

2 June 2026

Dear

ATISN 27006 – Senedd questions

Thank you for your request which I received on 21 May. You asked for the information as listed at Annex 1.

Our response

1. The expected timeframe, target, convention, service standard, guidance, or internal working assumption used by the Welsh Government during the Sixth Senedd for answering Written Questions tabled by Members of the Senedd.

The [Senedd's Standing Orders](#) states that 'A [written] question must be tabled at least five working days before it is to be answered.' (SO 14.3).

Working days are defined in Standing Orders as:

“any day unless it is: (i) a Saturday or a Sunday; (ii) (iii) Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Maundy Thursday or Good Friday; a day which is a bank holiday in Wales under the Banking and Financial Dealings Act 1971; or (iv) a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.”

Therefore, there is no time frame in which a Written Question (WQ) must be answered.

Internally, the Welsh Government currently aims to provide an answer to a WQ within 8-working days (but is not bound to do so). An 'answer' is either a full answer to a question or a 'holding response' in which the Welsh Government informs a Senedd Member that more time is needed to answer their question and that a Minister will provide a full answer in correspondence as soon as possible.

Although the Welsh Government aims for a substantive letter to follow within 10 further working days, the exact timeframe will depend on the nature and detail of the question. It should be noted that the issuing of substantive letters is not administered as part of the WQ process, but by individual policy teams. Once issued, the letter is published on the Senedd's Record of Proceedings alongside the holding reply.

2. For all Written Questions tabled to the Welsh Government during the Sixth Senedd, please provide:

a) the total number of Written Questions tabled to the Welsh Government

According to the [Senedd Commission website](#) 15,520 questions were tabled to the Welsh Government during the Sixth Senedd.

b) the number answered within the expected timeframe in response to point 1

- c) the number answered outside that expected timeframe**
- d) the number, if any, for which no answer was published**
- e) the percentage answered within the expected timeframe**

I have reached the conclusion that it will cost more than the appropriate limit established in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 to consider parts 2. b), c), d) and e) of your request. The appropriate limit specified for central government is £600. When calculating whether or not your request exceeds appropriate limit, I am allowed to consider the time it is likely to take to establish if we hold the information, locate the information, retrieve the information and extract it. If these tasks are estimated to take more than 24 hours of working time, the limit will have been exceeded.

It is not possible to determine an exact figure for the number of questions answered (or not) within the 8-working day target period without exceeding the 'appropriate cost' limit.

A central database of WQs is not held by Welsh Government. Questions are received in daily batches up to 5-days per week during term time and half term recesses, and weekly during the Easter, Christmas and Summer recesses. Each set of questions has its own record sheet, detailing at what stage each question is at in the drafting, clearing and answering process.

To determine whether a question was answered within the 8-working days or not, would involve examining each individual sheet across the Sixth Senedd (approximately 1040 sheets). I estimate that to open, examine and extract data from each sheet, would take an official approximately 10-minutes. Therefore, to retrieve the information requested would take approximately 173 hours. All calculations are provided at annex b.

Further, once a full or holding reply has issued, responsibility for issuing a substantive follow-up letter if one is required, rests with individual policy teams.

As the appropriate limit has been reached in addressing part 2 of your request, I have not addressed part 3.

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 e-mail: 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

Website: www.ico.org.uk

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 1

I am seeking information about the timeliness of answers to Written Questions tabled to the Welsh Government during the Sixth Senedd.

Please provide:

1. The expected timeframe, target, convention, service standard, guidance or internal working assumption used by the Welsh Government during the Sixth Senedd for answering Written Questions tabled by Members of the Senedd.

For example, if Written Questions were expected to be answered by the “for answer on” date shown in the Senedd Record / Order Paper, within a stated number of working days, or by reference to any other internal or external standard, please state that.

If more than one standard applied during the Sixth Senedd, please provide each standard and the dates during which it applied.

2. For all Written Questions tabled to the Welsh Government during the Sixth Senedd, please provide:
 - a. the total number of Written Questions tabled to the Welsh Government;
 - b. the number answered within the expected timeframe identified in response to point 1;
 - c. the number answered outside that expected timeframe;
 - d. the number, if any, for which no answer was published;
 - e. the percentage answered within the expected timeframe.
3. Please also provide the same information broken down by calendar month, using the relevant due date, “for answer on” date, or closest equivalent recorded date as the month for allocation.

For each month, please provide:

- a. the number of Written Questions due for answer;
- b. the number answered within the expected timeframe;
- c. the number answered outside the expected timeframe;
- d. the number, if any, for which no answer was published;
- e. the percentage answered within the expected timeframe.

Annex B - Calculations

Number of record sheets per Senedd

5 sheets per week during sitting weeks and half term recesses:

$$5 \times 39 = 195 \text{ sheets}$$

1 sheet per week during the Easter, Summer and Christmas recesses:

$$1 \times 13 = 13 \text{ sheets}$$

Total number of sheets in the Sixth Senedd:

$$(195 + 13) \times 5 = 1040 \text{ sheets}$$

Amount of time to examine 1040 sheets

*The amount of time to examine each sheet will vary substantially. The number of questions on each sheet will vary markedly from 1 to in excess of 150. Therefore, I have assumed a conservative average of 10-minutes to open each sheet, to assess each question and extract the information.

$$1040 \text{ sheets} \times 10 \text{ minutes} = 10400/60 = 173.3 \text{ hours}$$