

**Force Disclosure Unit**

Wiltshire Police HQ

London Road

Devizes

Wiltshire

SN10 2DN

Tel 101 ext 62005

www.wiltshire.police.ukdisclosure@wiltshire.pnn.police.uk

XXXXXX – by email

Date: 2nd December 2021

Your ref: FOI

Our ref: FOI 2021 / 951

Reply contact name is: Nick Penny

Dear XXXXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 12th November 2021 concerning Officers investigated for inappropriate use of social media.

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 I am not obliged to supply all of the information you have requested.

You wrote :

Please provide details of how many officers have been investigated for inappropriate use of social media since 2018.

Please break down the figures by year.

Please include WhatsApp in this, as well as Facebook, twitter and other social media platforms.

Please provide details of:

- the nature of the allegations against the officer(s), please give as much detail as possible
- the rank of the officer(s) involved
- the outcome of the investigation - eg. officers dismissed/given a written warning.

Our response:

The answers to your request are as follows :-



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Officers Investigated

The number of Police Officers that have been investigated by year for inappropriate use of social media have been as follows :-

2018	9	(this covered 5 different cases)
2019	0	
2020	0	
2021 (to date)	4	(this covered 3 different cases)

Details of each case are as follows :-

2018

Case A – WhatsApp – Inappropriate content of team WhatsApp group, other users were offended. Management Action was issued to 4 of the 5 officers.

Case B – WhatsApp – Inappropriate image. Police Officer was ethically Interview initially; Management Action followed.

Case C – Facebook – Inappropriate content and image, Police Officer received Management Action.

Case D – Facebook – inappropriate comments, Police Officer received Management Action.

Case E – Facebook – inappropriate comments, Police Officer received Management Action.

2021

Case F - Facebook – Inappropriate content, Police Officer received Management Action.

Case G - Facebook – Inappropriate content, Police Officer received Management Action.

Case H – WhatsApp - Operational matters discussed using the app – the 2 officers involved were dealt with under the reflective practice review process.

Please Note

- All of the 13 officers involved in the above 8 cases were Police Constables
- The level of detail provided above for each of these cases is the limit of what can be disclosed in this response without attracting specific exemptions (eg Section 40, Personal Information, etc).
- There have been no Police Officers dismissed in any of the 4 years 2018-2021 to date for their conduct on WhatsApp and other social media sites.
- Wiltshire Police has a robust social media policy and as such, numbers of social media investigations are low.

- We have to rely on the accuracy of the Centurion Case Management system and as such, it is possible there may be other investigations that we have not located. It is not possible to search under 'Social Media', instead breaches of the Standards of Professional Behaviour of this nature are recorded under 'Orders and Instructions' (not following force policies).
- Further to this, it is likely other minor breaches have been dealt with by local managers in line with the Reflective Practice Review Process.
- Wiltshire Police continues to reinforce the need to only use social media for personal use and not to put anything on public systems linking them to working for the Police Service, and to only put things on that are appropriate in nature.

I am satisfied that all the relevant information has been passed to me and been considered in the light of your request within the time constraints applicable under the legislation.

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

Yours sincerely,

Nick Penny
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