



Our ref: ATISN 20006  
Date: 9 August 2024

Dear ,

**Complaint in respect of ATISN/20006, Information relating to the Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill**

You wrote to the Welsh Government on January 15 2024 asking for a review of our response to your FOI request 'Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidates Lists) Bill information.

I am sorry that it has taken the time it has to respond to your request.

You wrote in as follows:

*I am writing to request an internal review of Welsh Government's handling of my FOI request 'Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidates Lists) Bill information'.*

*You have failed to supply the information requested in questions 2, 3 and 4, citing that you do not hold information regarding the total number of staff working on the electoral bill.*

*My question relates to the Gender Quotas Bill, more recently known as the Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidates Lists) Bill and not the wider Senedd reform work. You have staff dedicated to working on this specific Bill and no other wider work. Please therefore supply the information as originally requested.*

*Please be clear that if you do not, this will be taken as a denial that you have staff who are or have been, specifically working on the Gender Quotas Bill, more recently known as the Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidates Lists) Bill, and should*



*confirmation of that emerge, or be provided by any other means, now or in the future, then your response to this Fol Act request will demonstrate deliberate dishonesty*

I have made enquiries with officials who are working on the areas you have asked for information on and conclude we do not hold the information that you have asked for.

The nature of Bill work is multi-disciplinary and to provide a full picture we would have to assess a large number of 'central services' who have contributed to the work in addition to policy officials. That may include, but is not limited to, Knowledge and Analytical Services, general and legislative translation, Welsh Treasury and Economists. Our legislative drafters work on multiple Bills at the same time including the main Senedd Reform Bill as well as other Bills outside of Senedd reform and don't account for their time on each. Within Senedd Reform officials have been working on the programme as a whole, which comprises gender quotas but is only part of the work.

If the Welsh Government took a narrower focus on only the policy officials and lawyers concerned (not including legislative counsel), these have all been working on other aspects of the Senedd Reform programme. The staff within the policy branch that leads on the Gender Quota Bill (that over the 18 months has comprised of between 3 or 4 staff) have a wide range of other responsibilities and workstreams, for example, job-sharing provisions that appear in the main Senedd Reform Bill; provisions in relation to diversity and inclusion strategies for political parties; provision in relation to the collection and publication of diversity information of candidates, which were to appear in the main Bill but are now being taken forward through the Elections and Elected Bodies (Wales) Bill; as well as the development of guidance to support delivery of those diversity measures.

The same is true of the lawyers that are supporting policy officials. There have been 2 or 3 lawyers who have supported the work on the Gender Quota Bill, but have done so at the same time as working on provisions in the main Bill as well as wider Senedd Reform work.



Therefore, I have concluded that the Welsh Government does not hold the information you have requested as our staff are not engaged solely on the Gender Quota Bill.

I have considered your complaint in accordance with the procedure outlined in the [Welsh Government's Practical Guide for Making Requests for Information](#) which is available by post on request or via the internet.

If you remain dissatisfied with this response you 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.

Yours sincerely

Steve Hudson  
Welsh Government