



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

19 December 2016

Dear

Complaint in respect of ATISN 10862

I wrote to you on 23 November to explain that your complaint had been referred to me for internal review. I have now completed the review and I am writing to confirm the outcome.

In your email of 21 November, you stated your wish to appeal against the reply to your request for copies of emails sent by Ceri Breeze i.e. as the "originator" or "sender" to Huw Lewis (to him personally or to him as Minister for Housing, Regeneration and Heritage) between 1 May 2011 and 31 July 2011 and in the whole month of January 2012. You considered there was a clear refusal to supply the email correspondence you were originally told was available. You referred to the response to your previous request (ATISN 10712) which had identified a total of 440 records. You also referred to the reply to your latest request which stated all those documents had been reviewed and five emails had been identified which meets your request. You asked for an explanation of the reasoning behind what you considered to be a new interpretation.

I have reviewed documentation relating to your latest request (ATISN 10862), which is the subject of this complaint, and your previous requests on the same subject. I can confirm your request has not been interpreted in any new or different way but I can see how you have come to the conclusions above. First, let me apologise if our correspondence has caused any confusion, which may have arisen.

It might help if I set out some of the facts from our correspondence. You asked for emails sent by Ceri Breeze i.e. as the "originator" or "sender" to Huw Lewis, to him personally or to him as Minister for Housing, Regeneration and Heritage. In our letter of 3 August, which responded to your request ATISN 10560, we aimed to explain how, in assessing the time it would take to respond to your request, searches for documents were undertaken.

We have an electronic records management system. To identify all documents which could be relevant to your request, searches were undertaken using key words from the categories which were described to you. In order to identify the emails you requested, the search category "(i)" sought to identify every email sent by Ceri Breeze during the relevant periods. This involved identifying who saved the email from our email system to our electronics records management system (the "originator" of the record). The result of the search shows that during the period stated in your request - between 1 May 2011 to

31 July 2011 inclusive, and the whole of January 2012 - Ceri Breeze was the originator of 440 records.

This was the number of emails he sent. The 440 records included internal and external email saved to the system during the period, on any subject and to any person. This strikes me as the source of possible confusion and I am sorry if this was not as clear as it should have been in our correspondence. The officials responsible were clear in their own minds that the figure of 440 referred to the total records identified in that specific search category whereas it is apparent from your complaint that you considered that figure to be referring more narrowly to the total number of emails between Ceri Breeze and Huw Lewis (to him personally or to him as Minister for Housing, Regeneration and Heritage).

We have provided copies of the five emails which fall within the scope of your request. Your complaint refers to the fact none of these five emails are from Ceri Breeze to Huw Lewis. The reason for this is that none of the 440 emails were sent by Ceri Breeze to Huw Lewis personally. The reason behind us sending you emails sent by Ceri Breeze to other people, including Personal Secretaries ("PS Minister for Housing, Regeneration and Heritage") and Diary Secretaries ("DS Minister for Housing, Regeneration and Heritage") is that those are the staff that run the Minister's outer office and who provide us with the typical route for email transmissions to the Minister.

Having reviewed the information, I am unable to uphold your complaint but trust that my explanation of how our records were searched and the five documents identified is helpful to clarify any misunderstanding.

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



John Howells
Director of Housing and Regeneration