



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref ATISN 14349

16 October 2020

Dear

Thank you for your request which I received on 24 September about Funding to remove unsafe cladding.

There are references within the request to the Senedd, by which we assume you mean the Welsh Senedd/Parliament which is a separate entity to the Welsh Government. We have answered those questions as if directed to the Welsh Government.

The contact details for the Welsh Parliament are; Welsh Parliament, Cardiff Bay, Cardiff, CF99 1SN. Their email address is: contact@senedd.wales.

The information you requested is given below each question asked by you.

Question posed:

The extent of funding provided to the Welsh Government by the UK Government in support of implementing shared legislation. Namely - The Fire Safety Bill 2019-2021

Details of all funds received by the Welsh Government from the UK Government earmarked to remove and replace unsafe cladding from high-rise residential buildings in the private and social housing sectors; and when was that funding received?

Welsh Government response:

The Welsh Government does not hold information of this description.

The Barnett formula is a mechanism used by the UK Treasury to automatically adjust the amounts of public expenditure allocated to the devolved administrations to reflect changes in spending levels allocated to public services. The formula applies only to expenditure on issues for which the devolved administrations are responsible. Any increase or reduction in expenditure in England will automatically lead to a proportionate increase or reduction in resources for the devolved administrations. Expenditure is allocated *en bloc*, not by service, allowing each devolved administration to allocate these funds as it believes appropriate.

As a result of the UK Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government's announcement in relation to a £1bn "Building Safety Fund for the remediation of

non-ACM cladding systems”, the Welsh Government received consequential funding equivalent to £58m capital and £1.2m revenue.

The Minister for Finance and Trefnydd wrote to the Senedd Finance Committee on 24 April and 19 August 2020 outlining the consequential funding received since the UK Government budget on 11 March. Copies of these letters can be found on the links below:

<https://business.senedd.wales/documents/s101097/FIN5-11-20%20P1%20-%20Response%20from%20the%20Minister%20for%20Finance%20and%20Trefnydd%20-%20Financial%20response%20to%20COVID-.pdf>

<https://business.senedd.wales/documents/s104451/FIN5-15-20%20PTN%206%20-%20Letter%20from%20the%20Minister%20from%20Finance%20and%20Trefnydd%20Update%20on%20the%20consequential.pdf>

Question posed:

Details of all funds received from the UK Government earmarked for remediation of ACM cladding; and when that funding was received?

Welsh Government response:

The Welsh Government does not hold information of this description.

No such funding was received by the Welsh Government from the UK Government.

Question posed:

Details of all funds received by the Welsh Government from the UK Government earmarked for Fire and Rescue Services to increase inspection and enforcement capability and build a strategic response to the Grenfell Public Inquiry’s findings.

Welsh Government response:

The Welsh Government does not hold information of this description.

No such funding was received by the Welsh Government from the UK Government.

Question posed:

Details of all funds received by the Welsh Government from the UK Government ‘specifically’ earmarked to finance coronavirus pandemic – above and in addition to the normal annual precept funding (Barnett formula funding) made to Wales.

Welsh Government response:

The Welsh Government does not hold information of this description.

No such funding was received by the Welsh Government from the UK Government.

Question posed:

The democratic decision making process, that approved the further spend of £58m for the allocation and spending of UK Government Capital Grant Funding earmarked for Building Safety projects on the Welsh Governments revenue responses to Covid.

Who made the decision to spend £58m on Covid rather than on a strategic response to Grenfell Public Inquiry's findings?

Welsh Government response:

The information you have requested is exempt under section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act (information accessible by other means).

The explanatory note to First Supplementary Budget 2020-21, laid before the Senedd by the Minister for Finance and Trefnydd on 27 May 2020 (<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-07/1st-supplementary-budget-2020-2021-note-v2.pdf>) sets out the additional funding received by the Welsh Government since the 2020-21 final Budget.

The explanatory note also sets out the additional allocations made to Welsh Government departments at that point.

