

WILTSHIRE POLICE



XXXXXXX
By email

**Force Disclosure Unit
Police Headquarters**
London Road
DEVIZES
Wiltshire
SN10 2DN

Date 15th December 2023

Our Ref FOI 2023-974

Dear XXXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 9th October 2023, concerning hosting contracts with third party providers. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding to your request for information.

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 ICT department at Wiltshire Police.

Your request for information has now been considered and I am able to respond as follows.

You wrote and our response:

I wish to submit a request to the organisation around their hosting contract(s) with 3rd party providers.

You may have received the same request in the past and this information sent has now expired and I require an update as soon as possible for the following.

The type of contract I wish to see is below:

1. Dedicated hosting- Managed environment
2. Co-Location- hosting allows a business to still own their own server equipment; however, instead of storing it in their own data centre, they instead are able to store it in rented space in a colocation hosting centre.
3. Cloud Hosting- [Cloud hosting services](#) provide hosting for websites on virtual servers, which pull their computing resources from extensive underlying networks of physical web servers.

Not all of these will be applicable to the organisation.

For the different types of hosting services, can you provide me with the following information:

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1. Type of hosting – Dedicated, Co-Location, Cloud Hosting, Other?

Halo **Dedicated**

QTC **Dedicated**

DEMS This information is exempt by virtue of Section 31(1)(a)(b) - Law Enforcement. Please see the Harm and Public Interest Tests at the end of the questions.

2. Who is the supplier of the contract? If possible can you also provide me with the name of the vendor, if applicable?

Halo **Halo Service Solutions Ltd**

QTC **QuickThink Cloud**

DEMS This information is exempt by virtue of Section 31(1)(a)(b) - Law Enforcement. Please see the Harm and Public Interest Tests at the end of the questions.

3. What is the annual contract value for each contract?

Estimated cost of next renewal

Halo **£29,340**

QTC **£6,784**

DEMS **£146,838**

4. What type of cloud environment?

Private Cloud- a distinct and secure cloud based environment in which only the specified client can operate.

Public Cloud - where cloud services are provided in a virtualized environment, constructed using pooled shared physical resources, and accessible over a public network such as the internet.

Hybrid- integrated cloud service utilising both private and public clouds to perform distinct functions within the same organisation.

Halo **Private cloud**

QTC **Private cloud**

DEMS This information is exempt by virtue of Section 31(1)(a)(b) - Law Enforcement. Please see the Harm and Public Interest Tests at the end of the questions.

5. What is the original start date of the contract agreement? If there are more than one contract please provide me with the start date for each contract.

Halo **29.05.2020**

QTC 07.02.2021

DEMS 21.12.2018

6. What is the actual expiry date of the contract agreement? If there are more than one contract please provide me with the expiry date for each contract.

Halo 02.06.2025

QTC 06.02.2024

DEMS 20.12.2024

7. When will the organisation plan to review this contract? If there are more than one contract please provide me with the review date for each contract.

We do not have review dates recorded, however we would generally review a contract a few months before the expiry date.

8. What is the contract period in years? Please include whether the agreement has any extension periods?

The contract period is the end date minus the start date. Halo is the only contract that has an extension period specified. Both the QTC and DEMS contracts incorporated the option to extend the terms of the contracts, however these have been exercised.

9. What services are provided under the contract? Please do not put hosting information such as web hosting, file storage, hosted application. The more information the better,

This information is not noted within the system.

10. Can you please provide me with the contract officer responsible for this contract? Complete contact details if possible name, title, contact email and number.

We do not currently have a Contracts Officer.

Section 31 - Harm and Public Interest Tests

The Harm Test process requires Wiltshire Police to consider any possible harm that might arise as a result of placing the requested information into the public domain. This process considers the potential harm to:

- Individuals
- The community as a whole
- Wiltshire Police and the wider policing service
- Other bodies

Policing is an information-led activity, and information assurance (which includes information security) is fundamental to how the Police Service manages the challenges faced. In order to comply with statutory requirements, the College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice for Information Assurance has been put in place to ensure the delivery of core operational policing by providing appropriate and consistent protection for the information assets of member organisations, see below link:

<https://www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/information-management/>

Commercial DEMS Providers are vitally important in the Criminal Justice system - not only do they play a crucial role by supporting UK Policing with the security and storage of vast amounts of digital evidence that can be gathered or generated during investigations, but they help manage the chain of custody; keeping relevant audit logs so that the digital evidence can be relied upon in Court.

Whilst not in any way questioning the motives of the applicant, it must be taken into account when considering potential harm that a disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 is made to the world at large, rather than a private correspondence. Specific details of the DEMS used by Wiltshire Police would be extremely useful to those involved in criminality as it would enable them to create a map of those most critical to the Law-and-Order sector, and specifically target those proving the most assistance.

The risk of such is significant and real, whether it is in relation to the DEMS or any other aspect of policing within the context of digital evidence, such as the use of Forensic Service Providers. For example, in 2019 Eurofins (one of the UKs largest FSPs) suffered a highly sophisticated ransomware attack which severely disrupted UK Policing and the Criminal Justice system.

<https://www.helpnetsecurity.com/2019/06/24/eurofins-ransomware-attack/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/science/2019/jul/05/eurofins-ransomware-attack-hacked-forensic-provider-pays-ransom>

As demonstrated, the threat of cyberattacks is clear and remains ever present, which if successful, such an attack would have devastating consequences for law enforcement as a whole.

Factors favouring Disclosure - Confirming the names of DEMS providers would be of interest to the public, namely give insight into the solutions used by the police to manage and store vast amounts of digital evidence.

Factors favouring Non-Disclosure - Measures are put in place to protect the community we serve and as evidenced within the harm, to provide the information requested would allow individuals intent on disrupting law enforcement to target specific companies using the information obtained to maximise the impact.

Taking into account the current security climate within the United Kingdom, and the previous Eurofins cyber-attack, no information which may aid criminality should be disclosed. It is clear that it would have an impact on a Force's ability to carry out the core duty of enforcing the law and serving the community.

The public entrust the Police Service to make appropriate decisions with regard to their safety and protection and the only way of reducing risk is to be cautious with what is placed into the public domain.

Balance Test - The Police Service is charged with enforcing the law, preventing and detecting crime and protecting the communities we serve. In order to effectively and robustly carry out those duties, external services are utilised which are vital to investigating criminal activity. Weakening the mechanisms used to investigate any type of criminal activity would have a detrimental impact on law enforcement as a whole. To provide the information requested, despite the known risks of cyber-attacks, would undermine any trust or confidence the public have in the Police Service.

Therefore, at this moment in time, it is our opinion that the balance test favours against disclosure.

Note – The following link may be of future assistance : [In-Tend Organiser - User Login](#). This has replaced the Blue Light Procurement Database and you will need to create a free account.

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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.

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 this letter acts as a Refusal Notice for those aspects of your request.

Exemptions applied:

Section 31(1)(a)(b) - Law Enforcement

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,

Abigail Standidge

Phone: 01722 547081

Email: abigail.standidge@wiltshire.police.uk

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



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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 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 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 to contact them, please visit <https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/>

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