November 2026

Ref: ATISN 26-0051

Dear

Thank you for your request which I received on 16/10/26. You asked for:

Any information held by the Welsh Government on the removal of the names of members of the External Accountability Group, internal correspondence, and note briefing from 1 -14th August concerning Professor Arday and information on the selection panel.

Our response

I have decided that **some of the information** is exempt from disclosure under **section 40** of the **Freedom of Information Act** and is therefore withheld. The reasons for applying these exemptions are set out in full at **Annex 1c** to this letter.

1.The name and role of the official or team who removed Professor Ardays's biography from the External Accountability Group members page on gov.wales on 11 August 2026 and any recorded reasons or instruction for the removal and whether any other member's biography was removed from that page on the same day.

The biography of all members on the External Accountability Group was removed from the gov.wales website because their contracts had all come to an end.

2. Any internal correspondence, note or briefing, from 1 August 2026 to 14 August 2026, concerning Professor Arday, including any concerning press coverage of him or his continued listing as a member of the External Accountability Group.

We hold this information. Please see attached Annex 1a

3. Professor Arday's entry in the External Accountability Group register of members' interests, and the Conflicts of Interest form he returned on or about 15 December 2022.

We hold this information. Please see attached Annex 1b
Professor Arday completed and returned a Conflict-of-Interest declaration. In his declaration, Professor Arday recorded that he was a **Trustee of the Runnymede Trust**

4. *The selection panel's assessment, scoring or notes relating to Professor Arday's application and interview for the External Accountability Group appointment offered on 13 December 2022, and any record of checks undertaken by the Welsh Government to verify the qualifications, positions or affiliations stated in his application or CV.*

The Welsh Government holds records relating to the selection panel's assessment and scoring records relating to Professor Arday's application and interview and we will be relying on Sec 40 (2) FOIA to withhold this information.

In relation to checks undertaken following the appointment process, no additional verification checks were undertaken by the Welsh Government beyond obtaining two references and requiring completion of a Conflict-of-Interest declaration.

5. Whether the two references he supplied on 15 December 2022 were taken up, and if so the dates on which they were requested and received. I am not asking for the referees' identities. If the references themselves are held, I ask for them with the referees' names and contact details redacted.

Both referees were contacted on 10 January 2023, and completed references were received from both referees on 12 January 2023.

In considering your request for copies of the references, with the referees' names and contact details redacted, we are relying on Section 40(2) FOIA as consent has not been given and it would breach data protection law to provide this information.

6. Whether Professor Arday was a member of the Education and Welsh Language Subgroup, and if so the date of his appointment to it and the dates of any of its meetings he attended.

We have searched through our records and cannot find any written information that is captured by this request. There are no attendance records for the subgroups and the meeting minutes do not name attendees specifically.

7. Please confirm whether he was a member of the Race Equality Action Plan Steering Group and, if so, the date of his appointment and any record of it.

Professor Arday was not a member of the Race Equality Action Plan (REAP) Steering Group. Professor Arday was invited to a roundtable discussion in the development of the REAP in his academic capacity. Information of all the members on the Race Equality Action Plan is in the public domain [41912 An Anti-Racist Wales - Race Equality Action Plan for Wales]

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

4th Floor
No. 3 Circle Square
5 Hawkshaw Street
Manchester
M1 7BL

Telephone: 0303 123 1113

Website: www.ico.org.uk

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

Yours sincerely,