

Ref – ATISN 15679

30 November 2021

Dear

Information requested

Thank you for your request which I received on 11 November 2021. You asked for:

1. Copies of all correspondence available to be shared between Ministers, Officers or other government staff of the UK and Welsh Governments regarding consequential funding for Wales for building safety since it was first announced in 2019 which includes, but not limited to, letters, emails, notes, text messages, and whatsapp messages.
2. Copies of any meeting minutes available to be shared between representatives of the UK and Welsh Governments at which funding for building safety in Wales has been discussed
3. Copies of any agreements available to be shared between the UK and Welsh Governments regarding funding for building safety in Wales
4. Any other documents besides those given for the requests above relating to consequential funding for building safety in Wales that is available to be shared.

Our response

From my preliminary assessment I 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 request. 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.

In order to provide you with the information that you have requested, it would require us to meet with more parties than we have already engaged with, and further to this we will need to analyse and extrapolate the information you would like, ensuring redactions are in place to adhere with GDPR. The team have already exceeded the 24 hour limit in data gathering alone and it is not feasible for us to continue with the broad request you submitted. Consequently, I have decided not to provide you with the information you have requested.

However, I would like to be as transparent as possible to help you get the information you want. I believe your request for information focuses on the consequential funding allocation from UK Government to Welsh Government, and how this was spent in financial year 2020/21.

As you are aware, Wales is a devolved nation and as such, when a department in UK Government announces an increase in funding, it is generally passed on to the devolved nations using the Barnett formula (this is at the discretion of UK Government and does not always apply).

Early in 2020 Welsh Government received £58.873m from UK Government from their building safety fund. When devolved nations receive consequential funding, regardless of the department the funding has come from, it is not ring fenced for that purpose when it reaches the devolved nation. As a result, Ministers allocated the funding received toward their Covid-19 pandemic response.

For this financial year (2021/22), Minister for Climate Change has not received confirmation from UK Government on the level and timing of any building safety consequential funding for Wales as a result of announcements by the UK Government earlier this year so we are unable to share this information with you.

If I am incorrect and this doesn't answer your original request, you may wish to refine this request by narrowing its scope by being more specific about what information you particularly wish to obtain, including any dates or period of time relevant to the information required. 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