

8 November 2024

Dear

ATISN 22015

Thank you for your request which we received on 13 October 2024. You asked for the following information:

- 1. Since devolution established the National Assembly for Wales (NAW) in 1998 - to list (by date) the number of substantial reviews since 1998 subsequently commissioned by NAW / Welsh Government which review their delivery of all their functions in Wales against prior stated objectives and cost benefits arising for which NAW (and its successor Welsh Parliament) were scheduled to deliver.*
- 2. Since the establishment of NAW and its successor, a) list by name all the public bodies or "quangos" that have either been dissolved or substantially modified along with their review date and b) state the number of these organisations from the above list for which a subsequent dedicated and comprehensive review has taken place which review the extent to which the original objectives for organisational change and the presumed costs and benefits were subsequently delivered.*

Our response

With regard to part 2 of your request (only), I have reached the conclusion that it will cost more than the appropriate limit established in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 to consider your request. The appropriate limit specified for central government is £600. When calculating whether or not your request exceeds appropriate limit, I am allowed to consider the time it is likely to take to establish if we hold the information, locate the information, retrieve the information and extract it. If these tasks are estimated to take more than 24 hours of working time, the limit will have been exceeded.

I have conducted an initial search on our electronic records management system (iShare) using the term 'quango' and this has resulted in 2403 results. I estimate it would take at least 3 minutes to review each result to determine whether it fell within the scope of your request. The limit is therefore exceeded as $2403 \text{ records} \times 3 / 60 = 120.15 \text{ hrs}$. The limit would be further exceeded by subsequent electronic searches using the specific names of any and all 'quangos' since 1998. The limit would also be further exceeded by any equivalent searches of hard copy information, and by searches for similar terms to 'quango.'

It is possible that your request could come within the appropriate limit if you are able to identify the specific "quango/s" about which you would like to receive information, against a specific theme and combined with a narrowed time frame. Please note, any reformulated question would be treated as a new request for information.

With regard to part 1 of your request, most of the information you have requested is exempt under Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act (2000) – information readily

accessible to the applicant by other means. For example, the [Explanatory Memorandum that accompanied the Senedd Cymru \(Members and Elections\) Bill](#) summarises a series of relevant reviews into the delivery of the functions of the National Assembly for Wales and Senedd Cymru, including:

- The Commission on the Powers and Electoral Arrangements of the National Assembly for Wales (the Richard Commission), 2004;
- The Commission on Devolution in Wales (the Silk Commission), 2014;
- A Parliament that works for Wales: The report of the Expert Panel on Assembly Electoral Reform, 2017;
- Senedd reform: The next steps - Committee on Senedd Electoral Reform, 2020;
- The Special Purpose Committee on Senedd Reform, 2022.

It is also worth noting that the Senedd and the Welsh Government are separate legal entities. A core function of the Senedd is to hold the Welsh Government to account. One of the ways in which it undertakes this role is by reviewing the delivery of particular Welsh Government functions, including against the Welsh Government's stated objectives and through examining its delivery of cost benefits. For example, since the last Senedd election in May 2021, the Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee has completed inquiries into a number of different public functions in Wales that can be found on the [Committee's Senedd webpage](#).

There are currently 19 Senedd Committees. Reports of each Committee's inquiries, including those undertaken in previous Senedd terms, are publicly available on the [Senedd's website](#).

Please note, a search for other administrative reviews of the delivery of the Welsh Government's functions (such as internal audit reports) would require an additional search as described above, adding further to the appropriate limit calculation. Because of the timespan of your request (1998-2024) different documents will variously be held electronically and in hard copy, with many having been archived and not searchable electronically.

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