

Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)

Decision notice

Date: 11 March 2019

Public Authority: Welsh Government

Address: freedom.ofinformation@wales.gov

Decision (including any steps ordered)

1. The complainant submitted three multipart requests for information in respect of various items of information in relation to the TrawsCymru bus services. The Welsh Government refused all three requests on the grounds that they were vexatious, citing section 14(1) of the FOIA. The Commissioner's decision is that the Welsh Government was entitled to rely on section 14(1) to refuse all three requests. The Commissioner does not require the public authority to take any steps.

Request and response

The requests

2. The Commissioner notes that all three requests contain multipart questions/requests in relation to various aspects of the TrawsCymru Bus Service and in particular, the T3, T2 and T1 routes. Due to the length of each request, the full text of each request has been reproduced in the annex of this notice with a brief summary of the requests provided below.

Request one ATISN 12375

3. On 2 June 2018, the complainant wrote to the Welsh Government requesting 32 separate items of information largely in relation to the TrawsCymru T3, T2 and T1 services.
4. The Welsh Government responded to the request on 25 June 2018. It stated that it did not consider his requests to be valid requests for information, it did not hold documented information to answer the

questions, and reminded him that requests of this nature had previously been deemed vexatious under section 14(1) of the FOIA.

5. Following an internal review, the Welsh Government wrote to the complainant on 16 July 2018 confirming that it was upholding its original response to refuse the request on the basis of section 14(1) of the FOIA.

Request two ATISN 12382

6. Request two was dated 7 June 2018 and consisted of 13 separate items in respect of passenger numbers and costs in relation to the T1, T2, T3 and T5 TrawsCymru bus services.
7. The Welsh Government responded on 25 June 2018 refusing the request on the basis of section 14(1) of the FOIA on the grounds that the requester was acting in concert with another requester who uses the same personal email address to submit numerous other FOIA requests on the same subject matter.
8. In addition to being dissatisfied with the response from the Welsh Government, the complainant disputed that he was acting in concert with another individual or that this request had deviated in any way from any of his previous requests.
9. Following an internal review, the Welsh Government responded on 16 July 2018 informing the complainant that it was upholding its original decision in respect of this request for information. In relation to the complainant's comments that the method of submitting his requests had not deviated in any way from the complainant's previous requests, the Welsh Government stated that it was clearly signed in a different name to his previous requests adding:

"This is part of the Welsh Government's official record and there is no ambiguity about it."

Request three ATISN 12559

10. The complainant contacted the Welsh Government on 13 July 2018 submitting a 23 part request with a cluster of questions in respect of the TrawsCymru Strategic Management Board, followed by further enquiries in respect of Professor Cole's 'High Level Strategic Review' of the TrawsCymru T3 service route. The request also contained questions in relation to the T10/T11 and Llandudno/Rhyl to Wrexham via Ruthin Services.

11. The Welsh Government responded on 24 August 2018, confirming that it did not hold any recorded information that would answer questions 5, 6, 7 and 23 of his request, and cited section 14(1) for the remainder of the request on the basis that it was vexatious.
12. Following an internal review the Welsh Government wrote to the complainant on 7 September 2018. It stated that having reviewed the original decision, it was satisfied with its response.

Scope of the case

13. The complainant contacted the Commissioner on 16 July 2018 in respect of the first two requests for information to complain about the way his requests had been handled.
14. The complainant does not accept that either of these requests were vexatious, and disagrees with the Welsh Government's conclusions that there is a background of aggressive or abusive language, personal grudges, unreasonable persistence or intransigence, or that there is evidence of unfounded accusations or frequent or overlapping requests.
15. In relation to the second request, the complainant has stated that it was not related in any way to any of his previous correspondence with the Welsh Government and he did not accept that his method of submitting the request had deviated in any way from his previous requests and further stated that the other party:

"... has nothing whatsoever to do with any of the emails that I have sent to the Welsh Government..."
16. The Commissioner has had sight of the request, and can confirm it was clearly signed in a different name whilst coming from the same email address from which the complainant has always corresponded. She also notes that the complainant has subsequently referred to it as his request for information and has not therefore disputed that it came from him. Why it was signed in a different name is not known and speculation is beyond the Commissioner's remit.
17. The complainant contacted the Commissioner on 1 October 2018 in respect of his third request for information on the same basis as outlined in paragraph 14 of this notice.
18. During the course of the Commissioner's investigation, the Welsh Government has confirmed that it is relying on section 14(1) of the FOIA in respect of all items of the three requests. The scope of the Commissioner's investigation, is therefore to consider whether the Welsh

Government was entitled to refuse each request on the grounds that they are vexatious and whether it was therefore entitled to rely on section 14(1) of the FOIA.

Reasons for decision

Section 14(1) - Vexatious requests

19. Section 14(1) of the FOIA states that section 1(1) does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the request is vexatious. There is no public interest test.
20. The term 'vexatious' is not defined in the FOIA, however, the Upper Tribunal in the Information Commissioner vs Devon CC and Dransfield [2012] UKUT 440(AAC), (28 January 2013) took the view that the ordinary dictionary definition of the word 'vexatious' is only of limited use, because the question of whether a request is vexatious ultimately depends on the circumstances surrounding that request.
21. In further exploring the role played by circumstances and whether the request has adequate and proper justification, the Tribunal concluded that 'vexatious' could be defined as the "*...manifestly unjustified, inappropriate or improper use of a formal procedure.*" (paragraph 27)
22. Consistent with the Upper Tribunal's decision which established the concepts of 'proportionality' and 'justification' as central to any consideration of whether a request is vexatious, the Commissioner's guidance for section 14 confirms that the key question to ask when weighing up whether a request is vexatious is whether the request is likely to cause a disproportionate or unjustified level of disruption, irritation or distress.
23. Where this is not clear, the public authority should weigh the impact on the authority of complying with the request and balance this against the purpose and value of the request. In doing this, public authorities will inevitably need to take into account the wider factors such the background and history of the request.
24. When considering refusing a request on the basis that it is vexatious, the Commissioner's guidance in respect of section 14(1) refers to a number of indicators which a public authority may find helpful and notes that the Welsh Government considered the following indicators as relevant factors in respect of all three requests:
 - Abusive or aggressive language
 - Personal grudges

- Unreasonable persistence
 - Unfounded accusations
 - Intransigence
 - Frequent or overlapping requests
25. The Commissioner has previously considered a number of complaints from the requestor in respect of the Welsh Government's handling of his requests for information, most recently four separate requests under decision notice FS50734061¹ which the Welsh Government also refused on the basis of section 14(1) of the FOIA, with which the Commissioner concurred.
26. Whilst the Commissioner acknowledges that the above mentioned decision notice is currently under appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Information Rights), she remains satisfied with her decision.
27. In respect of the three requests which are the subject of this notice, the Welsh Government confirmed that much of the evidence in respect of these requests for information is the same as the previous requests. However, it did provide an updated background, informing the Commissioner that the complainant continues to submit requests for information in relation to TrawsCymru bus services, providing details of one submitted on 16 January 2019, which it states constitutes the 22nd FOI request he has submitted to the Welsh Government in respect of the TrawsCymru bus services.
28. In addition, the Welsh Government has since come across entries by the complainant in an on-line bus users forum and provided an extract from an entry dated 22 June 2018 which stated :
- "... that bus routes in Wales are being arranged to favour the constituency of the Minister for Economy and Transport."*
29. The Welsh Government considers that wherever possible, it has strived to accommodate the complainant's requests for the retiming of its bus services and informed the Commissioner that in 2018 the complainant requested the retiming of the T2 9.30am arrival in Aberystwyth from

¹ <https://ico.org.uk/media/action-weve-taken/decision-notice/2018/2614065/fs50734061.pdf>

Dolgellau so it connects with the T1C Aberystwyth to Cardiff departure at 9.30am.

30. On 5 June 2018, the Welsh Government informed the complainant that the T2 and T1C were contracted by two different local authorities and not connecting services, however, it would discuss the feasibility of adjusting the timetables with the two contracting local authorities to see if a recognised connection could be provided. The timetables were subsequently changed and the new services were introduced on 21 January 2019.
31. The Commissioner is aware that the complainant originally contacted the Welsh Government in 2016 in respect of the routing of the T3 TrawsCymru bus service from Wrexham to Barmouth as opposed to his preferred option of Wrexham to Aberystwyth, and a significant proportion of the complainant's correspondence since that date has been in relation to this issue.

Burden on the authority

32. As with decision notice FS50734061, the Commissioner also considers that even though the Welsh Government did not explicitly refer to 'burden on the authority' (another potential indicator), the Welsh Government has provided sufficient arguments and evidence in support of its more general reliance on section 14(1) that this is also applicable.
33. Decision notice FS50734061, included details provided by the Welsh Government of the complainant's correspondence with the Welsh Government, informing the Commissioner that since January 2016, it has received voluminous correspondence (including many FOIA requests), from the complainant, responding to which has proved extremely time consuming. This has been exacerbated by the nature of the requests themselves which were very detailed, repetitive and contained extracts from various other pieces of correspondence in an ad-hoc and unclear way, often being received before responses to earlier correspondence had been issued.
34. Ultimately therefore, the Welsh Government considered it necessary to develop a coping strategy to deal with the multitude of correspondence, so created a separate iShare folder and provided a table of contents to the Commissioner as evidence in support of the above.
35. At the time of her investigation of FS50734061, the Welsh Government informed the Commissioner that since January 2016, there has been in excess of 150 items of correspondence in the form of emails direct to named officials and Ministers, correspondence to other AM's and MP's and various FOI requests. Having had sight of the supporting evidence from the Welsh Government, the Commissioner can also confirm that it

tends to be very detailed, contains extracts from other pieces of correspondence making it very time consuming to unpick, and often overlapping previous correspondence.

36. As discussed in paragraph 27 of this notice, the complainant has continued to correspond with the Welsh Government in respect of the TrawsCymru bus service and the nature of this correspondence has not altered.

Abusive or aggressive language

37. In its response to the complainant dated 25 June 2018, the Welsh Government repeated comments in respect of previous requests, that the tone of his frequent correspondence goes beyond the level of criticism that employees of a public authority should reasonably expect to receive, and stated that he has branded Welsh Government employees and Ministers as liars and questioned their behaviour. Indeed, decision notice FS50734061 referred to the complainant's correspondence as evidence stating:

"Government Advisers and Officials know they are allowed to lie and make incorrect statements with impunity and follow their own strategies rather than the Welsh Government strategies"

38. The Welsh Government further informed the complainant that the tone of his correspondence had not changed and that he continues to brandish Welsh Ministers and Welsh Government Officials as liars using the example of correspondence dated 3 May 2018 in which he refers to Welsh Government officials as being dishonest, deliberately delaying responding to his requests for information and amending the texts for tactical gain.

Personal grudges

39. The Commissioner's guidance in respect of this indicator states:

"For whatever reason, the requester is targeting their correspondence towards a particular employee or office holder against whom they have some personal enmity."

40. The Welsh Government has previously informed the Commissioner that one individual in particular has been subjected to extreme criticism and has provided the following list of criticisms the complainant has subjected them to:

- Lying on multiple occasions to the public and the media;
- Being evasive, unprofessional and dishonest;

- Favouring bus routes in his home county over other areas in Wales;
 - Being negligent in managing the TrawsCymru network;
 - Creating fictional responses to questions;
 - Attempting to divert responsibility for actions he has supposedly taken;
 - Deliberately altering the text of the complainant's FOIA requests in order to avoid answering questions;
 - Providing incorrect statements to Ministers.
41. Additionally, decision notice FS50734061 referred to the following extract from the complainant's email of 16 December 2016 regarding the Welsh Government's offer of a meeting:
- "...then I see no point in having a meeting. This is a very simple problem that is easily solvable. However, [named individual] (a government official) has refused to put it right and resorted to lying in order to justify his refusal. [Named official] has opposed 2 previous complaints and lost both those...[Named official] has therefore decided he will not lose a third complaint and has therefore resorted to lying and devious responses rather than considering the facts..."*
42. As stated in decision notice FS50734061 the Welsh Government informed the Commissioner that these are very serious allegations to make against a Crown official in terms of the Civil Service Code and the fact that they have been published has caused further embarrassment and distress to the individual in question.
43. Similarly, the Welsh Government has previously informed the Commissioner that the complainant has called for this individual to be sacked, and as with her previous decision notice the Commissioner has reproduced the following extract provided by the Welsh Government as supporting evidence:
- "The Welsh Government official responsible for not correcting this problem should be sacked for that alone and certainly should be sacked for repeatedly lying over a period of 2 years."*
44. The Commissioner notes that this has not changed and that he continues to target his correspondence towards this particular employee in a hostile manner copying in numerous and varied recipients.

Unreasonable persistence

45. The Welsh Government has previously informed the complainant that it considers that in submitting his requests, there is evidence of unreasonable persistence in the sense that he appears to be attempting to reopen an issue on which he has already received responses or which has been subject to independent scrutiny. More recently it has informed him that where he has raised new matters, he has received a response.
46. The Welsh Government informed the Commissioner that Bus Users Cymru² had offered to meet with the complainant when he first raised his concerns, but this was declined. The Deputy Director also offered a meeting which has not been taken up. Additionally, Welsh Government officials have met with the Traffic Commissioner to discuss his concerns and the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales informed the Welsh Government that it would not be investigating a complaint made to them by the complainant in relation to TrawsCymru.
47. The Commissioner considers that the fact that the complainant continues to submit FOIA requests in respect of the TrawsCymru bus service, further demonstrates a degree of unreasonable persistence.

Unfounded accusations

48. The Welsh Government has previously referred to the complainant labelling its employees and Ministers as liars. Accusations which it stated are based entirely on the complainant's own assumptions or conclusions. It further stated that where the complainant has asked for recorded information about meetings with local authorities, and has received a response which states no recorded information is held, that it will be a matter of fact as it does not necessarily follow that there will be record of those discussions.
49. As discussed in decision notice FS50734061 the Welsh Government informed the Commissioner that in addition to the unfounded allegations levelled against one of its officials, there have been accusations that Ministers have breached the Ministerial Code.

"The First Minister seems to think that his Ministers, Advisors and Officials are allowed to disregard the Ministerial Code and are allowed to lie and make misleading and incorrect statements to the Welsh

² <https://www.bususers.org/cymru-wales/about-us>

Assembly, fellow Assembly members, County Councillors and the public.”

50. Decision notice FS50734061 also makes reference to a document provided by the Welsh Government containing extracts of the complainant's allegations against its officials and ministers and the Commissioner has provided a small flavour of those extracts below:

(a) *"...[named Minister] has allowed his officials to lie and falsify Freedom of Information Requests ... [Named Minister has also refused to answer the questions ...] whether there is a Welsh Government procedure for dealing with situations where Welsh Government officials lie to the public and to the media.*

It seems [named Minister] is a) allowing favourable treatment to North Wales at the expense of Mid/West Wales and b) is not prepared to investigate the behaviour of his officials."

(b) *The Welsh Government is happy to sit back and protect Government Officials who are not doing their job and lying. They are lying not only to the general public, but to Local Authorities, Welsh MPs,, Welsh Assembly Members and Government Ministers alike. It is time you as Minister responsible for Transport and the First Minister as arbiter of the Ministerial Code took some action."*

(c) *Over the past 2 years I have been subjected to institutionalised bullying by Messers [named Minister and Official] in that [named Official] has been deliberately obstructive, has lied with impunity, has altered the questions in my Freedom of Information Requests to avoid answering, and has refused to answer questions relating to Trawscymru Services. [Named Minister] has refused to address this behaviour by [named Official] and has allowed ineffective Internal Reviews by Directors from his own department to take place which have not examined my complaints and have found that the behaviour of [named Official] was perfectly OK.*

51. Further, the complainant has disputed making unfounded accusations against Welsh Government ministers and officials. However, the Welsh Government considers his statements that TrawsCymru bus services through Aberystwyth are being disregarded on strategic routes for the benefits of passengers in another location for political gain supports its stance.

Intransigence

52. In her decision notice FS50734061, the Commissioner notes that the Welsh Government referred to Welsh Government Officials, Ministers and Bus Users Cymru having corresponded with the complainant on

numerous occasions regarding various matters he has raised in relation to TrawsCymru bus services.

53. The Commissioner also made reference to the Welsh Government's offer to meet the complainant to discuss his various concerns, including a meeting with Bus Users Cymru and the Deputy Directors of Network Management, and cited the following comments taken from his email dated 31 July 2017:

Before I would take part in any meeting I would wish to have recorded before the meeting the facts relating to the T2/T1 service and whether [named official] agrees or disagrees with these facts. This could be used as a basis for any discussions at a meeting. I enclose the list of facts relating to this service and would be grateful if you could ask [named official] to signify whether he agrees/disagrees with these facts.

This indicated to the Welsh Government that he is unwilling to engage with it regarding his concerns.

54. The Commissioner notes that the situation remains unchanged with the complainant continuing to copy several other email addresses, including the media and elected Members of the Welsh Government to most if not all of the correspondence he sends to Welsh Ministers.

Frequent or overlapping requests

55. In decision notice FS50734061 the Commissioner referred to a letter from the Welsh Government to the complainant dated 19 February 2018, which in turn referred to the volume of correspondence the complainant has submitted to both Welsh Government Ministers and employees regarding the TrawsCymru bus services. The Welsh Government drew attention to 15 FOIA requests since April 2016, and from November 2017 to February 2018, at least 24 pieces of correspondence to Welsh Ministers on the TrawsCymru bus services. The Welsh Government further informed the complainant that his correspondence often overlaps before the Officials have had the opportunity to consider and respond to earlier enquiries. The Welsh Government considers that with each piece of correspondence submitted by the complainant, it is his intention to re-examine and re-open issues that have already been considered and addressed.
56. The Commissioner has already referred to the voluminous correspondence sent to the Welsh Government from the complainant in its section discussing the burden on the authority in paragraphs 32 to 36 of this notice so does not intend to repeat them here.

Conclusion

57. In reaching her decision, the Commissioner is mindful of the Tribunal's definition of the meaning of vexatious in the context of the FOIA (as referenced in paragraph 21 of this notice) as the:

"...manifestly unjustified, inappropriate or improper use of a formal procedure."

58. The Commissioner has also been mindful of the evidence she has previously considered and discussed in respect of decision notice FS50734061 and notes that the pattern identified at the time has continued in respect of these three requests for information. As with decision notice FS50734061, the Commissioner has considered whether the requests were likely to cause a disproportionate or unjustified level of disruption, irritation or distress and consistent with her previous decision, has concluded that in taking one or two of the indicators in respect of a vexatious request in isolation, that the weight of evidence overwhelming supports the Welsh Government's decision to refuse the request on this basis. Taking the arguments and evidence as a whole therefore, the Commissioner has no hesitation in concluding that the Welsh Government was entitled to rely on section 14(1) of the FOIA in respect of all three requests for information.

Right of appeal

59. Either party has the right to appeal against this decision notice to the First-tier Tribunal (Information Rights). Information about the appeals process may be obtained from:

First-tier Tribunal (Information Rights)
GRC & GRP Tribunals,
PO Box 9300,
LEICESTER,
LE1 8DJ

Tel: 0300 1234504
Fax: 0870 739 5836
Email: GRC@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk
Website: www.justice.gov.uk/tribunals/general-regulatory-chamber

60. If you wish to appeal against a decision notice, you can obtain information on how to appeal along with the relevant forms from the Information Tribunal website.

61. Any Notice of Appeal should be served on the Tribunal within 28 (calendar) days of the date on which this decision notice is sent.

Signed

**Catherine Dickenson
Senior Case Officer
Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF**

Annex

The requests

1. As sated in the decision notice, due to the length of each request, only a summary of the requests was provided in notice as the Commissioner considered it more appropriate to reproduce the full text of each of the three requests in this annex.

Request one ATISN 12375 – dated 2 June 2018

I would be grateful if you could arrange for answers to given to the following questions:-

Question 1 Could the Minister give the reason why the review of a T3 Aberystwyth to Wrexham route has not been started.?. (the review was commissioned by the Minister on 14/11/2017 in a letter to Alun Williams, Ceredigion Councillor responsible for transport and was recommended by the Bevan Foundation review of Trawscymru in 2013). The current T2/T3 route from Aberystwyth to Wrexham takes 5.5 hours and this could be cut to 4 hours by a direct , strategic, express service route via Machynleth Newtown, Welshpool and Oswestry

Question 2 Could the Minister say when the review of a T3 Aberystwyth to Wrexham route will be started and when it will be completed.?.

Question 3 Could the Minister say when the Welsh Government Transport Strategy (Chapter 4 - Focusing our work: strategic priorities Page 48) will be addressed and when the Welsh Government will take action to improve journey times and reliability on the strategic North/South T2/T1 route between Bangor and Carmarthen , which has links to the rail network at Bangor, Porthmadog, Machynleth, Aberystwyth and Carmarthen. ?. (The strategic North/South T2/T1 route between Bangor and Carmarthen is currently dysfunctional because of the 15 minute delays to the T2 services in Dolgellau, in both North and South directions, these delays being required to wait for late running T3 services from Wrexham)

Question 4 Could the Minister give the reason why the T3 route between Wrexham and Dolgellau follows exactly the same route as the D94 Crossville Motors bus service which replaced the Ruabon to Barmouth railway following its closure 53 years ago in 1965 .?

Question 5 Could the Minister give the reason why the T3 route was not redesigned when it was introduced in 2014 to replace the Arriva X94 service.? (The Trawscymru Network Manager has said the T3 route was

"designed" as a "strategic" East-West route requiring connections with the T2/T1 North/South route between Bangor and Carmarthen.)

Question 6 Is the Minister aware that in 2013 the Welsh Government reported on a public consultation carried out on the TrawsCambria network when a government spokesman said over 300 responses were received to the consultation exercise and 70% of respondents supported the introduction of more limited stop faster express services between major centres. ?

Question 7 In view of the fact that in 2013 "70% of respondents supported the introduction of more limited stop faster express services between major centres", could the Minister give the reason why the T3 route between Wrexham and Dolgellau, introduced a year later in 2014, has 42% of its length as diversions off the direct route to service outlying settlements.?

Question 8 Is the Minister aware that 17 T3 services per day (9 from Dolgellau and 8 from Wrexham) are being diverted off the direct route between Dolgellau and Wrexham to service the villages of Llanuchlynn, Llanderfel , Llandrillo and Cynwyd in the AM constituency of South Clwyd. ?

Question 9 Could the Minister give the reason why the published journey time in the timetable for the T3 service is 2 hours for the journey from Dolgellau to Wrexham and 2 hours 10 minutes from Wrexham to Dolgellau.?

Question 10 Could the Minister give the reason why the T3 service is consistently between 9 and 20 minutes late in arriving at Wrexham and Dolgellau.? (NB This is based on my experience of 2 years using the T2/T1 route through Dolgellau on a weekly basis and having to wait in Dolgellau for late T3 services from Wrexham as well as being based on my recent experience of using the T3 in May 2018)

Question 11 Could the Minister say whether the consistent lateness of between 9 and 20 minutes of the T3 service is the reason that T2 services going North and South between Bangor and Aberystwyth have to be held back for 15 minutes in Dolgellau to wait for the T3 service from Wrexham. ?

Question 12 Is the Minister aware that an Arriva no 5 bus service runs every 15 minutes/half hour (24 services per day in both directions) between Wrexham and Llangollen on exactly the same route as the Trawscymru T3 service and takes the same amount of time as the T3 (35 minutes) to cover the same journey .?

Question 13 Is the Minister aware that an X5 Wrexham to Corwen service ,(which covers exactly the same route as the Trawscymru T3), is operated by Coastline Taxis with 2 services per day in each direction and taking 37 minutes to reach Llangollen ?

Question 14 Is the Minister aware that an an hourly bus service (Arriva no 2 with 14 services per day in both directions) runs from Oswestry to Wrexham via Chirk , Ruabon and Johnstown and covers most of the current T3 route between Llangollen and Wrexham?

Question 15 Could the Minister give the reason why passengers travelling to points between Wrexham and Llangollen cannot use local bus services (X5 and Arriva no 5 and no 2) instead of the Trawscymru T3 service?

Question 16 Could the Minister give the reason why the part of the T3 route between Wrexham and Llangollen , which is well served by local buses (X5 and Arriva no 5 and no 2), cannot be made into a direct route via the A5/A483 to save between 10 and 15 minutes in T3 journey time both into and out of Wrexham.?

Question 17 Is the Minister aware that a saving of between 10 and 15 minutes in T3 journey time into and out of Wrexham would :-

- a) avoid the consistently late arrivals at Wrexham and Dolgellau*
- b) avoid the waits of 15 minutes currently imposed on the T2 (Bangor to Aberystwyth) services in Dolgellau to wait for the T3 from Wrexham.*
- c) allow connectivity of the T2 and T1 services to be restored in Aberystwyth and therefore meet the published Welsh Transport Strategy. ?*

Question 18 Is the Minister aware that a saving of between 10 and 15 minutes in T3 journey time into and out of Wrexham would allow the last T2 service of the day to arrive in Aberystwyth from Bangor at 18.30 and therefore comfortably connect with the last T1 service from Aberystwyth to Carmarthen at 18.40.? This would allow passengers from Gwyned and Powys (between Bangor and Aberystwyth) to use the 15.15 T2 departure from Bangor to catch the 18.40 T1 from Aberystwyth and connect to the last train to Cardiff in Carmarthen.

Question 19 In view of the evidence supplied below based on 17 Trawscymru T1 journeys from Aberystwyth to Carmarthen rail station where the worst late arrival was 4 minutes late could the Minister say why the Trawscymru Network Manager insisted in 2016 that 10 minutes connection time was necessary for connection with the train by the 18.40 T1 departure from Aberystwyth. ?

Question 20 In view of the evidence supplied below based on 17 Trawscymru T1 journeys from Aberystwyth to Carmarthen rail station could the Minister say why the T1 departure from Aberystwyth at 18.40 could not be changed to say 18.43 which would leave 7 minutes for the T1 to connect with the train in Carmarthen. ?

Question 21 Can the Minister give the reason why on 01/01/2018 the departure time of all T2 services from Bangor were brought forward by 10 minutes, the journey time between Bangor and Caernarfon increased by 10 minutes and the total journey time between Bangor and Aberystwyth increased by 10 minutes ?

Question 22 Could the Minister give the reason why on 01/01/2018 there was only one T2 service, where the total journey between Bangor and Aberystwyth was increased by 20 minutes and not 10 minutes, and this one T2 service was the 18.40 arrival in Aberystwyth where T1 departs to Carmarthen at 18.40 ? Could the Minister also give the reason why on 01/01/2018 all other T2 services from Bangor had their total journey time increased by only 10 minutes and not 20 minutes ?

Question 23 Could the Minister give the reason why on 01/01/2018 the 18.40 T2 arrival in Aberystwyth was changed to 18.50 by inserting 10 minutes of delay near Aberystwyth. ? Could the Minister give the reason why an unnecessary wait of 5 minutes in Machynleth (16 miles from Aberystwyth) and an unnecessary 5 minute diversion off the a487 on the edge of Aberystwyth through a small village and an Aberystwyth housing estate were introduced. ?

Question 24 Could the Minister give the reason why the 18.50 T2 arrival in Aberystwyth cannot be changed back to 18.40 by removing the wait of 5 minutes in Machynleth and removing the 5 minute diversion off the a487 on the edge of Aberystwyth through a small village and an Aberystwyth housing estate . ?

Question 25 Could the Minister give the reason why the 18.50 T2 arrival in Aberystwyth cannot be changed back to 18.40 and the T1 departure time in Aberystwyth be changed to from 18.40 to 18.43 giving 3 minutes of connection time in Aberystwyth and leaving the T1 7 minutes to connect with the last train to Cardiff in Carmarthen ? (NB the Trawscymru T1C coach service from Aberystwyth introduced in April 2018 has only 3 minutes of connectivity in Carmarthen to the Trawscymru T1S to Swansea.)

Question 26 Could the Minister give the reason why the Trawscymru T2 departure from Dolgellau cannot be changed to 8.00 instead of 8.10 to allow passengers from North of Aberystwyth to reach Aberystwyth at 9.15 and connect with the T1C coach service from Aberystwyth. to Cardiff ?

Question 27 Could the Minister give the reason why the Trawscymru T1C departure from Aberystwyth to Cardiff cannot be changed to 9.25 instead of 9.30 to allow passengers 8 minutes of connectivity instead of 3 minutes in Carmarthen to the Trawscymru T1S service to Swansea.. ?

Question 28 Can the Minister give the reason why a Trawscymru route between Oswestry/Chirk and Bangor (via Wrexham) has been reviewed by the Welsh Government. ?

Question 29 Is the Minister aware of the following services between Oswestry/Chirk and Wrexham :-

(1) An hourly bus service (Arriva no 2) from Oswestry to Wrexham via Chirk , Ruabon and Johnstown taking 60 minutes (43 minutes Chirk to Wrexham) and covering most of the current T3 route between Llangollen and Wrexham

(2) EasyBus operates a bus from Wrexham to Oswestry and Oswestry to Wrexham . with six services per day in both directions taking 25 minutes.

(3) An hourly train which runs from Chirk to Wrexham and which takes 12 minutes

Question 30 In view of the services outlined in question 29 can the Minister give the reason why part of the new Trawscymru bus route under review is between Oswestry/Chirk and Wrexham ?

Question 31 Can the Minister give the reason why a Trawscymru route between Oswestry/Chirk and Bangor (via Wrexham) is necessary, when there is a fast train service from Chirk to Bangor (via Wrexham) with 14 services per day and taking between 1 hr 43 minutes and .2 hrs 18 minutes ?

Question 32 Could the Minister give the reason why questions such as those above are considered by the Welsh Government to be ""vexatious"" and why the Welsh Government refuse to answer them.

Request two ATISN 12382 – dated 7 June 2018

"Could you please provide the following information regarding the following Trawscymru bus routes ..

*TrawsCymru T1 Aberystwyth – Aberaeron - Lampeter – Carmarthen;
TrawsCymru T1C Aberystwyth – Carmarthen – Cardiff;*

TrawsCymru T2 Bangor – Dolgellau – Aberystwyth;

TrawsCymru T3 Wrexham – Llangollen – Dolgellau - Barmouth;

TrawsCymru T5 Aberystwyth – Aberaeron – Cardigan – Haverfordwest;

Could you please tell me the following figures for each of the above services individually :-

(1) The total number of passengers carried on weekdays on each of the above services for the year 1st April 2016 to 31st March 2017 or any other period in 2016 to 2017

just before the free weekend travel scheme started on 8th July 2017

(2) The Total number of bus journeys on weekdays on each of the above services for the same time period as in (1)

(3) The Total number of passengers carried on weekends on each of the above services for the same time period as in (1)

(4) The Total number of bus journeys on weekends on each of the above services for the same time period as in (1)

(5) The Total cost incurred for each of the above services on weekdays for the same time period as in (1).

(6) The Total cost incurred for each of the above services on weekends for the same time period as in (1).

(7) The total number of bus journeys on weekdays for each of the above services for the time period 8th July 2017 to May 2018 during the free weekend pilot scheme.

(8) The Total number of passengers carried on weekdays on each of the above services for the time period 8th July 2017 to May 2018 during the free weekend pilot scheme.

(9) The total number of bus journeys on weekends for each of the above services for the time period 8th July 2017 to May 2018 during the free weekend pilot scheme.

(10) The Total number of passengers carried on weekends on each of the above services for the time period 8th July 2017 to May 2018 during the free weekend pilot scheme.

(11) The Total cost incurred on weekdays for each of the above services for the time period 8th July 2017 to May 2018 during the free weekend pilot scheme.

(12) The Total cost incurred on weekends for each of the above services for the time period 8th July 2017 to May 2018 during the free weekend pilot scheme.

(13) The Total extra cost incurred on weekends for each of the above services for the time period 8th July 2017 to May 2018 as a result of extra services, extra manpower etc to provide the free weekend pilot scheme."

Request three ATISN 12559 – dated 13 July 2018

"Could the Welsh Government please provide the following information.

(1) Could the Welsh Government please provide a full list of the TrawsCymru Strategic Management Board ie job title and organisation. ?

(2) Could the Welsh Government please provide the job title and organisation of the Chairman of the TrawsCymru Strategic Management Board ?

(3) Could the Welsh Government please give specific details of which "Trawscymru issues" the TrawsCymru Strategic Management Board agreed to a "joint position of all Board members" on ?

(4) Could the Welsh Government please say whether the "joint position of all members of the Board" was dealt with at a meeting ,or by email, or by phone, or by any other means .?

(5) If the "joint position of the TrawsCymru Strategic Management Board" was agreed at a meeting could the Welsh Government please provide the date of the meeting and say whether the "joint position" was minuted at the meeting . Could the Welsh Government please provide the text within the meeting notes which dealt with the "joint position" ?

(6)) If the "joint position of the TrawsCymru Strategic Management Board" was agreed at a meeting could the Welsh Government please provide a full list of the TrawsCymru Strategic Management Board members who attended the meeting at which "the joint position of all members of the Board" was

arrived at as stated in the Trawscymru Network Manager's letter of 09/07/2018 ?

(7) If the "joint position of the TrawsCymru Strategic Management Board" was agreed at a meeting could the Welsh Government please say whether each of the "Trawscymru issues" was discussed at the meeting and could the Welsh Government please say whether discussion on each of the "Trawscymru issues" was minuted at the meeting ?.

{8) If the "joint position of the TrawsCymru Strategic Management Board" was agreed by email, or by phone or by any other means could the Welsh Government please provide the job title and organisation of the person who took the lead in organising the "joint position of the TrawsCymru Strategic Management Board". ?

(9) If the "joint position of the TrawsCymru Strategic Management Board" was agreed by email, or by phone or by any other means could the Welsh Government please state how each of the "Trawscymru issues" was disseminated to all the Board members to allow them to agree .a "joint position of the TrawsCymru Strategic Management Board" on all the "Trawscymru issues" ?

(10) Could the Welsh Government please say who within the Welsh Government provided the remit to Professor Cole for his 'High Level' strategic review of the TrawsCymru T3 service which links Wrexham to Barmouth.?

(11) Could the Welsh Government please provide a copy of the remit for Professor Cole's 'High Level' strategic review of the TrawsCymru T3 service which links Wrexham to Barmouth.?

(12) Could the Welsh Government please state the date on which Professor Cole produced the 'High Level' strategic review of the TrawsCymru T3 service which links Wrexham to Barmouth ?.

(13) Could the Welsh Government please state when and how I can access a full copy of the Professor Cole's 'High Level' strategic review of the TrawsCymru T3 service which links Wrexham to Barmouth ?.

(14) Could the Welsh Government please state why the review by Professor Cole does not contain any mention of an Aberyswyth to Wrexham Trawscymru route ?

(15) Could the Welsh Government please state why, despite the fact that it is not mentioned in Professor Cole's review , the Trawscymru Network Manager states in his letter that Professor Cole has not recommended a Trawscymru Aberystwyth to Wrexham service.?

(16) Could the Welsh Government please provide the relevant text from within the 'High Level' strategic review document of the TrawsCymru T3 service which links Wrexham to Barmouth, which gives the recommendation by Professor Cole to not provide a Trawscymru Aberystwyth to Wrexham service ?

(17) Could the Welsh Government please provide the reasons that Professor Cole gave for not recommending a Trawscymru Aberystwyth to Wrexham service ?

(18) Could the Welsh Government please provide the relevant text from within the review document which gives the reasons that Professor Cole gave for not recommending a Trawscymru Aberystwyth to Wrexham service ?

(19) Could the Welsh Government please say why a review of a Trawscymru Wrexham to Aberystwyth route commissioned by the Cabinet Minister for Economy and Infrastructure on 14/11/2017 has not been carried out ?

(20) Could the Welsh Government please state when and how I can access a full copy of the review/evaluation/justification document of the TrawsCymru T10/T11 service (Machynlleth to Wrexham) ?

(21) Could the Welsh Government please state when the review of the TrawsCymru T10/T11 service (Machynlleth to Wrexham) was or will be placed in the public domain for public consultation ?

(22) Could the Welsh Government please state which organisations have been consulted regarding the TrawsCymru T10/T11 service (Machynlleth to Wrexham) ?

(23) Could the Welsh Government please state when and how I can access a full copy of the review/evaluation/justification document of the proposed TrawsCymru Llandudno/Rhyl to Wrexham via Ruthin service ?"