

WILTSHIRE POLICE



Police Headquarters

London Road
DEVIZES
Wiltshire
SN10 2DN

Date: April 16, 2026

Our ref: FOI 2025/864

Reply contact name:

Dear,

I write in connection with your request for information dated 4th September 2025.

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 able to respond as follows.

You Wrote:

Any policies, procedures, or internal guidance used by Wiltshire Police Professional Standards Department (PSD) regarding whether officers may respond directly to complainants once a PSD decision has been issued but is within the statutory review period.

Any generic instructions, communications, or policy documents (that do not constitute personal data) issued by PSD to serving officers in such cases.

Records of the policy basis or rationale PSD relies on when instructing officers not to disclose information to complainants during the review period.

My request asked specifically for Wiltshire Police Professional Standards Department's own internal policies, procedures, and guidance regarding whether officers may respond directly to complainants once a PSD decision has been issued but is within the statutory review period. This is force-specific operational information.

The response directed me to the IOPC Statutory Guidance (2020), which is generic national guidance applicable to all police forces. The IOPC guidance sets the broad framework for complaints handling but does not contain Wiltshire Police's specific local procedures for managing officer-complainant contact during review periods. Each force is required to implement the IOPC guidance through its own local policies, and it is those local policies I requested.

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Section 21 requires that the information which is 'reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means' must be the same information that was requested. The IOPC guidance is not the same information as Wiltshire Police's internal PSD procedures. Directing me to a national framework document does not satisfy a request for force-specific policy documents.

For the avoidance of doubt, I have reviewed the IOPC Statutory Guidance 2020 and it does not contain the information I requested. It provides general principles but does not specify what individual forces permit or prohibit regarding officer contact with complainants during the review window.

Response:

On reviewing the original Freedom of Information request, the response provided and the request for an Internal Review, I do not uphold the original response and believe that the exemption (Section 21) was incorrectly applied.

To clarify, after liaising with our Professional Standards Department and Policy Officer, both have confirmed that there is no information held regarding this request.

To provide some further context, all forces follow the Police Conduct Regulations 2020 handbook for managing complaints and misconduct allegations through their Professional Standards Department. Due to this, all of the above Questions can be answered by reading it.

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,

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



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:

Keeping Wiltshire Safe

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/>