

21 November 2023

Dear

ATISN 19237

Thank you for your request which we received on 2 November 2023, you asked for the following information:

Please provide me with copies of all correspondence between Ministers and Deputy Ministers and rabbis, Jewry leaders and Jewish community groups in Wales, between 7 October 2023 and 2 November 2023.

Please provide me with a list of all visits made by Ministers and Deputy Ministers to synagogues in Wales, between 7 October 2023 and 2 November 2023.

Please provide this information in date order and give the location of each synagogue.

For the request regarding correspondence, section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act allows a public authority to refuse a request if it calculates that dealing with it would exceed the appropriate limit. The appropriate limit specified for central government is £600. This represents the estimated cost of it taking over 24 hours of time to determine whether we hold the information and to thereafter locate, retrieve and extract it.

We do not record details of the religious affiliation of correspondents within our correspondence database. Therefore the only way we could accurately provide the information requested would be to manually check the details of each item of correspondence received within this period. I have assessed that the combined total time to locate the information requested would therefore be over 50 hours.

In terms of visits, details of ministers' meetings with external organisations and attendance at engagements are published quarterly in arrears at the following link:
<https://gov.wales/ministerial-meetings-and-engagements>.

I have therefore concluded that the information you requested is exempt under Section 22 of the Freedom of Information Act (2000), information intended for future publication. Details of Ministerial visits are published quarterly. This information will be published with the next tranche of information in early January 2024.

Section 22 is a publicly tested exemption and I have set out my arguments for non-disclosure at Annex 1 to this letter

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 e-mail: 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

Telephone: 0303 123 1113

Website: www.ico.org.uk

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely

Annex 1

Section 22: Information intended for future publication.

The Welsh Government believes that Section 22 is applied in relation to the requested information. Section 22 of the Freedom of Information Act is subject to the public interest test. This means that in order to withhold information under its provisions, any personal interest of the requester notwithstanding, it has to be shown that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs that in releasing it.

Public interest arguments in favour of disclosure

The general presumption of openness and transparency, which the Freedom of Information Act aspires to.

Public interest arguments against disclosure

This information is regularly published on a quarterly basis. It will be published along with other visits according to the usual schedule in early January 2024.

The Welsh Government acknowledges the public interest in openness and transparency, and therefore publishes details of Ministerial visits and engagements on a quarterly basis.

Therefore, we believe the public interest would be better served in the information being published at the appropriate time. To that end, I believe the information should be withheld under s22 of the Act, until it is published in due course at the following link:

<https://www.gov.wales/ministerial-meetings-and-engagements>