21 October 2026

Dear

ATISN 27244 - Follow-up to Internal Review outcome

I am writing further to the Internal Review outcome issued on 23 September 2026. That letter explained that the Welsh Government would repeat its search and scoping exercise using the relevant themes, keywords and date ranges identified in your request for an Internal Review and would communicate the results to you within 20 working days.

Further searches undertaken

In accordance with that commitment, further searches have now been completed. The searches were focused on the themes identified in your correspondence, including whistleblowing and regulatory culture, water-company governance, sewage pollution, monitoring and enforcement, and Welsh Government engagement with Natural Resources Wales, Ofwat and other regulators. The searches also used relevant keywords and the date ranges specified in your correspondence.

The searches identified 67 records for review. Each record was considered to determine whether it fell within the scope of the reconsidered parts of your request and whether the information could be disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

Our response

Following that review, I have decided to release the information identified as falling within scope. The information is enclosed with this letter. An accompanying schedule describes the material being released and, where relevant, signposts information that is already publicly available online.

This further disclosure completes the action set out in the Internal Review outcome of 23 September 2026. The conclusions reached in that letter on the remaining elements of your complaint are unchanged.

Personal Information

Parts of the enclosed information have been redacted to remove the names and identifying details of certain officials and third parties. We have concluded that this information constitutes personal data. Disclosure would place that personal data into the public domain and, in the circumstances of this case, would be unfair to the individuals concerned. We have therefore withheld this information under Regulation 13 of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. Regulation 13 is an absolute exception and is not subject to the public interest test. Full details of our application of this exception is set out in Annex B.

Next steps

I have considered your complaint in accordance with the procedure outlined in the Welsh Government's Practical Guide for Making Requests for Information which is available by post on request or via the internet.

If you remain dissatisfied with this response you 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.

Yours sincerely,

Deputy Director
Mining Legacy, Water and Flood
Welsh Government

Annex A – Details of requested information

- Summary of NRW's counter fraud, briber and corruption policy, first published in 2022 and available publicly online: https://naturalresourceswales.gov.uk/about-us/corporate-policies/anti-bribery-and-corruption-policy?lang=en
- Summary of NRW's counter fraud strategy 2022-2026, available publicly online: https://naturalresourceswales.gov.uk/about-us/corporate-policies/anti-fraud-policy/?lang=en
- Process flow diagram of NRW's fraud and whistleblowing procedure, their whistleblowing policy is also available publicly online: https://naturalresourceswales.gov.uk/about-us/how-we-are-performing/annual-whistleblowing-and-prescribed-person-report-2025-26/?lang=en
- Email regarding ministerial complaint re illegal waste deposits at Aberdare Cemetery
- NRW Enforcement and Prosecution Policy Guidance on Enforcement and Sanctions document, updated version available publicly online: https://naturalresourceswales.gov.uk/about-us/what-we-do/how-we-regulate/our-regulatory-responsibilities/enforcement-and-sanctions-policy/?lang=en
- Dept for Business Innovation and Skills review of NRW against the principles of good regulation, published 2015 and available publicly online: https://senedd.wales/media/04adr5ix/gen-ld10285-e.pdf
- NRW's 'The state of contaminated land in Wales' report, publicly available online: https://cdn.cyfoethnaturiol.cymru/nu3dn2e5/nrw26759-contaminated-land-in-wales-pdf_english-1.pdf?mode=pad
- NRW Agriculture Bill White Paper development – Future uses of civil sanctions
- NRW resources on the application of Civil Sanctions in Environmental Regulation
- Annual environment performance report for Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water
- 2023 by NRW, available publicly online: https://cdn.cyfoethnaturiol.cymru/g3zgfbct/external-dcww-performance-report-2023-english.pdf?mode=pad
- Welsh Parliament Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee Report on performance of Dwr Cymru February 2024, available publicly online: https://senedd.wales/media/lijnmtov/cr-ld16328-e.pdf
- Summary of responses on the consultation of the Green Paper: Shaping the Future of Water Governance in Wales, available publicly online: https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2026-09/summary-of-response-green-paper-shaping-future-water-governance-wales.pdf

