

01 August 2025

Dear ,

ATISN 24948

Information requested

Thank you for your request which I received on 15 July 2025. You asked for:

- Documentation (including agenda and minutes) and participant details from the Implementation Group meeting held on 11 July 2025.
- The names of Valleys Greyhound Stadium representatives who will participate in the Implementation Group.
- Confirmation that Valleys Greyhound Stadium representatives were present at the Implementation Group meeting on 11 July 2025.

You have also requested copies of all communications regarding the ban on greyhound racing in Wales, spanning January 2025 – February 2025 between Welsh Government Ministers, Senedd Members and several organisations or individuals who include:

1. Blue Cross
2. RSPCA
3. Dogs Trust
4. Greyhound Rescue Wales
5. Hope Rescue
6. Grey2K
7. Jane Dodds MS

Additionally, you're asking for internal Welsh Government communications about the decision to:

8. **Publicise** "Hope Rescue Petition to ban greyhound racing" petition on official Welsh Government social media channels covering the period from September 2021 - October 2021.
9. **Not publicise** "The Welsh Government Should Support Greyhound Racing in Wales" petition on Welsh Government social media channels covering the period from February 2023 - March 2023.

Our response

A copy of the information I have decided to release is enclosed.

I have decided that some of the information is exempt from disclosure under sections 22 and 40 of the Freedom of Information Act and is therefore withheld. The reasons for applying this exemption are set out in full at Annex A to this letter.

1. A copy of the minutes/record and agenda for the meeting that took place on the 11th July 25 along with the names of the individuals who took part in the meeting

These documents will be published online in due course but are exempt at this time under FOIA S.22.

2. The names of the representatives from the Valleys Greyhound Stadium that the announcement says will form part of this group

This information will be included in the record of the meeting which took place on 11th July 2025 and will be published in due course as stated above.

3. Confirmation that representatives from the Valleys Greyhound Stadium took part in the meeting on the 11th July 2025

Yes

You have also requested information about the following:

1. Copies of all communication between any Welsh Minister and Senedd member involved in the decision to ban greyhound racing in Wales and the Blue Cross in January 25 and February 25

None

2. Copies of all communication (meeting minutes, e-mails, visit/consultation dates and times etc) between any Welsh Minister or Senedd member involved in the decision to ban greyhound racing in Wales and the RSPCA in January 25 and February 25

None

3. Copies of all communication (meeting minutes, e-mails, visit/consultation dates etc) between any Welsh Minister or Senedd member involved in the decision to ban greyhound racing in Wales and The Dogs Trust in January 25 and February 25

None

4. Copies of all communication (meeting minutes, e-mails, visit/consultation dates etc) between any Welsh Minister or Senedd member involved in the decision to ban greyhound racing in Wales and the Greyhound Rescue Wales in January 25 and February 25

The attached letter from Greyhound Rescue Wales was received during the requested timeframe but the response was issued in April 2025 and is therefore not captured by your request. However, we are including the response as we feel it is relevant. The organisation was not directly involved in the decision to ban greyhound racing.

5. Copies of all communication (meeting minutes, e-mails, visit/consultation dates etc) between any Welsh Minister or Senedd member involved in the decision to ban greyhound racing in Wales and the Hope Rescue in January 25 and February 25

None

6. Copies of all communication (meeting minutes, e-mails, visit/consultation dates etc) between any Welsh Minister or Senedd member involved in the decision to ban greyhound racing in Wales and the Grey2K between in January 25 and February 25

None

7. Copies of all communication (meeting minutes, e-mails, visit/consultation dates etc) between any Welsh Minister or Senedd member involved in the decision to ban greyhound racing in Wales and the Jane Dodds in January 25 and February 25

The attached letter from Jane Dodds MS was received during the requested timeframe but the response was issued in March 2025 and is therefore not captured by your request. However, we are including the response as we feel it is relevant. This correspondence did not influence the decision to ban greyhound racing.

8. Copies of all communication in Welsh Government in September 21 and October 21 around the decision to publicise the Hope Rescue Petition to ban greyhound racing on Welsh Government social media channels

Information not held.

This information is available from the Welsh Parliament.
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN
Tel: 0300 200 6565

Email: Information-request@senedd.wales

9. Copies of all communication in Welsh Government between February 23 and March 23 around the decision to not publicise the petition The Welsh Government Should Support Greyhound Racing in Wales on Welsh

Government social media channels in the same way they did for the Hope Rescue petition.

