

10 September 2026

Dear

ATISN 27331

Information requested

Thank you for your request which I received on 12 August. You asked for the following information:

1. Full information on the bidders for the contract C19820252026.
2. The scoring system used to assess the bids.
3. Justifications – we interpret this as the panel comments used to determine the outcome of the procurement and full clarification of how the decision was reached.
4. By who and on what basis – we interpret this as the individuals involved in determining the outcome of the procurement.

Our response

A copy of the information I have decided to release is enclosed.

1. Full information on the bidders for the contract C19820252026. 3 bids were received from Anglesey Sea Zoo, Swansea University and Marine Environmental Monitoring.

2. The scoring system used to assess the bids.

Capability	Evidence Provided	Score	Remark
Bidder is likely to be able to meet the needs of the Authority.	Evidence is consistent, comprehensive, compelling, directly relevant to the project in all respects, highly credible and substantiated.	100	Absolute Confidence
	Evidence is sufficient, convincing and credible.	80	Confidence
Small risk that bidder will not be able to meet the needs of the Authority.	Evidence has minor gaps, or to a small extent is unconvincing, lacks credibility or irrelevant to the project.	60	Minor Concerns
Moderate risk that the bidder will not be able to meet the needs of the Authority	Evidence has moderate gaps, is unconvincing.	40	Moderate Concerns
Significant risk that the bidder will not be able to meet the needs of the Authority.	Evidence has major gaps, is unconvincing in many respects, lacks credibility, or largely irrelevant to the project.	20	Major Concerns
Bidder will not be able to meet the needs of the Authority.	No evidence or misleading evidence.	0	Not acceptable

3. The panel comments used to determine the outcome of the procurement. The details below are for the successful applicant (Marine Environmental Monitoring) and further feedback for Anglesey Sea Zoo only.

Assessment Summary								
Ref	Criteria / Question	Max score	Moderated Score	Weighted Score	Explanation of Score	Moderated Score of successful supplier	Weighted score of successful supplier	Explanation of Score for the successful supplier
1.3 Q.1	Delivery: Demonstrate how you propose to deliver the requirements shown in section 3 of the specification in the timeframe available. Include evidence such as a project delivery plan and milestones to support your response.	0.30 (30%)	60 Minor Concerns	0.18 (18%)	The supplier provides a rough outline of a project delivery plan and time frame and includes information on making a database, website and outreach bilingual. The supplier shows limited knowledge on the purpose and scope of the turtle database. They also show limited connections within Wales to deliver a pan-Wales project.	80 Confidence	0.24 (24%)	Supplier provides good evidence and experience in turtle strandings across Wales and has an extensive and established network of relevant contacts to support strandings, satisfying the requirements outlined in Section3. Clearer details on the project plan for the funded period would have provided absolute confidence.
1.3 Q.2	Logistics: Explain how you will modernise a website and advertise the project, including consideration of cyber security, data protection and Welsh	0.20 (20%)	60 Minor Concerns	0.12 (12%)	The supplier clearly demonstrates good engagement with the public and communities. The supplier currently has a commercial website for the zoo but there is limited evidence of how they will improve	80 Confidence	0.16 (16%)	The supplier explains that they are the current supplier of the UK turtle database and the strandings website for Wales. This is maintained on a recently redesigned and dedicated turtle stranding website which includes plans for

	language standards.				and maintain the site and some concerns over the hosting and affiliation of the turtle base and website with a commercial zoo website.			translation. The webpage contains secure restricted access areas e.g. for vet access. Further detail on future plans for the website and any additional cyber security measures would have provided absolute confidence.
1.3 Q.3	Expertise: Provide details of relevant expertise and experience in working with turtle strandings, include information on existing connections and/or proposed networking.	0.30 (30%)	80 Confidence	0.24 (24%)	The supplier provides limited evidence on localised work to Wales and the UK. The supplier provides strong evidence of experience in rehabilitation, live recovery and repatriation but no clear evidence that repatriation was a result of the supplier or external organisations. The supplier shows that they have limitations with the ability to house multiple recovered turtles.	80 Confidence	0.24 (24%)	The supplier has extensive experience in turtle strandings and repatriation across Wales and the UK and they demonstrate that they work closely with other organisations such as the BDMLR. More comprehensive information on compliance with animal welfare legislation would have provided absolute confidence.
3.4	Commercial Questionnaire		0.20 (20%)		PASS		0.20 (20%)	PASS
Total Score			0.74 (74%)			Total Score	0.84 (84%)	

1. The individuals involved in determining the outcome of the procurement.

- The panel consisted of 2 x Welsh Government Officials and 1 x Independent External Official.