- NRW's Annual environmental performance report for Hafren Dyfrdwy 2023, available publicly online: https://cdn.cyfoethnaturiol.cymru/z5bcdrgg/annual-performance-report-for-hafren-dyfrdwy-2023.pdf?mode=pad
- Hafren Dyfrdwy's response to Shaping the future of water governance in Wales consultation
- Letter to member of the public from Water Branch on concerns over appointment of Sir James Bevan as NED of DCWW
- Letter to Zaynub Akbar, Nick Carter and Dafydd Trystan re concerns on DCWW environmental performance/governance/accountability on behalf of a constituent
- Letter to member of the public from Water Branch on concerns over sewage discharges in rivers
- Letter from Huw Irranca-Davies to Stephen Doughty MP on concerns about DCWW board membership
- Letter to member of public from Water Branch on concerns about DCWW appointment of Sir James Bevan
- Letter to member of public from Water Branch on concerns about DCWW appointment of Sir James Bevan and storm overflows
- Letter to member of public from Water Branch on concerns about DCWW appointment of Sir James Bevan
- Letter from Huw Irranca-Davies to Jane Hutt MS on constituents concerns around DCWW performance
- Letter to member of public from Water Branch on concerns about sewage pollution following Dirty Business programme
- Letter to member of public from Water Branch on concerns about water bills and DCWW
- Email including briefing and press release from Water Branch to PS Minister for Climate Change on BBC Network coverage of sewage spills from DCWW wastewater treatment works
- Written Question from Paul Davies on reducing sewage discharges in Welsh Wales
- Letter to member of public from Water Branch on concerns re sewage discharged in Welsh rivers
- Written question from Iain McIntosh on sewage discharges in 2025-26 financial year
- Written question from Rhys ab Owen on sewage discharges
- Briefing note on water quality around Clyne River
- Report summary - 2,274 days with illegal sewage discharges to 11 Welsh rivers from 2018 to 2023 - Peter Hammond, Windrush Against Sewage Pollution

(WASP), October 2023. Available publicly online: FINAL_SUMMARY_Welsh_Water_Overview_WwTWs_Oct_17th_2023.pdf

- Written question from Adam Price on storm overflows and sewage pollution
- Letter to Stephen Doughty MP on constituent's concern about sewage pollution in Wales
- Lines to take and briefing on sewage and bathing waters, 2025
- Written question from Gareth Beer on agricultural sewage in Riber Tywi
- Surfers Against Sewage water quality report 2023, available publicly online: https://www.sas.org.uk/resource/water-quality-report-2023/
- Surfers Against Sewage water quality report 2022, available publicly online: https://www.sas.org.uk/resource/water-quality-report-2022/
- Written question from Huw Irranca Davies to Julie James on sewage impacts on water quality
- Powerpoint presentation from Natural England on impacts of sewage discharge for training purposes
- Written question from Laura-Anne Jones to Huw Irranca Davies on sewage levels in rivers
- Letter to member of public from Water Branch on sewage discharges
- Letter to Chris Bryant MP from Llyr Gruffyd on sewage discharges
- Letter from Water Branch to member of public on sewage discharge and pollution concerns
- Letter from Water Branch to member of public on sewage discharge and pollution concerns
- Written question from Janet Finch-Saunders to Huw Irranca-Davies on sewage impact on businesses
- Guidance document from NRW on pollution prevention for works in or near water, available publicly online: https://www.netregs.org.uk/media/1436/gpp-21-final.pdf
- Ministerial Advice on Natural Resources Wales Funding for Improved Water Quality Compliance
- Oral question from Janet Finch Saunders to Huw Irranca-Davies on plastics in rivers, transcript available publicly online: https://record.senedd.wales/OralQuestion/63606
- Letter to Jack Sargeant MS from Huw Irranca-Davies on the Save the Teifi Community Group
- Briefing to Minister on meeting with Ofwat re enforcement action
- Meeting note from meeting with DCWW chief execs and Claire Bennett, discussing company performance and upcoming water reform work
- Letter to member of the public from Water Branch on £44.7m enforcement package for DCWW

- Powerpoint presentation on environmental and governance principles in Wales for training purposes
- Powerpoint presentation from workshop delivered by NRW
- Briefing to Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change on reports published by Ofwat that are publicly available
- Letter to member of public from Water Branch re concerns re pollution in River Towy
- Draft Ofwat response to Welsh Government Strategic Priorities and Objectives statement 2025
- Water Strategic Priorities Statement to Ofwat 2026, publicly available online: https://www.gov.wales/strategic-priorities-statement-ofwat-2026
- Document from NRW listing their duties in relation to water from the Independent Water Commission
- Meeting note from NRW / Welsh Gov Transition Planning Meeting 1 October 2025
- Meeting note from NRW / Welsh Gov Transition Planning Meeting 7 October 2025
- Meeting note from NRW / Welsh Gov Transition Planning Meeting 14 October 2025
- Meeting note from NRW / Welsh Gov Transition Planning Meeting 23 October 2025
- Meeting note from NRW / Welsh Gov Transition Planning Meeting 5 November 2025
- Meeting note from NRW / Welsh Gov Transition Planning Meeting 12 November 2025
- Meeting note from NRW / Welsh Gov Transition Planning Meeting 3 December 2025

Annex B – Application of exceptions

The Environmental Information Regulations provide a right for anyone to ask a public authority to make requested information available to the wider public. As the release of requested information is to the world, not just the requester, public authorities need to consider the effects of making the information freely available to everybody. Any personal interest the requester has for accessing the information cannot override those wider considerations.

