

Dear

### **ATISN 26950 - Safeguarding Governance and Accountability Review**

Thank you for your request to Welsh Government for information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) received on 07 May 2026 relating to the Safeguarding Governance and Accountability Review.

*The formal terms of reference for the safeguarding governance and accountability review, including documents defining its scope, objectives, and intended outcomes.*

1. *Any documentation identifying the issues, risks, or problem statements the review is intended to address, including (but not limited to):*
  - a. *barriers to safeguarding scrutiny*
  - b. *interaction between complaints handling policies and safeguarding duties*
  - c. *the impact of correspondence restrictions on safeguarding processes*
2. *Any recorded information (including submissions, evidence, or internal communications) considered as part of the review relating to:*
  - a. *the use of “unacceptable behaviour” or similar policies by local authorities*
  - b. *the potential for such policies to affect the reporting, consideration, or assessment of safeguarding concerns*
3. *Any documents identifying governance, oversight, or assurance responsibilities within the scope of the review, including the roles of:*
  - *National Independent Safeguarding Board (NISB) Regional Safeguarding Boards (RSBs) Inspectorates (CIW, HIW, Estyn) Any recorded timelines, next stages, or anticipated publication dates for the review.*

*If any information is exempt from disclosure, please specify the exemption relied upon and provide any information that can be disclosed in redacted form.*

### **Our Response**

1) The Terms of Reference for the Review was shared widely with stakeholders and co-produced. We are unable to publish this or any report of Phase 1 until the new Government has had the opportunity to review the draft report and recommendations.

The Review was not undertaken in relation to complaint processes. The Written Statement from former Minister Dawn Bowden dated 4 October, 2025 sets out the rationale for undertaking the Review:

“Safeguarding people from abuse, neglect, and other forms of harm is a continually evolving area of practice. To ensure our systems remain effective, responsive, and focused on achieving the best outcomes for the people of Wales, it is essential that they are subject to regular review and remain fit for purpose.

“In line with this commitment, we are undertaking a review of the current accountability and governance arrangements for safeguarding in Wales.”

The Written Statement is accessible via the Welsh Government website. [Written Statement: Review of Governance and Accountability mechanisms for safeguarding children and adults in Wales \(3 October 2025\) | GOV.WALES](#)

The Written Statement also sets out that this phase of the Review would focus on:

- The roles and responsibilities of the National Independent Safeguarding Board and Regional Safeguarding Boards;
- The interface between these bodies and the Inspectorates;
- The overall effectiveness of these arrangements in protecting people from harm;
- Recommendations to further strengthen safeguarding governance in Wales

2) The use of unacceptable behaviour policies by local authorities has not been considered as part of this Review.

3) As set out in the Written Statement in October 2025 and referred to above, the Review focused on:

- The roles and responsibilities of the National Independent Safeguarding Board and Regional Safeguarding Boards;
- The interface between these bodies and the Inspectorates;
- The overall effectiveness of these arrangements in protecting people from harm;
- Recommendations to further strengthen safeguarding governance in Wales

Incoming Ministers will be provided with a draft of the final report of the Review in June. Ministers will determine next steps.

## **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,