

16 October 2026

Dear

ATISN 27439 Sanctuary Seekers Support Service

Information Requested

Thank you for your request which I received on 31 August 2026. You asked for information concerning Welsh Government procurement reference C142/2021/2022, specifically Lot 2 – Sanctuary Seekers Support Service, which was awarded to the Welsh Refugee Council in January 2022. Your request concerns the development and approval of the procurement rather than routine correspondence about refugee policy generally. You asked for:

1. The business case, procurement initiation document or equivalent document authorising the procurement of the Sanctuary Seekers Support Service.
2. The final service specification issued to bidders and, where held, the immediately preceding substantive draft showing material changes to the specification.
3. Any ministerial submission, briefing or decision document relating specifically to:
 - the decision to procure the Sanctuary Seekers Support Service;
 - the scope or specification of that service;
 - its proposed duration or value; or
 - approval to proceed with procurement.
4. The names/job titles of Welsh Government officials and Ministers who approved the service specification and/or the decision to commence procurement.
5. Records of meetings or formal consultation between Welsh Government and the Welsh Refugee Council between 1 January 2020 and 3 November 2021 concerning:
 - the future or replacement of the Asylum Rights Programme;
 - the design of a successor refugee/asylum support service; or
 - the requirements subsequently incorporated into the Sanctuary Seekers Support Service.

For this item you are requesting meeting dates, attendees, agendas and minutes/notes rather than all routine correspondence.

6. Any response submitted by the Welsh Refugee Council to the 2021 Consultation on Future Funding for the Equality and Inclusion Programme, together with any record of meetings with WRC concerning that consultation.
7. Any document or correspondence recording involvement by Julie Morgan MS, or her ministerial/private office, in:
 - developing or commenting upon the Sanctuary Seekers Support Service;
 - determining its specification;
 - approving the procurement;
 - discussing the proposed successor service with the Welsh Refugee Council; or
 - commenting upon the Welsh Refugee Council in connection with this procurement.

You clarified that you are not requesting all correspondence mentioning Julie Morgan MS, asylum seekers or the Welsh Refugee Council. You are limiting this part of the request to material directly relating to the development or procurement of C142/2021/2022 Lot 2.

8. Any declaration of interest, conflict-of-interest assessment, recusal record or other record held concerning Julie Morgan MS' status as a founder member of the Welsh

Refugee Council in connection with her ministerial responsibilities or this procurement.

9. The names or job titles of the members of the evaluation/moderation panel for Lot 2, together with any conflict-of-interest declarations completed by those participants. Personal contact details may of course be redacted.
10. The final evaluation/moderation record for the successful Lot 2 tender, including the scores awarded against each published criterion and the final evaluation report or recommendation to award.
11. Any recorded explanation or internal assessment concerning the fact that only one tender was received for Lot 2.

Our response

I have decided that some information is exempt from disclosure under section(s) 40(2) and 41(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and is therefore withheld. The reasons for applying these exemptions are set out in full at Annex 1.

A copy of the information to be released is enclosed. Our response to each numbered part of your request is set out below.

Please note that decisions relating to the procurement of the Sanctuary Seekers Support Service were made by the 2021 to 2026 administration of the Welsh Government.

1. Authorisation for the procurement

Please see attached advice dated 3 August 2021 relating to the procurement of the Sanctuary Seekers Support Service at Annex 2, including confirmation that, on 5 August 2021, the then Minister for Social Justice agreed the procurement work for a new Sanctuary Seekers Support Service.

2. Service specification for bidders

A copy of the final service specification for bidders for C142/2021/2022 Lot 2 is set out at Annex 3.

In relation to your request for any draft version of the specification, this information is not held by the Welsh Government.

3. Ministerial briefing

Please see Annex 2.

4. Procurement approval

Jane Hutt MS, Minister for Social Justice at the time of procurement, made the decision to commence procurement of the Sanctuary Seekers Support Service.

5. Meetings and consultation with the Welsh Refugee Council

Information is not held by the Welsh Government of any meetings or formal consultation between Welsh Government and the Welsh Refugee Council between 1 January 2020 and 3 November 2021 concerning:

- the future or replacement of the Asylum Rights Programme;
- the design of a successor refugee/asylum support service; or

- the requirements subsequently incorporated into the Sanctuary Seekers Support Service.

6. Consultation response and event

Please see attached at Annex 4 a copy of the response received from the Welsh Refugee Council in relation to the 2021 Equalities and Inclusion Future Funding Consultation.

I have decided to withhold the name of the Welsh Refugee Council representative who submitted the response under section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 as set out in Annex 1.

A representative of the Welsh Refugee Council was among a number of stakeholders who attended a virtual consultation event with Welsh Government officials on 25 March 2021. The event formed part of the consultation on Future Funding for the Equality and Inclusion Programme, and the Welsh Government holds a transcript of the discussion. I have decided to withhold the transcript under section 41(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, for the reasons set out in Annex 1.

7–8. Julie Morgan MS

Julie Morgan MS held a ministerial portfolio as Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services from December 2018 to March 2024.

Information is not held by Welsh Government indicating involvement by Julie Morgan MS, or her ministerial private office, in the development, specification or procurement of C142/2021/2022 Lot 2.

Information is not held by Welsh Government regarding any declaration of interest, conflict-of-interest assessment, recusal record or other record concerning Julie Morgan MS' status as a founder member of the Welsh Refugee Council in connection with her ministerial responsibilities or this procurement.

The Register of Senedd Members' Interests for the Fifth and Sixth Senedd is published on the [Senedd website](#).

9–11. Evaluation and moderation information for Lot 2

Please see Annex 5 for the sections of the Contract Award Recommendation that fall within the scope of points 9, 10 and 11 of your request. These include:

- recorded confirmation that all panel members confirmed in writing that they had no conflicts of interest;
- the final evaluation and moderation information, including the scores awarded and recommendation to award; and
- the recorded information concerning the receipt of a single tender for C142/2021/2022 Lot 2.

I have decided to withhold the names and job titles of Welsh Government officials under section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 as set out in Annex 1.

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

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