Regulation 13– Personal data

Regulation 13(1) together with the conditions in Regulation 13(2)(a)(i) and 13(2)(a)(ii) provides an absolute exemption if disclosure of the personal data would breach any of the data protection principles.

'Personal data' is defined in sections 3(2) and (3) of the Data Protection Act 2018 ('the DPA 2018') and means any information relating to an identified or identifiable living individual. An identifiable living individual is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of the individual.

We have concluded that, in this instance, the information requested contains third party personal data.

Under Regulation 13(1) of the EIRs, personal data is exempt from release if disclosure would breach one of the data protection principles set out in Article 5 of the GDPR. We consider the principle being most relevant in this instance as being the first. This states that personal data must be:]

"processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subject"

The lawful basis that is most relevant in relation to a request for information under the FOIA is Article 6(1)(f). This states:

"processing is necessary for the purposes of the legitimate interests pursued by the controller or by a third party except where such interests are overridden by the interests or fundamental rights and freedoms of the data subject which require protection of personal data, in particular where the data subject is a child".

- In considering the application of Article 6(1)(f) in the context of a request for information under FOIA it is necessary to consider the following three-part test:

- **The Legitimate interest test**: Whether a legitimate interest is being pursued in the request for information;
- **The Necessity test**: Whether disclosure of the information/confirmation or denial that it is held is necessary to meet the legitimate interest in question;
- **The Balancing test**: Whether the above interests override the interests, fundamental rights and freedoms of the data subject.

Our consideration of these tests is set out below:

1. Legitimate interests

We recognise that there is a legitimate interest in transparency and accountability in relation to the Welsh Government's engagement with Natural Resources Wales, water companies and other organisations on the matters covered by your request. There is also a legitimate interest in understanding how the Welsh Government has considered and responded to matters relating to water-company governance, environmental performance, pollution and regulatory activity.

We have therefore considered whether disclosure of the names and individual email addresses that have been redacted would further those legitimate interests. We acknowledge that, in some circumstances, identifying an individual may assist the public in understanding who was involved in official correspondence or discussions and may therefore contribute to transparency and accountability.

We are therefore satisfied that there is a legitimate interest which could, in principle, be furthered by disclosure of the personal data. We have consequently gone on to consider whether disclosure of that personal data is necessary to meet that legitimate interest and, if so, whether the legitimate interest outweighs the rights and interests of the individuals concerned.

2. Is disclosure necessary?

We have considered whether disclosure of the names and individual email addresses of the officials concerned is necessary to meet the legitimate interests identified above.

We do not consider that disclosure of this personal data is necessary. The substantive information contained within the relevant records is being disclosed and enables the requester and the wider public to understand the Welsh Government's consideration of, and engagement on, the matters covered by the request. The legitimate interests in transparency and accountability can therefore be met without disclosing the names and individual email addresses of the officials concerned.

Redacting this personal data while releasing the substantive content of the records represents a less intrusive means of meeting those legitimate interests. We have therefore concluded that disclosure of the personal data is not necessary for the purposes of the legitimate interests identified.

3. The balance between legitimate interests and the data subject's interests or fundamental rights and freedoms

For completeness, we have also considered the balance between the legitimate interests in disclosure and the rights and interests of the individuals concerned.

We recognise the legitimate public interest in transparency and accountability concerning the Welsh Government's work and its engagement with other organisations. However, the substantive information relevant to those interests is being disclosed. Disclosure of the names and individual email addresses of the officials concerned would therefore provide limited additional information relevant to understanding the issues covered by the request.

Against this, disclosure under the Environmental Information Regulations is disclosure to the public at large. The information being withheld identifies individual members of staff and principally relates to officials whose personal details are not necessary to understand the substance of the records being released.

On balance, we consider that the interests, rights and freedoms of the individuals concerned outweigh the additional legitimate interest that would be served by disclosure of their names and individual email addresses. We have therefore concluded that disclosure of this personal data would not be lawful and fair within the meaning of the first data protection principle. The information has consequently been withheld under Regulation 13 of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.