

**Force Disclosure Unit**

Wiltshire Police HQ

London Road

Devizes

Wiltshire

SN10 2DN

Tel 101 ext 62005

www.wiltshire.police.ukdisclosure@wiltshire.pnn.police.ukDate: 7th May 2021

Your ref: FOI

Our ref: FOI 2021 / 265

Reply contact name is: Kerry Merritt

I write in connection with your request for information dated 23rd March 2021 concerning Complaints by female officers.

I am required by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to handle all requests in a manner that is blind as to the identity and motives of the requestor. Any information released as a response to a request is regarded as being published and therefore in the public domain without caveat.

Your request for information has now been considered and having consulted our Professional Standards Department I am now able to respond as follows.

You wrote:

Please can you tell me how many formal complaints female officers have made regarding sexual discrimination or sexual harassment at work over the last three years (to the present day)?

For each complaint, please can you give me:

- a) details about / a description of the complaint
- b) the outcome of the complaint

If you can also give the following info, please do, but if this will take you over the cost threshold or involve personal information, please leave it out:

- c) the current employment status of the officer(s) being complained about including if they are suspended
- d) the current employment status of the complainant

Our response:

Please can you tell me how many formal complaints female officers have made regarding sexual discrimination or sexual harassment at work over the last three years (to the present day)?

Total between 2018 and 2021 = 9



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

For each complaint, please can you give me:

- a) details about / a description of the complaint
- b) the outcome of the complaint
- c) the current employment status of the officer(s) being complained about including if they are suspended
- d) the current employment status of the complainant

Please note there are very few that that relate specifically to sexual harassment, however I have included the other similar reports that could amount to that type of behaviour.

Please note there are 3 conduct investigations that were commenced in 2020 and 2021, however these matters are still ongoing therefore it would be harmful to those involved to release information at this time. As a result, this part of your request is exempt by virtue of the following exemption:

Section 40 (2) – Personal Information.

Section 40 is an absolute exemption and therefore there is no requirement to articulate the harm or conduct a Public Interest test.

- **Allegation against a male Police Officer of inappropriate comments and tactile behaviour off duty towards a female member of police staff. The report was received from a police officer colleague, the victim did not wish to pursue a complaint. Closed no further action.**
- **Allegation against a male Police Officer of inappropriate behaviour towards a female officer whilst off duty. The report was received from a police officer colleague, the victim did not wish to pursue a complaint however the subject officer received a final written warning.**
- **Allegation of inappropriate comments made by a male Police Officer towards a female member of police staff whilst on duty. This was reported by a Police Officer colleague however the victim did not wish to pursue a complaint. Closed no further action.**
- **An allegation of harassment by a male police staff member against a female police officer member both on and off duty. This was reported by the victim. Outcome – no further action.**
- **An allegation of inappropriate behaviour by a male member of police staff towards female members of police staff on and off duty, reported anonymously. Officer was suspended and the matter referred to the IOPC, Officer resigned and is now on the barred and advisory register after allegations were upheld.**
- **An allegation of inappropriate behaviour by a male Special Constable against a female Special Constable whilst on duty. This was reported by the victim however they did not support a criminal prosecution. This was referred to IOPC, officer suspended during the investigation, allegations were upheld and dealt with via the Reasonable Proportionate Review Process.**

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the Constabulary, when refusing to provide information (because the information is exempt) to provide you the applicant with a notice which: (a) states that fact, (b) specifies the exemption in question and (c) states (if that would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemption applies.

Exemptions applied:

Section 40(2) - Personal Information

In accordance with Section 17 of the Act, this letter acts as a Refusal Notice for this particular request.

I am satisfied that all the relevant information has been passed to me and been considered, I apologise for the delay in answering your request.

Wiltshire Police would like to thank you for the interest that you have shown in the Force.

Yours sincerely,

Kerry Merritt
Disclosure Decision Maker

Wiltshire Police offers a re-examination of your case under its review procedure.



Force Disclosure Unit

Wiltshire Police HQ, London Road, Devizes, Wiltshire SN10 2DN
Telephone 101 ext 62005

Freedom of Information Request Appeals Procedure

1. Who Can Ask for a Review

Any person who has requested information from Wiltshire Police, which has been dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act, is entitled to complain and request an internal review, if they are dissatisfied with the response they received.

2. How to Request a Review

Requests for review of a Freedom of Information request must be made in writing to the:
Force Disclosure Unit
Wiltshire Police Headquarters,
London Road, Devizes,
Wiltshire,
SN10 2DN

Email at disclosure@wiltshire.pnn.police.uk.

The reference number, date of the request and details of why the review is being requested must be included. Requests for review should be brought to the attention of the Force Disclosure Unit within 20 working days of the Force's response to the original FoI request.

3. Review Procedure

Receipt of a request for review will be acknowledged in writing to include confirmation of the reasons for the review. The review will be conducted by another Decision Maker, who is independent from the original Decision Maker. The Force Disclosure Unit will set a target date for a response. The response will be made as soon as is practicable with the intention to complete the review within twenty working days. In more complex cases the review may take up to 40 working days.

The Independent Decision Maker will conduct a review of the handling of the request for information and of decisions taken, including decisions taken about where the public interest lies in respect of exempt information where applicable. The review enables a re-evaluation of the case, taking into account the matters raised by the complaint.

4. Conclusion of the Appeal

On completion of the review the Independent Decision Maker will reply to the complainant with the result of the review. If the complainant is still dissatisfied following the review they should contact the Information Commissioner to make an appeal. The Information Commissioner can be contacted via the following details:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Tel: 01625 545 700
Fax: 01625 524 510
Email: mail@ico.gsi.gov.uk