



Our Ref: 002881/20

Your Ref:

Address Correspondence to: Information Management

Date 14 September 2020

Freedom of Information Act 2000

I write further to your request for information received 28/08/2020.

I note you seek access to the following information:

- 1. How many Prevent referrals were made by Leicestershire police force to the Channel program in the years 2012; 2013; 2014; 2015; 2016; 2017; 2018; 2019?*
- 2. How many Prevent cases were managed by Leicestershire police force in the years 2012; 2013; 2014; 2015; 2016; 2017; 2018; 2019?*
- 3. Please provide a copy of Leicestershire police forces policy regarding Prevent referrals.*

Following receipt of your request, searches were conducted within Leicestershire Police to locate information relevant to your request.

Your request for information has now been considered and the information asked for is as follows: -

Statistics on prevent referrals are published annually but at a [regional level only](#), they are also are only available from 2015 onwards.

For Questions 1 & 2 and the redacted sections of the Policy

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires Leicestershire 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(s) applicable relate to your request are as follows:

- Section 24 – National Security
- Section 31 – Law Enforcement

These exemptions are qualified and require us to carry out a harm and public interest balancing test before they can be relied upon.

Evidence of Harm

Under the Act, we cannot, and do not request the motives of any application for information. We have no doubt that the vast majority of requests made under the Act are legitimate.

However, in disclosing information to one applicant, we are expressing a willingness to provide it to anyone in the world. This means that a disclosure to a genuinely interested and concerned person automatically opens it up for a similar disclosure, including those who would use the information to gain an advantage over the police.

In considering whether or not this information should be disclosed, consideration has been given to the potential harm that could be caused by disclosure.

Effective policing requires the active participation of a wide number of agencies in order for it to be successful. As a result, during the course of policing activities National Security is vitally important to protect information provided with the confidence that it will be treated confidentially. If a disclosure was made under the Act that left the Force susceptible and therefore broke this confidence, it would mean that information is not discussed and would severely impact on the process of law enforcement.

To release this information into the public domain would therefore clearly impact on our law enforcement capabilities with regards to protecting and ensuring the safety of our National Security.

Section 24 – Considerations favouring disclosure

The public are entitled to know how public funds are spent and by providing the information requested could lead to a better-informed public that can take steps to protect themselves, and any information they provide or that is held by the Police.

Section 24 – Considerations favouring non-disclosure

Providing the requested information would render Security measures less effective. This could lead to the compromise of ongoing or future operations by those criminally minded seeking to attempt to penetrate systems and security that Leicestershire Police have in place. This could damage security or infra-structure of the UK and increase the risk of harm to the public.

Section 31 – Considerations favouring disclosure

There is a public interest in disclosure of the requested information as it would allow the public to discuss the conduct of how the Police process and protect information gathered for investigations and would therefore raise the Force's accountability. It would also aid transparency and allow any failings to be discussed in the public domain.

Disclosure would also enable the public to see how public funds are spent during the course of Policing Operations.

Section 31 – Considerations favouring non - disclosure

I am of the opinion that it is not in the public interest to disclose detailed information that relates to the protection and security infrastructure on this occasion. The information requested contains a wealth of information that if disclosed, would reveal police protection and security along with other information which is vital to Law Enforcement.

It would therefore give those criminally minded an added advantage should they wish to impede a future investigation and would significantly weaken our law enforcement capabilities..

Conclusion

I believe that on balance it is **not** in the public interest to release information which you have requested on this occasion for the reasons stated above. I appreciate that this is not the decision you had hoped for but I must consider the wider position under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 which I feel necessitates the need to refuse your request under this legislation.

Leicestershire Police provides you the right to ask for a re-examination of your request under its review procedure. Letters should be addressed to Information Manager, Corporate Services Department at the above address. If you decide to request such a review and having followed the Force's full process you are still dissatisfied, then you have the right to direct your comments to the Information Commissioner who will give it consideration.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Officer

Leicestershire Police

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