



Our ref: ATISN 20317
Date: 26 March 2024

Dear _____,

ATISN 20317

Thank you for your request which I received on 5 March 2024. You asked for the following information:

Referring to the Covid inquiry yesterday where minutes were quoted suggesting Vaughan Gething stated there were no imported covid cases in the UK as of 24 February 2020 (when in fact there were nine positive cases confirmed by 18th February).

However, Leighton Andrews in his thread says reference to that was not included in the published minutes on the Welsh Government website. He suggests that may have been due to the covid inquiry quoting draft minutes, and that the statement may have been omitted as a correction was requested before they were published on the Welsh Government website? Is that correct and if so what the request for correction was?

The Cabinet's policy is to conduct business as openly as possible and publishing Cabinet minutes is part of that.

Before publication, Cabinet minutes are circulated to the First Minister and members of his office to ensure an accurate account of the meeting is published.

On this occasion, an email response from private office sought clarification on whether the phrase "The worldwide response was still in the containment stage and there had been no imported cases into the UK" was an accurate reflection of what was said at the meeting, given the information in the rest of the update. The minutes were corrected, and the final version published.

The relevant entry relating to the Cabinet minutes sent to the First Minister for comment and the email exchange have been disclosed to the Covid-19 Inquiry and are now publicly available on the Covid -19 Public Inquiry website as follows -

[INQ000129852_0001-0006.pdf \(covid19.public-inquiry.uk\)](https://covid19.public-inquiry.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/11193326/INQ000129852_0001-0006.pdf)

https://covid19.public-inquiry.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/11193326/INQ000420999_0001-0003.pdf

The published Cabinet minutes for the 25 February 2020 are available on the UK Web Archive:

<https://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/en/archive/20210615082833/https://gov.wales/cabinet-meetings>

As further background, the Health Minister issued a [Written Ministerial Statement](#) on 31 January stating the UK had confirmed its first cases of coronavirus, and through February had stated “to date there have been no imported cases of the novel coronavirus to Wales” on four occasions in Written Ministerial Statements.

[Written Statement: Coronavirus \(2019-nCoV\) \(4 February 2020\) | GOV.WALES](#)

[Written Statement: Coronavirus \(2019-nCoV\) \(11 February 2020\) | GOV.WALES](#)

[Written Statement: Coronavirus \(COVID-2019\) \(18 February 2020\) | GOV.WALES](#)

[Written Statement: Coronavirus \(COVID-2019\) \(25 February 2020\) | GOV.WALES](#)

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 e-mail: 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

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