

20 April 2026

Dear

Complaint in respect of ATISN 26693

You requested an internal review of the Welsh Government's handling of a Freedom of Information request (ATISN 26693) dated 10 March 2026. Your request for an internal review was received on 23 March 2026.

In ATISN 26693 you requested:

"Please now conduct a targeted search limited to the period 1 January 2023 to present, and restricted to correspondence held by:

- Creative Wales;
- Marsh Marketing; and
- The Journalists' Charity.

Specifically, I request copies of correspondence, emails, or meeting notes relating to:

1. Decisions to set sponsorship at £10,000 in 2023, 2024, and 2025;
2. Invitations to ministers to speak or present awards;
3. Arrangements for Welsh Government tables of ten; and
4. Agreements on Welsh Government branding at the Wales Media Awards."

The response to the request was issued on 10 March 2026.

Your grounds for requesting an internal review are as follows:

"1. Incomplete Scope of Searches

The response confirms that only correspondence held by Creative Wales was searched, and explicitly excludes correspondence held by Marsh Marketing and The Journalists' Charity.

However, given that Welsh Government entered into a sponsorship arrangement with these external organisations, it is reasonable to expect that correspondence exchanged with them would be held within Welsh Government systems (e.g. emails, contracts, briefings, or liaison communications).

I therefore request clarification of:

- Whether searches included all Welsh Government email accounts and systems where such external correspondence would reasonably be held
- Whether any correspondence with these organisations exists but was excluded from the response

2. Absence of Value-for-Money and Decision-Making Records

The disclosed material shows repeated approval of £10,000 sponsorship without any accompanying:

- Business case
- Value-for-money assessment
- Options appraisal
- Formal decision-making documentation

Please confirm whether such records exist. If they do, they should be disclosed. If they do not, please confirm explicitly that no such recorded information is held.

3. Missing Information on Attendees (Publicly Funded Hospitality)

The response confirms that Welsh Government hosted tables of ten at the awards, with invitations issued to stakeholders.

However, no information has been provided regarding:

- The identities of attendees
- The organisations represented
- Any selection or approval criteria

Given that this involves the use of public funds, I request disclosure of attendee lists (subject to appropriate redactions where necessary under the Act).

4. Public Interest Considerations

This request concerns the use of public funds for recurring sponsorship and hospitality within the media sector. There is a strong public interest in transparency regarding:

- How such spending decisions are made
- Who benefits from publicly funded hospitality
- The nature of relationships between government and media stakeholders”

I was appointed to undertake that internal review as the Deputy Director for Arts and Sport. I have interviewed relevant colleagues to understand the process undertaken and I have conducted my own independent search in relation to your request.

Here are my findings and response to you.

Point 1

Your request was for information held by Creative Wales, Marsh Marketing and The Journalists’ Charity in relation to the specific four points in your request. I would consider that only Creative Wales, as a Division within the Welsh Government, is within scope in this instance and would not expect the Welsh Government to have information held by external organisations on its ishare system, the Welsh Government’s central digital file storage system. My understanding is that the original search undertaken included email folders of relevant staff in the decision-making process and a search of ishare. I have been unable to find any additional correspondence between Creative Wales and these organisations in relation to this specific request. Your original request did not ask for “any correspondence with these organisations”, therefore this would be out of scope.

Point 2

You requested “copies of correspondence, emails, or meeting notes relating to decisions to set sponsorship at £10,000 in 2023, 2024, and 2025”. This information has been

provided in the response dated 10 March with email copies of the decisions taken by senior Creative Wales staff. You did not request any additional information (such as a business case, value for money assessment etc). However, the emails do contain consideration of the benefits of the funding / sponsorship package. I have not been able to find additional documentation that you have subsequently requested (such as a business case) in relation to the decisions taken but it would be for Creative Wales to confirm the existence of such documentation.

Point 3

You requested “arrangements for Welsh Government tables of ten” which was provided in the response dated 10 March. You did not specifically request “the identities of attendees or the organisations represented”. You may wish to request this additional information from Creative Wales.

Point 4

I have noted your points regarding transparency in how spending decisions are made, who benefits from publicly funded hospitality, and the nature of relationships between government and media stakeholders. These are important aspects, and we recognise the strong public interest in ensuring clarity and openness in these areas.

Next steps

I have considered your complaint in accordance with the procedure outlined in the [Welsh Government's Practical Guide for Making Requests for Information](#) which is available by post on request or via the internet.

If you remain dissatisfied with this response you 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.

Yours sincerely

Dirprwy Gyfarwyddwr - Celfyddydau a Chwaraeon
Deputy Director - Arts and Sport