

**Force Disclosure Unit**

Wiltshire Police HQ
London Road
Devizes
Wiltshire SN10 2DN
Telephone: 101
Extn: 62005
e-mail

disclosure@wiltshire.police.uk

Date: 24 June 2022

Your ref

Our ref: FOI 2022/335

Reply contact name is: **Lloyd Tilbury**

Dear,

I write in connection with your request for information, dated 9th April 2022 concerning Operation Hydrant.

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.

Following receipt of your request, research was conducted by the Public Protection and Team Performance Departments of Wiltshire Police.

Your request for information has now been considered and I am not obliged to supply the information you have requested.

You wrote:

In April last year (2021) the NSPCC-managed Report Abuse in Education helpline was set up in response to thousands of reports of recent and non-recent abuse of young people, particularly in schools and colleges.

By December, of the 979 reports into the helpline, it was reported 95 allegations were referred on to police forces through the national child sexual abuse hub at Operation Hydrant.

As a Freedom of Information request can I ask whether your force received any of these 95 referrals? If so, how many?

If you did not receive any could you please specify that.

Have any other referrals been passed to police from the same helpline between December 31 2021 and April 1 2022? If so, how many?

other forces have supplied this information when the numbers are low. There is no risk of ID by cross-referencing any available data so I'm appealing this decision please



Response:

On reviewing your original Freedom of Information request, the response provided to you and your request for an Internal Review, I can respond as follows. Although in my view the previous exemption (40(2) – Personal Information) was incorrectly applied, I believe that another exemption is applicable.

The information that you are requesting is not stored in a way which allows for easy retrieval. To confirm, Wiltshire Police do not have the search capability to automatically gather this type of information, as although there is a 'Op Hydrant' flag it is not accurate, meaning that the only way to gather this information for the requested time period would require manually reviewing each and every sexual offence individually to determine whether or not it has come from Operation Hydrant.

Under the circumstances 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. Therefore the whole of the request falls under the exemption of section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Ordinarily under our section 16 duty to provide advice and assistance, we would advise you of a way to refine your request to a more manageable level. However, due to the difficulties outlined above, I cannot see how this could 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,

Lloyd Tilbury
Principal Decision Maker

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



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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 Manager
Wiltshire Police Headquarters,
London Road, Devizes,
Wiltshire,
SN10 2DN

Email at disclosure@wiltshire.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 Manager within 20 working days of the Force's response to the original Fol 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 Manager 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

Please note that the ICO's offices will be closed for the foreseeable future and are therefore unable to receive correspondence via post.

If you should wish you contact them, please visit <https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/>