4 November 2026

Dear

ATISN 27617- NHS Finances

Thank you for your request to Welsh Government for information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) received on 6th October. You asked for

SECTION 1 — REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

all information held, in any form, relating to the matters below.
This includes (but is not limited to):

- *internal emails*
- *ministerial submissions*
- *Permanent Secretary briefings*
- *Director General (Health) briefings*
- *senior leadership team papers*
- *draft and final documents*
- *audit findings*
- *risk assessments*

correspondence with Health Boards, NWSSP, DHCW, Audit Wales, NAO, UK Government Teams/Zoom notes WhatsApp/SMS messages used for official business metadata, audit logs, and digital artefacts information held in any system used by Welsh Government

This FOI applies to all directorates, including:

- *Ministerial Private Offices*
- *Permanent Secretary's Office*
- *Director General (Health & Social Services) Workforce, Digital & Governance Divisions Finance Procurement Legal Services*

SECTION 2 — SUBJECT MATTER

Please provide all information held relating to:
A. Statutory Financial Governance Failures (All Health Boards) repeated statutory breaches under the NHS Finance (Wales) Act

- *Qualified Regularity Opinions*
- *£461,572,000 combined overspend*
- *IMTP failure*
- *Welsh Government oversight, monitoring, escalation, or intervention*

B. National Risk Category Failures

- *Level 5 Special Measures (BCUHB)*
- *Level 4 Critical (multiple boards)*
- *Level 3 Enhanced Monitoring (DHCW)*
- *Welsh Government risk governance and ministerial awareness*

C. NWSSP Governance, Liability Exposure, and Contradictions £1.957bn liability exposure

- *£7.049m inventory losses*
- *£511k obsolete stock payouts*
- *fruitless payments*
- *procurement breaches*
- *governance contradictions*
- *Welsh Government oversight of NWSSP*

D. NWSSP Legal & Risk Failures
£99,514.80 fruitless payment

- *flat-lining risk scores*
- *missed mitigation deadlines*
- *liability governance failures*
- *Welsh Government oversight*

E. TRAC / ESR / Civica Digital Governance Failures TRAC governance failures

- *external account creation risk*
- *ESR workforce data ownership*
- *Civica system governance gaps*
- *Welsh Government oversight of digital governance*

F. Procurement, Inventory, and Special Payment Failures PPE expiry

- *£138m special payments*
- *procurement governance failures*
- *inventory write-offs*
- *Welsh Government procurement oversight*

G. Clinical Governance Failures

- *Swansea Bay maternity failures*
- *Powys CHC accrual error (£437k)*
- *Welsh Government clinical governance oversight*

H. Menu Framework Digital Collapse

- *digital failure*
- *concealed write-offs*
- *governance failures*
- *Welsh Government oversight*

I. Governance Gaslighting & Public Accountability "fundamentally sound governance" public statements

- *internal contradictions*
- *ministerial awareness*

J. Ministerial Awareness, Briefings, and Escalations ministerial briefings

- *escalations*
- *risk summaries*

- *governance collapse warnings*
- *digital integrity risks*
- *procurement failures*
- *NWSSP/DHCW governance gaps*
- *statutory breach awareness*

SECTION 3 — MANDATORY SEARCH REQUIREMENTS To comply with Section 1, Section 10, and Section 16 FOIA, please confirm searches across:

- *Ministerial & Senior Leadership Systems*
- *Ministerial Private Offices*
- *Permanent Secretary's Office*
- *Director General (Health & Social Services) Senior Leadership Team repositories*

Operational Systems

- *all email accounts*
- *all shared drives*
- *all Teams channels and chats*
- *all WhatsApp/SMS messages used for official business all procurement, audit, risk, and digital governance systems*

NWSSP/DHCW correspondence archives

- *metadata and audit-log repositories*

If any system cannot be searched, please provide:

- *the reason*
- *the data held*
- *who controls access*
- *whether Ministers or senior officials rely on that system whether Welsh Government has used that system for governance or oversight This is required for ICO adequacy-of-search compliance.*

