



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Our ref ATISN 15022

20 April 2021

Dear

Request for Information – ATISN 15022

Information Requested

I wrote to you on 24 March regarding your request for information. Regarding the Business Wales Barriers Grant, you stated that it appears as if public funds are being offered to all but discrimination is being applied certain groups being more affected by the pandemic, namely Women, Disabled People, People from BAME Backgrounds and Young People not in education. You asked for -

1. All information regarding this decision, in particular the research that was conducted to justify discrimination based on sex, disability, race and age.
2. Information on who/whom made the decision and have access to their notes and communication pertaining to it.
3. Data regarding who has been provided with the grants (with personal protected data redacted) to see how much of a priority the above groups were given.

Our response

I can confirm we hold information relating to your request.

1. All information regarding this decision, in particular the research that was conducted to justify discrimination based on sex, disability, race and age.

The provision of the Barriers Grant is part of a wider Welsh Government initiative to provide support for unemployed individuals as part of the economic recovery from the Covid pandemic.

The overall approach aims to reduce the negative impact of changes across the employment market and ideally go some way to renew the skills of people in Wales,



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 .

improve prospects for businesses, public services and community groups. Therefore supporting those most likely to be negatively impacted in the Welsh labour market.

The links below and the enclosed documents are sources of data used to inform the decision making process to identify which groups have been economically disadvantaged the most as a result of the Covid pandemic and to ensure that those groups, as well as others, could access and benefit from this fund and the broader support available.

<https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/Policy-Brief-A-Disability-Inclusive-Response-to-COVID-19.pdf>

<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/coronavirus-which-workers-are-economically-impacted/>

https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/equality_and_human_rights_commission_how_coronavirus_has_affected_equality_and_human_rights_2020.pdf

2. Information on who/whom made the decision and have access to their notes and communication pertaining to it.

The advice offered to the Ministers formed part of a wider employability and skills proposal that aimed to outline the case to reduce the negative impact of the Covid pandemic. This included support to individuals to find employment, enhance their skills or enter self-employment. The response proposed was to provide opportunities to create resilient individuals who have the skills, enthusiasm, drive, and creativity to fulfil their potential and achieve better outcomes irrespective of ability, background, gender, or ethnicity.

The advice also recommended that support should be prioritised to ensure that support was also offered to those individuals economically impacted the most by the Pandemic, these being young people, disabled people, individuals from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities and women.

In the case of supporting individuals to consider self-employment as an option it was recommended that support should include.

- Provide more bespoke support to individuals who may not have considered self-employment before, in particular women, young people, BAME and disabled people. This will include exploring self-employment in detail, generating and testing new business ideas, and developing business plans.
- Introduce a fund offering up to £2,000 to help overcome barriers to starting up, in particular, where they need to be able to operate within social distancing regulations, operating more digitally, or acquire start up space perhaps in a business hub or Local Authority unit.
- Provide additional targeted support in localities most affected by the crisis, working with other support services, such as Communities for Work and the Department for Work and Pensions, to engage with individuals from protected groups who need the most support to benefit from the range of start-up support available.

3. Data regarding who has been provided with the grants (with personal protected data redacted) to see how much of a priority the above groups were given.

The number of individuals applying for support are:

Total number of applications	816	
Of which from men	319	39%
Of which from women	485	59%
Prefer not to say		2%
Of which from young people	93	11%
Of which from BAME individuals	129	15.0%
Of which from disabled individuals.	89	10.9%

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.

The request you sent me contains personal information about you - for example, your name and address. The Welsh Government will be the data processor for this information and, in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation, it will be processed in order to fulfil our public task and meet our legal obligations under the Act to provide you with a response. We will only use this personal information to deal with your request and any matters which arise as a result of it. We will keep your personal information and all other information relating to your request for three years from the date on which your request is finally closed. Your personal information will then be disposed of securely.

Under data protection legislation, you have the right:

- to be informed of the personal data we hold about you and to access it
- require us to rectify inaccuracies in that data
- to (in certain circumstances) object to or restrict processing
- for (in certain circumstances) your data to be 'erased'
- to (in certain circumstances) data portability

- to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) who is our independent regulator for data protection

For further information about the information which the Welsh Government holds and its use, or if you wish to exercise your rights under the GDPR, please contact: Data Protection Officer, Welsh Government, Cathays Park, CARDIFF, CF10 3NQ or e-mail DataProtectionOfficer@gov.wales.

Any information released under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or Environmental Information Regulations 2004 will be listed in the Welsh Government's Disclosure Log (at <https://gov.wales/about/open-government/freedom-of-information/responses/?lang=en>).

Yours sincerely