Information not held.

This information is available from the Welsh Parliament.
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN
Tel: 0300 200 6565

Email: Information-request@senedd.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,
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

Annex A

Application of exemptions/exceptions

The Freedom of information Act/Environmental Information Regulations provide a right for anyone to ask a public authority to make requested information available to the wider public. As the release of requested information is to the world, not just the requester, public authorities need to consider the effects of making the information freely available to everybody. Any personal interest the requester has for accessing the information cannot override those wider considerations.

I have decided to withhold the following information:

- A copy of the minutes/record and agenda for the meeting that took place on the 11 July 2025 along with the names of the individuals who took part in the meeting - exempt under S.22 (information intended for future publication).
- Personal data in the letters we are releasing is exempt under S.40(2) (personal data).

This Annex sets out the reasons for the engagement of section 22 of the Freedom of Information Act and our subsequent consideration of the Public Interest Test.

Engagement of section 22 (information intended for future publication) of the Freedom of Information Act

The Welsh Government believes that the minutes/record and agenda for the meeting that took place on the 11 July 25 should be exempt from disclosure. We intend to publish this information on our website, but the information is currently in the course of completion and is undergoing QA checks to ensure it is accurate and a true and correct record. Placing the information in the public domain at this time risks releasing inaccurate and incomplete information into the public domain.

Public Interest Test

In order to satisfy the public interest test in relation to the exemption(s), it is necessary to conclude that the public interest arguments in favour of withholding the information are sufficient to *outweigh* the public interest arguments in favour of release.

Public interest arguments in favour of disclosure

There is a clear public interest in this matter, and in the content of these minutes. It is in the interests of the openness and transparency of government that such information be available, and there is a strong public interest in public accountability of government.

Public interest arguments in favour of withholding

It is not in the public interest that incorrect or incomplete information be placed in the public domain. Public accountability of government relies on the information being released be full and accurate, and as release of information under FOI is release into the public domain, and not just to the requestor, there is a risk that such information, if it is incomplete or inaccurate, will misinform public debate and erode trust in government.

Balance of public interest test

As we intend to release the information as soon as it is complete and accurate, it is only necessary to consider whether there is a case for releasing the information now. That is, to outweigh the public interest in withholding until the information is complete and accurate, there needs to be a countervailing reason why release of the information is required now, rather than when the work is complete. No such countervailing reason has been identified, so the balance of public interest lies in withholding the information at this time.

Section 40(2) – Personal Data

Section 40(2) together with the conditions in section 40(3)(a)(i) or 40(3)(b) provides an absolute exemption if disclosure of the personal data would breach any of the data protection principles.

‘Personal data’ is defined in sections 3(2) and (3) of the Data Protection Act 2018 (‘the DPA 2018’) and means any information relating to an identified or identifiable living individual. An identifiable living individual is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of the individual.

We have concluded that, in this instance, the information requested contains third party personal data.

Under Section 40(2) of the FOIA, personal data is exempt from release if disclosure would breach one of the data protection principles set out in Article 5 of the GDPR. We consider the principle being most relevant in this instance as being the first. This states that personal data must be:

“processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subject”

The lawful basis that is most relevant in relation to a request for information under the FOIA is Article 6(1)(f). This states:

“processing is necessary for the purposes of the legitimate interests pursued by the controller or by a third party except where such interests are overridden by the interests or fundamental rights and freedoms of the data subject which require protection of personal data, in particular where the data subject is a child”.

In considering the application of Article 6(1)(f) in the context of a request for information under FOIA it is necessary to consider the following three-part test:-

- **The Legitimate interest test:** Whether a legitimate interest is being pursued in the request for information;
- **The Necessity test:** Whether disclosure of the information/confirmation or denial that it is held is necessary to meet the legitimate interest in question;
- **The Balancing test:** Whether the above interests override the interests, fundamental rights and freedoms of the data subject.

Our consideration of these tests is set out below:

1. Legitimate interests

There is a legitimate interest in both the communications and the context of the communications captured by this request.

2. Is disclosure necessary?

The personal data is the personal data of correspondents. This provides some context to the content of the communications, although that is limited. The context of the communication can be preserved by redacting the information in such a way as to preserve the overall context.

3. The balance between legitimate interests and the data subject's interests or fundamental rights and freedoms

Because the redaction meets the legitimate interest and so disclosure of the personal data is not necessary, there is no need to further consider the balance of interests, and the information is withheld.