

8th May 2026

Dear

ATISN 26885 Review of BSL data collection and barriers

Information requested

Thank you for your request which I received on 14th April 2026. You asked for:

The winning bid for contract C378/2025/2026 'Review of BSL data collection and barriers' (submitted by Alma Economics) in its entirety, including: what Alma Economics indicated they could deliver, how they indicated they could deliver on their tender, their argument as to why they were qualified and capable to conduct the proposed work, and their experience working with deaf people and deaf communities in Wales.

Our response

I have decided that the information described above is exempt from disclosure under section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act and is therefore withheld. The reasons for applying these exemptions are set out in full in Annex A to this letter.

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

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:

Information withheld	Section number and exemption name
The winning bid for contract C378/2025/2026 'Review of BSL data collection and barriers' (submitted by Alma Economics)	Section 43 (2) - Commercial interests

This Annex sets out the reasons for the engagement of section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act and our subsequent consideration of the Public Interest Test.

Engagement of section 43(2) – Commercial interests of the Freedom of Information Act

The Welsh Government believes that the successful bid for contract C378/2025/2026 'Review of BSL data collection and barriers' should be exempt from disclosure. The submitted bid contains commercially sensitive information, including research methodologies, project management approaches, and the overall approach taken by the bidder to write and compete for commercial bids. The bid also contains confidential information relating to individual project staff, pay rates, and company revenue.

The requested information constitutes commercial information that is a business asset and not in the public domain. Releasing this information to the public would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of the bidder, and associated third parties, in current work and in future opportunities if accessed by competing bidders.

Allowing competitors to access this information in the public domain would put the bidder at a commercial disadvantage, compromising their ability to compete for future tendering opportunities on an equal footing and would be likely to lead to commercial loss.

For this reason, Section 43(2) is engaged.

Public Interest Test

In order to satisfy the public interest test in relation to the exemption, 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

The Welsh Government acknowledges the public interest in openness and transparency that the release of the requested information would engender, and the public interest in how the public purse is used to ensure value for money

It is also acknowledged that there is public interest in ensuring that the commissioned work can be delivered to a sufficient standard and in a way that meets the needs of those likely to be affected by its outcome, particularly from members of the deaf BSL community in Wales.

Public interest arguments in favour of withholding

It is not in the public interest that companies tendering for contracts should suffer commercial loss as a result. Making the requested information available in the public domain would allow competitors access to confidential business information, preventing the bidder and associated third parties from undertaking competitive bids on an equal footing in the future.

Release of the requested information would therefore be likely to cause commercial loss, both prejudicing the commercial interests of the bidder and undermining confidence and trust in the tender process.

Balance of public interest test

Release of the requested information would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of the bidder and associated third parties, with confidential business information regarding specific methodologies, project management approaches, finances, and approaches to bidding for tender opportunities being made accessible by competitors.

As the equivalent information from competing parties is not available in the public domain, the bidder would be placed at a commercial disadvantage and limited in their ability to compete on an equal footing for tender opportunities in the future.

An equally strong countervailing public interest in disclosure would be required to make it in the public interest that bidders be put at risk of commercial loss. Although some level of public interest has been identified in disclosure, there is no sufficiently strong countervailing interest to allow bidders to suffer such loss. As such, the balance of public interest lies with withholding this information.