



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

5 August 2026

Dear ,

ATISN FoI/REQ/LCCG/Police and justice (27195)

Information requested

Thank you for your request which I received on 9 July. You asked for a Wales-specific costing estimate for the devolution of policing and justice functions, including:

- The overall expected cost of devolving policing and criminal justice functions to Wales (with costing data on projected overall costs should policing and criminal justice be devolved now, in 2026).
- A breakdown of this overall expected cost for devolving policing and criminal justice functions to Wales, including:
- The expected initial, one-off, upfront cost of devolving policing and criminal justice functions to Wales (in 2026).
- The expected additional, ongoing annual cost of devolving policing and criminal justice functions to Wales (in 2026).

Within this information you requested a breakdown of the estimated initial and subsequent annual costs of devolving the following components of justice functions to Wales:

- Police
- Courts and tribunals
- Legal aid
- Prisons
- Probation
- Youth justice

You also asked for information on:

- How much was spent on policing functions in Wales during the last fiscal year for which you hold data.
- How much was spent on overall justice functions in Wales during the last fiscal year for which you hold data.
- Any cost estimates, impact assessments, correspondence, reports, or advice to Ministers on this issue.

In the absence of this information, you requested the latest available data we hold on the expected costs of devolving policing and criminal justice to Wales.

Our response

- The expected costs of devolving policing and criminal justice functions to Wales (with costing data on projected overall costs should policing and criminal justice be devolved now, in 2026), including upfront costs and ongoing running costs.

We do not hold this information. Our reasonable expectation is that a period of 18 months- two years would be required between reaching an agreement to devolve policing and criminal justice and implementing devolution. This time is required for the legislative amendments to progress through Parliament, for practical implementation steps to be taken for the transfer of staff, assets, liabilities and so on, and for negotiations on the level of funding to transfer. As such, we have not calculated the cost of devolving policing and criminal justice in 2026.

Additionally, upfront costs depend on the whether devolution takes place as part of a wider system reform, or separately from other matters. Ongoing running costs will also be affected by policy choices taken post-devolution.

Within this information you requested a breakdown of the estimated initial and subsequent annual costs of devolving the following components of justice functions to Wales:

- Police
- Courts and tribunals
- Legal aid
- Prisons
- Probation
- Youth justice

We do not hold a breakdown of the estimated initial and subsequent annual costs of devolving each element of these justice functions, as this work is under development. The initial costs of devolution would depend on the extent of devolution, the timescales, and the approach to implementation. The subsequent annual costs would depend on policy choices taken after devolution, as well as the extent of devolved services and how they interact with any remaining reserved services/ functions. There needs to be agreement on the parameters/ scope before the costs can be estimated.

Some of the initial work that has been undertaken to establish factors influencing costs has been published. [The Report on Preparing for the Devolution of Policing to Wales](#) by Carl Foulkes and Emma Ackland established factors influencing the financial implication of devolving policing. The [Commission on Justice in Wales](#) set out evidence on some of the cost implications of the current system but did not consider the cost of devolution in depth. The [Commission on Devolution in Wales](#) included financial implications of the initial and ongoing costs for devolving a range of measures, including the devolution of policing and criminal justice, though these require re-evaluation due to the passage of time.

- How much was spent on policing functions in Wales during the last fiscal year for which you hold data.

Budget allocations for policing in Wales are in the public domain and are published [here](#). The audited accounts of the police forces in Wales are published by the Police and Crime Commissioners, please see the links for contact details for [South Wales PCC](#), [Gwent PCC](#), [Dyfed-Powys PCC](#) and [North Wales PCC](#).

- How much was spent on overall justice functions in Wales during the last fiscal year for which you hold data.

This information is not held by the Welsh Government, as justice is a reserved matter. The Ministry of Justice may be able to provide this information. Here is the [contact form](#) for requests from the MoJ.

- Any cost estimates, impact assessments, correspondence, reports, or advice to Ministers on this issue.

Some of the initial work that has been undertaken to establish factors influencing costs has been published. [The Report on Preparing for the Devolution of Policing to Wales](#) by Carl Foulkes and Emma Ackland established factors influencing the financial implication of devolving policing. The [Commission on Justice in Wales](#) set out evidence on some of the cost implications of the current system but did not consider the cost of devolution in depth. The [Commission on Devolution in Wales](#) included financial implications of the initial and ongoing costs for devolving a range of measures, including the devolution of policing and criminal justice, though these require re-evaluation due to the passage of time.

The draft [Regulatory Impact Assessment](#) for the Tribunals Bill sets out the implications of current and future costs of devolved tribunals, the only aspect of the justice system which is currently devolved.

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 e-mail: 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