

15 July 2025

Dear

**ATISN 24838 – Baroness Casey's audit of group-based child sexual exploitation**

Thank you for your request to Welsh Government for information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) received on 18 June 2025 relating to the Baroness Casey's audit.

You have requested the following:

- 1. Did the Welsh Government receive a data request from Baroness Casey or her team in relation to the National Audit on Group-Based Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, published in June 2025?*
- 2. If such a request was received: On what date was it received? What internal departments or officials were consulted? What data, if any, was provided in response?*
- 3. If no data was provided to the audit team, please state: The reasons why the data was not supplied; Whether the Welsh Government holds relevant data on group-based child sexual exploitation or abuse through health services or Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs); If such data exists, what format it is held in and whether a summary can be provided.*
- 4. What systems are currently in place to monitor and report cases of group-based child sexual exploitation or abuse within NHS Wales or through Welsh SARCs?*
- 5. Are there any official statistics, reports, or internal assessments from the past five years concerning group-based child sexual exploitation in Wales?*

**Our Response**

1. Yes, Welsh Government received two requests for information.
2. a) 03.04.25 and 28.05.25  
b) 03.04.25 – nobody needed to be consulted, this was a request for a timeline to be developed showing the legislation, policy and guidance pertaining to child sexual exploitation/abuse input was provided by Social Services and Integration, Community Safety, Modern Slavery and the Cohesive Communities Policy Teams. On the 28.05.25 information was supported by Analysis and Innovation Branch, the Single Unified Safeguarding Review (SUSR) Team,  
c) Data was provided to the audit team on the statistical information requested about sexual abuse/exploitation and child protection registration data including the category of registration. Child in need of care and support data and whether we record sexual exploitation as part of the assessment process was requested – whilst we do collect the number of children in Wales who have a care and support plan, we do not record sexual exploitation as a factor during the assessment and planning process in a way that can be extracted and reported. Data was requested, which is already available from StatsWales regarding the number of referrals to Social Services in which exploitation (criminal or sexual) are a factor [Number of children reported during the year where child exploitation was a factor, by local authority](#). We signposted the audit

team to the Stats Wales website where other key information is held about children, for example, the number of children and young people in care. We also provided a legislation, policy and guidance timeline to the audit team.

3. a) Baroness Casey published her audit report on group-based sexual exploitation of children on 16<sup>th</sup> June.

On page 52, the report states, “We also sought data from the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and the Government of Wales on how many cases of child sexual abuse or exploitation they see in health services but have only been able to obtain data from Sexual Assault Referral Centres (England).” This was incorrect as health data had not been requested by the audit team from Welsh Government. This was raised with the audit team.

On 20<sup>th</sup> June, Baroness Casey wrote to the First Minister to apologise for the error, confirming that health information was not requested from Welsh Government by the audit team and providing assurance that the report would be amended. We are assured that the report has now been amended.

The data that was requested by the audit team on child protection registration rates and a legislation, policy and guidance timeline were provided to the audit team.

- b) Welsh Government does not hold data on SARCs referrals. This information is held by the NHS and not published.  
c) see above

4. Welsh Government does not hold the information requested. SARCs data is reported to NHS Wales Performance and Improvement.  
5. Welsh Government does not have any official statistics, reports or internal assessments concerning group-based child sexual exploitation in Wales.

There are no official statistics available on group-based child sexual exploitation for the reasons outlined by Baroness Casey in her report. Data systems are not mature enough to drill down into this level of detail. There have been no reports or internal assessments undertaken concerning group-based child sexual exploitation.

## **Next Steps**

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government’s handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government’s Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit  
Welsh Government  
Cathays Park  
Cardiff  
CF10 3NQ  
or Email: [Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales](mailto:Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales)

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely,