

**P-05-761 Demand Funding from the Welsh Government to Support Autism Spectrum Connections Cymru – Correspondence from the petitioner to the Committee, 29.01.18**

Dear Petitions Committee.

I am very disappointed with the response received from the Welsh government to my petition under the reference number, P-05-761.

I feel that there is no substance to the response and the Welsh Government are clearly refusing to answer any of the questions raised throughout the duration of this petition's consideration.

The Welsh Government don't appear to be accountable to anyone, and why is there a need to be so evasive with the responses?

Funding a helpful resource for me and many others as individuals living with autism should be a priority of the strategy.

The Welsh Government should be ashamed of itself for the lack of transparency in the development of the autism strategy and the apparent bias towards certain organisations.

According to the FOI published on the Welsh Government's website under the reference number, ATISN 10984, the Welsh Government do have the information for how autism services in Wales are funded and you are not telling me this information. Details of this particular FOI can be found from viewing this link, <http://gov.wales/docs/decisions/2017/health/170105atish10984ltr.pdf>.

The Welsh Government has information about all of the following points relating to the autism strategy. These points are quoted below, (taken directly from the FOI letter dated the 4th of January, 2017);

"1. Copies of all email and letters exchanged between Welsh Government Social Services officials and the national co-ordinator for the Autism Development Team in the WLGA and/or any other representative of the WLGA.

2. Copies of all minutes of meetings held between Welsh Government Social Services officials and the national co-ordinator for the Autism Development Team in the WLGA and/or any other representative of the WLGA.

3. Copies of all notes made of telephone conversations and conferences exchanged between Welsh Government Social Services officials and the national co-ordinator for the Autism Development Team in the WLGA/ and/or any other representatives of the WLGA."

The details of these FOIs are particularly concerning. They show how the WLGA are profiting immensely at the expense of public money that could be used for autism resources in Wales.

Nothing in the strategy proves that the Welsh Government are spending some of the funding on the third sector which is a duty placed within the social care and well-being act.

The FOI mentioned above is very interesting. The investigation showed that there has been no procurement during the roll out of the autism strategy. The WLGA are profiting immensely from the autism strategy.

There appears to be no evidence of any of the plans for an integrated autism service and have never been formally tendered for or proposed. This seems especially strange considering ASCC's previous response.

Why have the points that ASCC have raised in their response not been addressed?

Can they provide any evidence that funding has been allocated to the third sector?  
What are the procurement processes, how is it ensured that there is equality of opportunity for all?

You haven't even mentioned anything about the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) and not to mention the influence of the WLGA on how funding is allocated to the regional boards.

I have absolutely no confidence in the Welsh Government in their development of the autism strategy.

Regards,

Aled Thomas.