



Via email



Force Disclosure Unit
Wiltshire Police HQ
London Road
Devizes
Wiltshire
SN10 2DN
www.wiltshire.police.uk
disclosure@wiltshire.police.uk

Date: 19 January 2023

Your ref: **FOI**

Our ref: FOI 2022/994

Reply contact name is

Dear,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 19/12/2022 concerning utilities warrants.

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:

Please provide the following information. I make this request under the Freedom of Information Act.

1. Since 1 July 2021, up to the date of your response to this request, please state how many times police officers attended domestic properties in your force area where an energy supplier or their agent (debt collectors and such) was forcing entry. These are known to courts as utility warrants or warrants of entry, but may be known under a different name to police forces. I am not interested in warrants on behalf of water suppliers, only gas or electric.
2. Please state how many of these calls for attendance were made by the energy supplier or their agents.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

3. How many of these calls were made by energy suppliers or their agents for attendance in advance of the warrant being used (ie for officers to arrive at the scene before the energy company or debt agent tried to force entry using the warrant), rather than in response to an ongoing public order incident at the property after they had tried to enter the property?
4. Please state if possible how many of these warrants were for the installation of a prepayment gas or electricity meter.
5. If possible, please provide a list of each attendance, with the date and the name of the energy company or debt agent that made the attendance request.
6. Please state whether these attendances were counted as “special police services” and were provided for a charge, pursuant to the power in s.25(1) of the Police Act 1996.
7. If so, please state how much was paid to the force for attending these incidents during this period.

Response:

The type of information you require is not stored in a way which allows for easy retrieval.

When recording call of this nature, Wiltshire Police do not have a specific field in which to indicate that officers have attended such properties in these circumstances. Such calls can be logged under different headings such as “anti-social behaviour”, “disorder”, or “other”, depending on the situation unfolding at the scene. To find the information you have requested, we would need to manually peruse all relevant reports within the timeframe given.

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 obligation 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 in obtaining the requested information, as outlined above, I cannot think of a way in which this could be achieved.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the Constabulary, 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.

Please contact me if you would like to discuss the withheld information.

Yours sincerely

Force Disclosure Decision Maker

The 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.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

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/>