



Blocking GB News

4 April 2024

Request for Information.

Thank you for your request received on 7 March in which you asked:

It has been reported that the Welsh Senedd has spent £233,000 on software with the intent of blocking an independent UK based news agency from being shown within the Senedd walls.

- 1. Can you confirm if this is true.*
- 2. If true what was the justification behind blocking GBNews, and not any of the many other news agencies who operate within the UK of GB, especially when it has cost the tax-payer £233,000?*
- 3. Who cleared the invoice for payment?*
- 4. What was the software that was purchased that was used to block GBNews?*
- 5. What is the process the software uses to block GBNews?*
- 6. Can you name the company that installed the software that was used to block GBNews?*
- 7. Ordinarily to block a service from being accessed on a public facing computer network the IT department would add the undesirable service to a 'blacklist' on the network firewall, why wasn't this done instead?*

Please see response below.

- 1. Can you confirm if this is true.*

This is incorrect. There are no costs relating to removing GB News from televisions in the Welsh Parliament, therefore we hold no recorded information relating to your request

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Caerdydd, CF99 1SN

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- 2. If true what was the justification behind blocking GBNews, and not any of the many other news agencies who operate within the UK of GB, especially when it has cost the tax-payer £233,000?*

Please see our response to question 1.

- 3. Who cleared the invoice for payment?*

Please see our response to question 1.

- 4. What was the software that was purchased that was used to block GBNews?*

No software was purchased to remove GB News from televisions in the Welsh Parliament, therefore we hold no recorded information relating to your request.

- 5. What is the process the software uses to block GBNews?*

Channel provision and the selection of channels to stream is a built-in feature of the internal television system's central management system.

- 6. Can you name the company that installed the software that was used to block GBNews?*

As indicated in response to question 4, no software was purchased. However, the internal television system was installed by Senedd AV Engineers, Tripleplay and NEP Bow Tie.

- 7. Ordinarily to block a service from being accessed on a public facing computer network the IT department would add the undesirable service to a 'blacklist' on the network firewall, why wasn't this done instead?*

GB News is not blocked on the Senedd's IT network. Members and staff are still able to watch GB news using other means but is not being facilitated by the Commission internal system.

Yours sincerely

Buddug Saer
Freedom of Information Manager
Welsh Parliament

Your request has been considered according to the principles set out in the **Code of Practice on Public Access to Information**. If you have any questions regarding this response please contact me. If you feel you have cause for complaint, please follow the guidance below.

Cause for concern or complaint with your FOI response?

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Parliament's handling of your request, you can request an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Freedom of Information Manager at:

Information-request@senedd.wales or in writing to

Welsh Parliament
Governance and Assurance
Cardiff Bay
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If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

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