



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref ATISN 14476

12 November 2020

Dear

### **Request for Information – ATISN 14476**

Thank you for your request for information dated 24 October. You asked for any and all information regarding the decision by the Welsh government to only allow supermarkets to sell certain products and goods. Specifically:

1. Who was involved in the decision making process. i.e. who was on the committees or advisory boards etc. I'd like individual names please along with positions within government.
2. How was it decided what was or isn't essential information.
3. What outside bodies (non governmental) lobbied the Welsh Government
4. The science behind the decision. i.e. why has de-icer been banned and what is the science behind banning de-icer and the reduction of the R value in Wales, or indeed the rest of the UK?
5. The science behind banning these items in Wales but they are not banned in Tier 3 regions of the England. Does England have a different science to Wales perhaps? If so I'd like that information as well.
6. If external consultants were used during the decision making process who were they, names and what was paid to them?
7. What rationale was used to justify allowing smaller business to sell the items supermarkets were banned from selling?
8. What information was sent to the supermarkets for them to agree to not selling those items? I'd like the specific documents please.

With coronavirus rising and spreading rapidly in every part of Wales, acting on the clear advice of its medical and scientific advisers, the Welsh Government introduced a time-limited firebreak to help bring coronavirus under control, prevent the NHS from becoming overwhelmed and ultimately to save lives. The firebreak period started on October 23 and ended on November 9. It contained a range of measures to curb the spread of coronavirus and break the chains of transmission by reducing contact between people, including the closure of non-essential retail.



**BUDDSODDWYR** | **INVESTORS**  
**MEWN POBL** | **IN PEOPLE**

Llywodraeth Cymru /  
Welsh Government  
Parc Cathays / Cathays Park  
CF10 3NQ

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

We attach a link to the relevant regulations and the Coronavirus firebreak Frequently Asked Questions page:

<https://gov.wales/health-protection-coronavirus-restrictions-no-3-wales-regulations-2020>

<https://gov.wales/coronavirus-circuit-break-frequently-asked-questions>

In addition, we attach guidance concerning the closure of businesses and premises, which includes list of items that supermarkets and other food and drink retailers are allowed to sell and the general rules.

<https://gov.wales/coronavirus-covid-19-closure-businesses-and-premises-html>

The Cabinet is the decision-making body of the Welsh Government. Cabinet minutes published six weeks after the meeting <https://gov.wales/cabinet-meetings#Cabinetmeetings:2020>

The scientific advice used to inform decisions made by Welsh Ministers comes from the Welsh Government's Technical Advisory Cell, the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies and the Chief Medical Officer:

- Information relating to the Technical Advisory Cell (TAC) can be found at: <https://gov.wales/technical-advisory-cell>
- A report by the Technical Advisory Cell about the firebreak is available at: <https://gov.wales/technical-advisory-group-fire-breaks>
- For more information regarding scientific advice, the UK Government SAGE website is at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/scientific-advisory-group-for-emergencies-sage-coronavirus-covid-19-response>

In relation to the operation of retailers during the firebreak, the operation of the firebreak was discussed at length with retailer representative bodies (Wales Retail Consortium (WRC), Confederation of Business and Industry , Federation of Small Businesses, Association of Convenience Stores (ASC), retailers (including Tesco, Morrisons, Asda, Sainsbury's, Lidl, Aldi, Marks and Spencer, The Co-operative Group (Co-op), Boots, Kingfisher (B&Q), Waitrose/John Lewis Partnership, WHSmith), and the main union for retail workers USDAW.

The Welsh Government and retailer representative bodies (CBI Wales, Welsh Retail Consortium, Association of Convenience Stores and USDAW) have published a joint statement available at:

<https://gov.wales/joint-statement-cbi-wales-welsh-retail-consortium-association-convenience-stores-and-usdaw>

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