

14 January 2026

Dear

**ATISN 26505 - Equalities Legal Advice Service**

**Information requested**

Thank you for your request which I received on 16 December 2025. Your request was:

I am writing to request the following information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

In relation to the decision announced on 9 December 2025 by the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip to allocate £400,000 per annum in 2026–27 and 2027–28 to support an Equalities Legal Advice Service under the Single Advice Fund.

1. Any business case, options paper or written analysis prepared for ministers which set out the rationale for creating a dedicated Equalities Legal Advice Service, rather than allocating the same funding to alternative uses within the Single Advice Fund.
2. Any briefing, submission or advice provided to ministers which explicitly compared this proposal with at least one alternative option for the use of the funding.
3. Any written assessment held by the Welsh Government which considered the potential for overlap or duplication between the proposed Equalities Legal Advice Service and existing Single Advice Fund provision dealing with employment or discrimination-related advice.

You have advised that this request is limited to documents prepared prior to, or in direct connection with, the decision of 9 December 2025.

In relation to the procurement of the Equalities Legal Advice Service funded via the Single Advice Fund from 2026–27 onwards.

1. The service specification or tender documentation issued by the Welsh Government which sets out the required scope, objectives and deliverables of the Equalities Legal Advice Service.

2. The evaluation framework or criteria used to assess bids or applications for this service, including any weighting applied to quality, outcomes or delivery capacity.
3. The final contract or grant agreement entered into with the successful provider, including any schedules that define:
  - expected activity levels or case volumes;
  - performance or outcome measures; and
  - reporting or monitoring requirements.

You have advised that this request does not seek commercially sensitive pricing schedules or unsuccessful bid material.

Finally, in relation to the evidence used by the Welsh Government to inform the decision to establish an Equalities Legal Advice Service under the Single Advice Fund from 2026–27.

1. Any analysis, modelling or written assessment held by the Welsh Government which was used to assess unmet demand for advice or legal support relating to discriminatory or unfair employment practices in Wales.
2. Any breakdowns or summaries used in that analysis which distinguish demand by protected characteristic, sector, or geographic area (where such breakdowns were prepared).
3. Any evaluation, review or internal assessment of existing Single Advice Fund provision which concluded that current employment- or discrimination-related advice services were insufficient and supported the creation of a separate equalities-focused service.

This request is limited to existing documents and does not require the creation of new analysis.

### **Our response**

Following a search of our paper and electronic records, I have established that some of the information you require is not held by the Welsh Government.

To manage this request, I have broken it up into several sections and am responding to each in turn.

**Request 1:**

*This request relates to the decision announced on 9 December 2025 by the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip to allocate £400,000 per annum in 2026–27 and 2027–28 to support an Equalities Legal Advice Service under the Single Advice Fund.*

*Please provide:*

- 1. Any business case, options paper or written analysis prepared for ministers which set out the rationale for creating a dedicated Equalities Legal Advice Service, rather than allocating the same funding to alternative uses within the Single Advice Fund.*

**We do not hold this information**

- 2. Any briefing, submission or advice provided to ministers which explicitly compared this proposal with at least one alternative option for the use of the funding.*

**We do not hold this information**

- 3. Any written assessment held by the Welsh Government which considered the potential for overlap or duplication between the proposed Equalities Legal Advice Service and existing Single Advice Fund provision dealing with employment or discrimination-related advice.*

**We do not hold this information**

*This request is limited to documents prepared prior to, or in direct connection with, the decision of 9 December 2025.*

**Request 2:**

*This request relates to the procurement of the Equalities Legal Advice Service funded via the Single Advice Fund from 2026–27 onwards.*

*Please provide:*

1. *The service specification or tender documentation issued by the Welsh Government which sets out the required scope, objectives and deliverables of the Equalities Legal Advice Service.*
2. *The evaluation framework or criteria used to assess bids or applications for this service, including any weighting applied to quality, outcomes or delivery capacity.*
3. *The final contract or grant agreement entered into with the successful provider, including any schedules that define:*
  - *expected activity levels or case volumes;*
  - *performance or outcome measures; and*
  - *reporting or monitoring requirements.*

*This request does not seek commercially sensitive pricing schedules or unsuccessful bid material.*

**We do not hold this information.**

Negotiations on the deliverables (outcomes, etc.) to be delivered from April 2026 through a variation to the Single Advice Fund Grant Scheme are still under discussion and there is no written information available at this time.

**Request 3:**

I have reviewed the written information provided to the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip in relation to your request and this is provided below.

*This request relates to the evidence used by the Welsh Government to inform the decision to establish an Equalities Legal Advice Service under the Single Advice Fund from 2026–27.*

*Please provide:*

1. *Any analysis, modelling or written assessment held by the Welsh Government which was used to assess unmet demand for advice or legal support relating to discriminatory or unfair employment practices in Wales.*

The Welsh Government introduced the Single Advice Fund (SAF) in January 2020 to help meet the increasing demand for advice services and ensure that funding is directed towards strategically planned services that provide access to all the advice a person requires to resolve their social welfare problems. The SAF delivery model includes Advice and Access Partners. Access Partners are a wide range of national and local organisations who reach out to their service users to ensure they can easily access the advice that they need.

The SAF is designed to encourage collaboration amongst funded providers with service delivery models reaching the most disadvantaged and marginalised members of local communities, particularly people who would not usually seek advice until they are in crisis.

The analysis of the SAF quarterly grant performance management information demonstrates that over 80% of people who have accessed a SAF service are from a priority group, including older people, disabled people, and people from the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities. Furthermore, over 60% of people were advised at an early stage (33% were advised when in crisis). Delivering the Equalities Legal Service through the SAF would therefore target those people most likely to need such a service.

*2. Any breakdowns or summaries used in that analysis which distinguish demand by protected characteristic, sector, or geographic area (where such breakdowns were prepared).*

The Welsh Government commissioned 'A needs analysis and predictive model of social welfare information and advice services in Wales', published in December 2023 and available here [Social welfare information and advice services in Wales | GOV.WALES](#). This noted (para 5.38) discrimination is most prevalent in the category of employment. Based on Citizens Advice data from July 2022 to January 2023 for the whole of the UK, discrimination was most often recorded as a factor in employment advice (over 5% of cases – the rate was much lower for other categories of advice). If these figures are reproduced among all individuals with advice needs in Wales then around 7000 individuals would have employment advice needs in 2022/2023 which relate to discrimination. This assumption cannot be tested with available data but gives an indication of the possible level of need in relation to employment advice.

Data from Citizens Advice, for the period July 2022 to January 2023, demonstrated across the UK that discrimination was recorded as a factor in employment advice in over 5% of cases; in the other categories of social welfare need i.e., welfare benefits, housing, debt, the rate was less than 1%. When these figures are reproduced among all

individuals with advice needs in Wales it is predicted that in 2023-24 around 7,000 individuals had a need for employment advice which related to discrimination.

#### Delivering discrimination advice through the Single Advice Fund

The SAF regional service delivery model has proven effective at reaching people from our most disadvantaged and marginalised communities (often people least likely to be in Trade Union) and offers an opportunity to provide a foundation upon which the PfG commitment to establish an equalities legal service to provide support on unfair or discriminatory employment practices can begin to be delivered.

*3. Any evaluation, review or internal assessment of existing Single Advice Fund provision which concluded that current employment- or discrimination-related advice services were insufficient and supported the creation of a separate equalities-focused service.*

*This request is limited to existing documents and does not require the creation of new analysis.*

**We do not hold this information.**

#### **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](mailto: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,