SECTION 4 — EXEMPTIONS, PUBLIC INTEREST, AND ICO COMPLIANCE If Welsh Government intends to apply any exemption, please provide:

- *the precise statutory exemption*
- *the full public-interest test*
- *the harm test (if applicable)*
- *the reasoning for any redaction*
- *the scope of searches conducted*
- *the directorates consulted*
- *whether ministerial offices were consulted whether senior officials were consulted whether NWSSP, DHCW, Audit Wales, NAO, or UK Government were consulted*

Please note:
Any "not held" response must include full details of searches conducted, systems examined, and directorates consulted, in accordance with ICO guidance on adequacy of searches.

SECTION 5 — FORMAT (STRICT REQUIREMENTS — NO FLATTENED OR COMPRESSED FILES) Please provide all information in native, uncompressed, fully searchable electronic formats. For absolute clarity:

- *No flattened PDFs*
- *No scanned image-PDFs*
- *No redacted-layer PDFs*
- *No password-protected files*
- *No zipped folders*
- *No compressed archives*
- *No portal-only access links*
- *No formats that remove metadata or audit-trail information*

Acceptable formats include:

- *native PDF (unflattened, text-searchable, metadata intact) Word (.docx) Excel (.xlsx) CSV open-format text files native digital exports from systems (with metadata preserved)*

All documents must retain:

- *metadata*
- *audit-trail information*
- *timestamps*
- *version history (where applicable)*
- *digital signatures (where applicable)*

On 10th October we attempted to seek clarification on some aspects of your enquiry, however it was determined that the request was not refined sufficiently.

Our Response

The Welsh Government holds information that is captured by your request, however, your request has combined:

- 10 very broad subject areas, A-J;
- all information held, rather than identifiable categories of information;
- numerous Health Boards and bodies;
- multiple Welsh Government directorates/offices;
- email, Teams, WhatsApp/SMS, shared drives and specialist systems;
- drafts as well as final documents;
- metadata, audit logs and version histories;
- ministerial and senior official records;
- correspondence with multiple external organisations;
- All information held from 1/1/15 onwards

From our preliminary assessment we estimate that it will cost more than the appropriate limit set out in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 to answer your requests. The appropriate limit specified for central government is £600. This represents the estimated cost of it taking over 24 hours of time to determine whether we hold the information and to thereafter locate, retrieve and extract it.

Using one of your search terms, we have identified over 800 potential files. Each file would need to be reviewed manually. To open and read the records would take at least 2 minutes for each one to determine if they are in scope. This would take.

Calculation:
Average number of Documents Located: approximately 800 documents
Average time take to retrieve and review each document = 2 minutes X 800 documents = approximately 26 hrs and 40 mins

Consequently, I have decided not to provide you with the information you have requested.

You may wish to refine your request by narrowing its scope by being more specific about what information you particularly wish to obtain. Some ways in which you could consider include:

- Identify which of the subject areas A-J is your priority. You may wish initially to restrict your request to one subject area, or a smaller number of clearly identified matters, rather than seeking all information relating to all ten areas
- The absence of a date range is particularly significant for email and electronic searches. You may wish to specify the period for which you require information. We would encourage quite a tight initial period, perhaps 6 or 12 months, depending on the subject.
- Replace “all information” with identifiable record. Instead of searching for absolutely everything “relating to” broad concepts such as “governance failures”, you could identify document types. You may wish to consider exclude drafts, duplicates, metadata, version histories and audit logs unless one of those is actually the information you are seeking.
- By identify the organisation/body of primary interest. Some topics in your request currently contain several potential organisations. You may wish to restrict the request to information concerning one organisation, such as NWSSP, DHCW or a specified Health Board, rather than all relevant NHS bodies.
- Narrow searches of communications. Your request has used terms such as “All email accounts”, Teams channels/chats, WhatsApp and SMS which is exceptionally wide. You may wish to consider if correspondence is your priority, to identify the individuals, offices or teams whose correspondence you are principally interested in, together with a defined subject matter and date range.

If you do refine your request in this way, this will be treated as a new request.

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