I have decided that some of the information is exempt from disclosure under section 40 of the Freedom of Information Act and is therefore withheld. The reasons for applying these exemptions are set out in full at Annex 1 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 1

Application of exemptions/exceptions

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:

The details of the individuals involved in determining the outcome of the procurement.

We consider that the interests, rights and freedoms of the individuals concerned outweigh any legitimate interest in disclosure. The individuals are officials who participated in the procurement process as part of their professional duties, are not senior decision-makers with public-facing accountability, and disclosure of their names would add little to public understanding of the decision. We therefore conclude that disclosure would be unfair and would breach the first data protection principle.

As release of the information would not be legitimate under Article 6(1)(f), and as no other condition of Article 6 is deemed to apply, release of the information would not be lawful within the meaning of the first data protection principle. It has therefore been withheld under section 40 of the Freedom of Information Act. Section 40 is an absolute exemption and not subject to the public interest test.

This Annex sets out the reasons for the engagement of section 40 of the Freedom of Information Act and our subsequent consideration of the Public Interest Test.

Engagement of section 40 (personal data) of the Freedom of Information Act

The Welsh Government believes that personal information from 3rd parties should be exempt from disclosure. Disclosure of the names of individuals involved would create a risk of unwarranted scrutiny, direct contact, complaints or pressure being directed towards us personally in connection with a procurement decision for which we do not have public-facing accountability. As officials providing professional advice as part of an evaluation process, we would not reasonably expect our identities to be disclosed into the public domain for the purpose of challenging a procurement outcome. Furthermore, the marine sector in Wales is relatively small and closely interconnected, and disclosure could adversely affect professional relationships with stakeholders, potentially impacting our ability to engage openly and effectively in future work. Disclosure would therefore be likely to cause an unjustified intrusion into our privacy and professional life, outweighing any limited transparency benefit arising from release.

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

We recognise there is a legitimate interest in understanding how public procurement decisions are reached, particularly where an unsuccessful tenderer wishes to understand the evaluation process and consider whether grounds exist to appeal a procurement outcome.

Therefore, we accept that a legitimate interest exists in obtaining information about the procurement process and how the evaluation decision was reached.

Public interest arguments in favour of withholding

We do not consider disclosure of the individual names of procurement panel members to be necessary to meet these legitimate interests.

The legitimate interest in understanding and scrutinising the procurement decision can be met through the provision of information regarding the procurement process itself, including the evaluation methodology, scoring criteria and rationale for both the unsuccessful and successful candidates. Disclosure of the identities of the individual panel members would add little, if any, further transparency regarding how the decision was made.

Furthermore, any challenge to the procurement outcome should be directed at the contracting authority and its decision-making processes rather than at individuals acting in the course of their official duties.

We consider the disclosure of personal names to be a very intrusive method to meet the legitimate interests which can instead be met through less intrusive measures.

Balance of public interest test

we consider the interests, rights and freedoms of the individuals concerned outweigh the legitimate interests in disclosure.

The panel members participated in the procurement process as part of their professional duties and would not reasonably expect their names to be disclosed into the public domain under the Freedom of Information Act for the purpose of challenging a procurement outcome.

There is a reasonable expectation that disclosure of the names could result in unwanted contact, complaints, scrutiny or pressure being directed towards officials from Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales rather than the contracting authority. This is particularly relevant where the requester has indicated dissatisfaction with the procurement outcome and intends to pursue an appeal or challenge (in separate correspondence).

To confirm, the individuals concerned are not members of the Senior Civil Service, senior decision-makers with public-facing accountability for procurement decisions but are instead officials providing professional input as part of a structured evaluation

process. Our identities do not materially enhance public understanding of the procurement decision.

In addition, the marine sector in Wales is relatively small, with professional relationships between stakeholders often closely interconnected. Disclosure of individual names may adversely affect working relationships with external stakeholders and could expose officials to unnecessary personal scrutiny, potentially impacting their ability to undertake their roles effectively.

Taking all the circumstances into account, we conclude that disclosure would be unfair and would breach the first data protection principle.