

**Force Disclosure Unit**

Wiltshire Police HQ

London Road

Devizes

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SN10 2DN

Tel 101 ext 62005

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XXXXXX – by E Mail

Date: 30th September 2024

Your ref: FOI

Our ref: FOI 2024 / 734

Reply contact name is: Nick Penny

Dear XXXXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 7<sup>th</sup> August 2024 concerning our Fraud Team.

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 – having consulted our Fraud, Establishment, HR and Finance Teams - I am now able to respond as follows.

**You wrote**

Q1 For every calendar year from 2011 to 2024, could you please confirm the total number of officers in the fraud squad in your Constabulary?

Q2 Could you please confirm the total salary expense for officers in the fraud squad of your Constabulary, for every calendar year from 2011 to 2024?

Q3 Could you please confirm the total salary expense for officers in your Constabulary, for every calendar year from 2011 to 2024?

Q4 Could you please confirm how many individuals your Constabulary have sentenced for crimes relating to fraud, and the length of the sentence they received, for every calendar year from 2011 to 2024?

**Our Response**

**The information that you are requesting for Q1 is not stored in a way which permits easy retrieval.**

**There is no legal or operational reason for us to record staffing levels by Team within the Force.**



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Our current Resource Management systems (ERP and GRS) do contain this information, however prior to their introduction (approx. 6 years ago), any historic information is held either on legacy databases or on various spreadsheets and manual records, many of which would be held in various Archive locations around the Force.

Under the circumstances I am absolutely confident that to locate, retrieve and extract the information you seek – to answer this question in full - 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.

Please also note that if one part of the request engages a Section 12 response, the whole request will engage a Section 12 response. The reason being is due to the fact that locating, retrieving and extracting any further information would only add to the already exceeded time obligations.

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

|            | Fraud    |       | Financial and Asset Investigation Team (FAIT) |       |
|------------|----------|-------|-----------------------------------------------|-------|
| Date       | Officers | Staff | Officers                                      | Staff |
| 30/04/2016 | 6        | 2     | 0                                             | 8     |
| 31/03/2017 | 5        | 2     | 0                                             | 8     |
| 31/03/2018 | 5        | 4     | 0                                             | 9     |
| 31/03/2019 | 3        | 3     | 0                                             | 9     |
| 31/03/2020 | 4        | 6     | 0                                             | 9     |
| 31/03/2021 | 3        | 6     | 0                                             | 9     |
| 31/03/2022 | 4        | 3     | 0                                             | 9     |
| 31/03/2023 | 6        | 2     | 0                                             | 9     |
| 31/03/2024 | 4        | 3     | 0                                             | 9     |

### Please Note

- Prior to FY 2014/15 we did not have a dedicated Fraud Team / Unit – officers working on Fraud crimes were part of other dedicated Teams around the Force and it is impossible to calculate historically how many individuals were involved specifically on fraud (particularly as fraud cases would have only formed a part of their overall responsibilities).
- Therefore, for Financial Years 2011/12 to 2014/15 our response for this question is No Information Held.
- Whilst numbers have been provided for the last 6 years (above), it should be noted that these staffing levels are only a snapshot taken at one point in time. During the

course of a given year, staff may have been seconded into (or out of) the Fraud Team for various operational reasons and staffing levels during a given year may have fluctuated due to operational restructuring and so on.

### Questions 2 & 3

For the above questions, please refer to the information in the following table :-

| Fin Year | Total Salary Expense |            |
|----------|----------------------|------------|
|          | Whole Force          | Fraud Team |
| 2011/12  | -                    | -          |
| 2012/13  | £57.4m               | -          |
| 2013/14  | £55.9m               | -          |
| 2014/15  | £54.9m               | £367k      |
| 2015/16  | £54.3m               | £347k      |
| 2016/17  | £53.4m               | £306k      |
| 2017/18  | £53.2m               | £241k      |
| 2018/19  | £55.9m               | £257k      |
| 2019/20  | £57.8m               | £193k      |
| 2020/21  | £60.3m               | £210k      |
| 2021/22  | £63.7m               | £199k      |
| 2022/23  | £66.9m               | £251k      |
| 2023/24  | £75.5m               | £369k      |

### Please Note

- We only hold this data in Financial Years not calendar years
- Information for FY 2011/12 pre-dates our current financial systems – No Information Held
- Prior to FY 2014/15 we did not have a dedicated Fraud Team / Unit – it is impossible to provide information for Salary Expense for officers working on Fraud crimes as they were incorporated in other dedicated Teams around the Force

### Question 4

#### No Information Held

There is no obligation on an authority to provide any form of explanation or rationale when providing a No Information Held response, however in this instance – and under our Section 16 obligation to be as helpful as possible to an applicant - I am happy to provide some additional context to you.

Wiltshire Police do not hold conviction data – this can be obtained by submitting an FOI request directly to CPS for this information

### Please Note

Since approximately 2009, all UK Police Forces have referred any crimes associated with fraudulent activity directly to Action Fraud (who are part of City of London Police).

**City of London Police hold information in respect of all Fraud crime that is reported (either directly to them or via individual Police Forces) together with information related to the number of individuals charged and/or summonsed. It might also be the case that they hold details of sentences given for Fraud offences, so they might also be able to provide you with this information as well as CPS.**

Ordinarily under our section 16 duty to provide advice and assistance, we would advise you how to refine your request in respect of question 1 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



### **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](mailto: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](mailto:mail@ico.gsi.gov.uk)