

WILTSHIRE POLICE



XXXX – By email

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

Date 16th December 2024

Our Ref FOI 2024-973

Dear XXXX,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 3rd November 2024, concerning officer allowances and bonuses.

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

You wrote:

1. For the year 2023/24, please provide the amounts officers received in:
 - a) On call allowance
 - b) Bonus payments
 - c) Removal expenses
 - d) Targeted variable payments and
 - e) Team recognition awards.
2. For parts b, c and d, please provide the number of officers concerned.
3. For part b (bonus payments) please specify the number of officers who received the maximum bonus of £2,000.
4. For part d (targeted variable payments) please break down the figure to show (i) service critical skills payments and (ii) recognition of workload payments.

Our response:

Keeping Wiltshire Safe

Section 1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) places two duties on public authorities. Unless exemptions apply, the first duty at s1(1)(a) is to confirm or deny whether the information specified in a request is held. The second duty at s1(1)(b) is to disclose information that has been confirmed as being held.

Whilst I can confirm Wiltshire Police do hold the requested information, section 12(1) of the FOIA states:-

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.

The information you are requesting, specifically regarding Q1 (e), is not stored in a way which permits for easy retrieval. Team recognition rewards are given in different ways, one of which is in the form of vouchers. In order to determine the amount that officers have received in vouchers for team recognition awards, we would be required to review individually each award that has been provided over the last year and investigate what the role of the recipient was. Unfortunately, the way this information is recorded on our systems means that even if we retrieved the data, we would not be able to confirm that it was correct for your purposes. Also, any monetary rewards provided are included within the response below for Q1 (b), however we do not have a way to break down this information between the type of bonus 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 should fall under the exemption of section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Please note:

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.

Forces may use different recording systems, therefore it may be possible some Forces can provide this information where others cannot.

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

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 can provide you with is documented below:

Question/answer:

Please note, due to our system being under a significant number of changes and updates, this information is subject to errors.

1. For the year 2023/24, please provide the amounts officers received in:

a) On call allowance

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£192,220

b) Bonus payments

£7,250

c) Removal expenses

£9,120

d) Targeted variable payments and

£302,707.46

2. For parts b, c and d, please provide the number of officers concerned.

b) 20

c) 2

d) 301

3. For part b (bonus payments) please specify the number of officers who received the maximum bonus of £2,000.

2: 1 officer received £2,000, 1 officer received £3,000

4. For part d (targeted variable payments) please break down the figure to show (i) service critical skills payments and (ii) recognition of workload payments.

(i) 282 Officers

(ii) 9 Officers

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires 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.

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

Yours sincerely,

Force Disclosure Decision Maker