

**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: 24th May 2022

Your ref: FOI

Our ref: FOI 2022 / 386

Reply contact name is: Nick Penny

Dear XXXXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 3rd May 2022 concerning 999 calls, offences committed by bailiffs, debt collectors, etc and headcount of warranted and unwarranted officers / staff.

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 the information you have requested.

You wrote:

I would be grateful if you could provide the following operational statistical information under FOI.

1. The number of 999 calls received over the past 5 years on a yearly basis.
 - 1.1. Specifically, the number of 999 on a yearly basis calls related to attendance of singularly or as a group:
 - 1.1.1. Bailiffs,
 - 1.1.2. High court enforcement officers and
 - 1.1.3. Debt collectors
 - 1.2. The total number of criminal charges against Bailiffs; a,b,c above on scene, for breach of any law, including but not exclusively;

- 1.2.1. Mifseasance,
 - 1.2.2. Fraud,
 - 1.2.3. Highways act,
 - 1.2.4. S68 Aggravated trespass,
 - 1.2.5. Perjury,
 - 1.2.6. Stalking.
2. The number of Charges brought against Bailiffs, resulting from Bailiffs on scene at private properties.
 - 2.1. The number of arrests of non-bailiffs when 'Bailiffs' a,b,c above on scene at Private properties.
 - 2.2. Number of 'no crime incidents' as a result of 999 calls referencing 'Bailiffs' a,b,c above on scene.
3. Number of Warranted Detectives in the force of any rank.
4. Number of 'civilian investigators' with no power to obtain evidence.
5. Number of warranted Police officers under investigation (any reason) for the same time period.

Our response:

The information that you are requesting for the majority of your request (namely questions 1.1, 1.2, 2 and 5) is not stored in a way which permits easy retrieval.

With regard to Question 1.1 and 2.2, our Storm (call log) system does not possess a field in which the call taker can record the whether the call related to the attendance at a property of either a bailiff, a high court enforcement officer or a debt collector.

The only way to ascertain whether this was the case or not would be to read each and every call log to determine whether the call related to the attendance at a property of one of those individuals and make a record of it.

Given that – for the 5 year time period you require – Wiltshire Police have received nearly 475,000 individual 999 calls, I am absolutely confident that to locate, retrieve and extract the information you seek would by far exceed the time obligations upon this authority to comply, and in so doing would exceed the fees limits. This is set at £450 calculated at a flat rate of £25 per hour for those work activities comprising of confirming the information is held, locating it, retrieving it and extracting it.

With regard to Questions 1.2 and 2.1, whilst our crime recording systems are sophisticated we do not have a reliable method of recording the information you require in fields that can be used for searches.

Generally we record crimes under specific Home Office Crime Codes or “generic” offence categories such as Violence Against The Person, Theft, Burglary and so on.

There are no specific crime codes (Home Office or otherwise) that are devoted to offences committed specifically by bailiffs, high court enforcement officers or debt collectors. The types of offences that could be committed by these officials could fall into virtually ANY specific crime code such as Violence Against The Person, Criminal Damage, Theft or even Sexual Offences depending on the type of offence committed.

Whilst we do have a number of specific fields on our database upon which we can undertake specific searches, such as “Occupation”, these fields are not mandatory and in reality are seldom used (if at all). The content of the Occupation field cannot be relied upon in which to undertake searches for roles such as bailiff, debt collector and so on – in many cases this may not even have been known when the offence was recorded – and certainly not for the purposes of publishing information in the public domain such as an FOI response.

The only way to ascertain the information you require for questions 1.2 and 2.1 would be to access and read each and every crime occurrence to see whether it involved one of those officials, note whether any offences were committed and an charges brought and – if so – make a new note of the relevant details.

Given that Wiltshire Police generally record in excess of 40,000 individual crimes in any given year, I am absolutely confident to locate, retrieve and extract the information you seek would by far exceed the time obligations upon this authority to comply, and in so doing would once again exceed the fees limits – simply for these questions on their own.

In respect of Q5, all of our information related to misconduct, gross misconduct and complaints cases is stored on a database of ours called Centurion.

Centurion is an old legacy system which is very limited in terms of the information that is held and the fields that can be used to hold data and undertake automated searches based on specific parameters.