Question posed:

Please provide copies of the decision making audit trail leading to the democratic approval of that decision (2.1. above) together with published declarations of interest for those parties involved in the decision.

Welsh Government response:

The information you have requested is exempt under section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act (information accessible by other means).

The First Supplementary Budget 2020-21, which regularises the allocations referred to above, was approved by the Senedd on 24th June 2020. A link to a recording of the debate can be found here: <https://record.senedd.wales/Plenary/6375#A58786>

The Ministerial Register of Interests can be found here: <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-10/ministerial-interests-october-2019.pdf>

Question posed:

Please provide copies of relevant correspondence exchanged by senior management and or the administration between Whitehall and the Senedd relating to the application for capital grant funding for Building Safety projects and stated intended use of that finance.

Welsh Government response:

The Welsh Government does not hold information of this description.

There was no application made to UK Government for capital grant funding for Building Safety projects.

Question posed:

The Welsh Government received £2.2bn to tackle the covid pandemic and a further £23m is earmarked in additional funding. It is noted that Wales deviated from the National Covid approach and indeed also deviated from UK plans to protect residents from another Grenfell by spending a further £58m OF UK TAXPAYERS MONEY on the covid lockdown. Can you please confirm the per-capita spend in Wales on the Covid response for comparison against England, Scotland and Ireland.

Welsh Government response:

With regard to per capita spend: The Welsh Government does not hold information of this description.

The information you have requested is exempt under section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act (Information accessible by other means).

The Welsh Government has received an additional £4 billion in the current financial year as a result of UK Government spending on COVID-19 measures. That additional funding has come through the application of the Barnett formula, which provides the same increases per head of the population in Wales as in England for those programmes which are devolved. In accordance with its Fiscal Framework Agreement, the Welsh Government receives a further 5% on top of its population share to reflect its greater needs.

A total of £2.46 billion was allocated to COVID-related programmes in the Welsh Government's first supplementary budget in May, financed partly by new funding but also via the re-allocation of existing funds. A second supplementary budget is planned for 20 October, setting out the detail of further COVID-related allocations in the current financial year. The first supplementary budget is available <https://gov.wales/1st-supplementary-budget-2020-2021>

The latest population estimate for Wales is 3,153,000, relating to mid-2019. Wales population estimates are available at:

<https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Population-and-Migration/Population/Estimates>

Question posed:

Can I have a written statement from the CX and or Finance Director to state the Senedd have lawfully spent Capital Grant Funding on revenue expenditure (Covid) without contravening the *Code of Practice for Local Authorities 2019-20* (SeRCOP) produced by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).

Welsh Government response:

The Welsh Government does not hold information of this description.

Question posed:

It's difficult to comprehend in the 21st century that any Local Authority would not thoroughly scrutinise Outline Planning Application, Detailed Planning Applications, Reserve matters and adherence to Building regulations which have, since the mid-1980's, set a legal requirement that external walls should adequately resist the spread of fire. Statutory Guidance (Approved Document B) has set out a number of routes and standards by which that requirement may be met. A separate FOI is being submitted to Cardiff Council but for completeness I would like the following information:

Copies of any correspondence between senior officers of the Senedd and or the administration with Cardiff Council relating to the granting of Taylor Woodrow Construction (Taylor Wimpey) planning permission, reserve matters and building control matters for phase I and phase II Victoria Wharf Grangetown apartment blocks with associated car parking and landscaping with specific regard to fire safety issues with those apartment blocks. For the benefit of doubt these developments include the apartment block Cambria.

Welsh Government response:

The Welsh Government does not hold information of this description.

No such correspondence was exchanged between the Welsh Government and Cardiff Council in relation to planning permission, etc. for the Victoria Wharf development (including the Cambria block).

Question posed:

Copies of any correspondence between senior officers of the Senedd and or the administration with Taylor Wimpey regarding fire safety issues with the apartment blocks detailed above.

Welsh Government response:

The Welsh Government does not hold information of this description.

No correspondence has been sent to or received from Taylor Wimpey in respect of fire safety issues at these apartment blocks.

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