



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

ATISN 15254

11 August 2021

Dear

### **Complaint in respect of ATISN 15254 – Singing**

Thank you for your email of 16 July requesting an Internal Review in respect of the above Freedom of Information request. Your request, on 19 June, was for the following information:

*A copy of all the evidence which underlies the following sentence in the document entitled “Guidance on reopening places of worship: coronavirus”:-*

*“Type of singer (eg. tenors are more likely to emit more virus than altos and sopranos)”*

*I am specifically interested in any statistical or similar data that the Welsh Government have collated on this topic, and also any academic articles, discussions or similar on this point.*

*If none exists, I would still request disclosure of any documents which led to the inclusion of this sentence despite the absence of data I allude to above.*

On 16 July, we wrote to you providing a link to the Technical Advisory Group Review Advice on communal singing and chanting, including wind instruments and pipe organs and providing a link to the updated Welsh Government Guidance: on reopening places of worship: coronavirus.

We also confirmed that the guidance published in June included some inaccurate information about risks associated with singing, due to an error, and that the guidance had been corrected and a new version published on the Welsh Government’s website.

On the same day (16 July), you requested an Internal Review because you considered that our response had not fully answered your request. In particular, you repeated your request for “*any documentation that led to the inclusion of the erroneous sentence in the now withdrawn guidance*”.

I have reviewed our response to the FOI request and spoken with the staff in the Technical Advisory Cell (TAC) who were responsible for the TAC paper on which the guidance note was based.

The error was due to a typographical mistake that was made when the guidance note was drafted using the information in the TAC paper. The reference to tenors in the guidance was one item in a list of several factors to be considered as part of a risk assessment. It should have been posed as a question to be asked:

“Type of singer (eg. are tenors more likely to emit more virus than altos and sopranos).”

Unfortunately, due to a typographic error, two words were transposed, and the sentence was initially published as “**tenors are** ...” instead of “**are tenors** ...”. Once the error was discovered it was corrected and updated guidance was published.

I can confirm that there is no documentation that led to the typographical error. It was simply an accidental (and unfortunate) transposition of two words in the guidance note. Neither do we hold any documents that concern the *correction* of the typographic error. The mistake and the appropriate remedial action (ie. removing the entire sentence from the guidance note) was discussed and agreed verbally.

For this reason, I do not uphold your complaint that the information you requested has not been provided.

If you remain dissatisfied with this response you also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner’s Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

Tel: 01625 545 745  
Fax: 01625 524 510  
Email: [casework@ico.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:casework@ico.gsi.gov.uk)

Also, if you think that there has been maladministration in dealing with your request, you have the option to make a complaint to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales who can be contacted at:

Public Services Ombudsman for Wales  
1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae

Pencoed  
Bridgend  
CF35 5LJ

Telephone: 0845 6010987 (local rate)  
Email: [ask@ombudsman-wales.org.uk](mailto:ask@ombudsman-wales.org.uk)

Yours sincerely,



**Stephen Probert CEng FIET MIOB**  
Deputy Director of Operations  
Health & Social Services Group