There are no fields within Centurion where it is possible to record whether a case relates specifically to a warranted Officer, an Officer with no warranted powers or a member of civilian/support staff.

As it stands today, the only way to identify the information you require for Q5 would be to access and read each and every case on Centurion for the time period you require and ascertain whether or not it related to a warranted officer and create a note of it.

Given that in the 5 year period you have requested, there have been in excess of 4,500 cases recorded on Centurion that relate either to Conduct Matters or Complaints against members of Wiltshire Police. Even allowing a very generous 2 minutes per record, I am absolutely confident that to locate, retrieve and extract the information you seek would by far exceed the time obligations upon this authority to comply, and in so doing would exceed the fees limits simply for this one individual question.

Please Note

With respect to questions 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2 and 5 it also needs to be noted that – where no information exists today – there is no obligation on an Authority to create new information in order to simply answer an FOI request.

Although excess cost removes the forces’ obligations under the Freedom of Information Act, as a gesture of goodwill I have supplied information, relative to your request, retrieved or available before it was realised that the fees limit would be exceeded. I trust this is helpful, but it does not

affect our legal right to rely on the fees regulations for the remainder of your request. What I am able to provide you are the answers documented below :-

Question 1

The total number of 999 calls received by Wiltshire Police over the last 5 completed years is as follows :-

Year	Total 999 calls received
2017	85,625
2018	93,328
2019	97,366
2020	94,530
2021	103,176

Question 3

The number of warranted Detectives in Force (of any rank) is 219 – as at 30th April 2022.

Question 4

Recent communication between us in order to clarify exactly what you mean by this question resulted in you confirming you wanted the following information :-

“a simple numbers ratio of civilian to warranted officers working on public facing and crime would suffice”

As of 30th April 2022, I can confirm our establishment numbers were as follows :-

Police Officers	1,134	this includes seconded officers and those on career breaks
Support Staff	1,041	
PCSO's	114	
Total Support Staff	1,155	

It is very difficult to identify an exact number of those 1,155 Support Staff that work in public-facing roles and deal predominantly with “crime”, as we - like most Forces – have numerous small Teams within our organisation undertaking a variety of different roles, some members of which are public-facing and some not, some members dealing with crime and some not.

In reality, almost all Support Staff could be described as being customer facing, each member of the Disclosure Unit and Professional Standards Team(s) - just to provide an example - deal with member of the public on an almost daily basis, however neither deal with “crime” per-se.

Indeed, it is arguable that the support staff that are customer facing and also deal with crime is open to conjecture and interpretation. However, under our Section 16 obligation to be as helpful as possible to an applicant, I have discussed this at length with our Establishment Team and the

best estimate as to the number of Support Staff individuals that are customer facing and who work on "crime" currently is as shown below :-

PCSO's	114	(CCTV enquiries, house to house, local enquiries, etc)
Control Room	66	(Take calls, record crimes and incidents, etc)
Enquiry Offices	19	(Man enquiry offices, deal with members of public reporting crimes, etc)
LCI's	66	(Interview, investigate, etc)
Escort officers	9	(Transport prisoners, CCTV and house to house enquiries, etc)
PPD	95	(DA, Child Abuse, Public Protection Teams dealing with MOP's and crime)
Horizon	19	(Deal with victim's right to review, support to victims of crime, etc)
Total	388	

With regards to the figures provided for Q4, the following points should be noted :-

- These figures are a snap-shot as at April 30th 2022
- Our Establishment (headcount) numbers change daily in line with retirees, dismissals, new recruits/starters and individuals moving between teams and/or changing responsibilities
- There may be other Support Staff not listed above in the total of 388 that also work on "crime"

Ordinarily under our section 16 duty to provide advice and assistance, we would advise you how to refine your request in respect of questions 1.1, 1.2, 2 and 5 to a more manageable level. However, due to the difficulties outlined above, I cannot see how this can be achieved in this particular case.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the Wiltshire Police, when refusing to provide such 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.

The exemption applicable to the information requested is:

Section 12: Exemption where cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit

- (1) Section 1(1) does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit.

In accordance with section 17 of the Act, this letter represents a Refusal Notice for this particular request.

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