



Our Ref: 001921/21

Your Ref:

Address Correspondence to: Information Management

Date 24 June 2021

I write in connection with your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), received on 04/06/2021 in which you requested the following information: -

I would like to know how many cryptocurrency 'mines', defined as the process to gain cryptocurrencies by solving cryptographic equations through the use of large amounts of computers, have been uncovered by your force for the years 2018; 2019; 2020; and present year.

For each year, How many cryptocurrency mines have been discovered during the force's 'drug warrant' raids in the listed years.

I can confirm, pursuant to s1(1)(a) of FOIA that this Force does hold the information you have requested.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires Leicestershire 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(s) applicable to the information are as follows.

Section 12 – Cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit.

'Mining' is in itself not a criminal offence, therefore to ensure accurate information in relation to this request would require a manual review of all offences in the time period requested to identify whether 'mines' were identified in the course of the investigation. This review would take in excess of 18 hours to conduct.

In order to retrieve the information you have requested would therefore be in excess of the 18 hours specified by the Home Office as the time period for which a police force should allocate to a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

In the Freedom of Information (Fees and Appropriate Limit) Regulations 2004, the current regulatory limit which has been set by the Secretary of State for public authorities, which includes the police service, is £450 for the marginal costs which are the costs of finding, sorting, editing or redacting information and disbursements (printing, photocopying etc). The Association of Chief Police Officers have agreed a national standard of an hourly rate of £25 is to be charged for the time taken. In essence therefore, the costs equate to 18 hours work per request. It will be

apparent therefore that within the time frame of 18 hours it will not be possible to extract the information to answer any of your questions.

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this letter acts as a Refusal Notice under s12(1) as the cost of providing you with the information is above the amount to which we are legally required to respond i.e. the cost of locating and retrieving the information exceeds the "appropriate level" as stated in the Freedom of Information (Fees and Appropriate Limit) Regulations 2004.

Section 16 – Duty to Assist

On discussion with a specialist within our Cyber Crime Team, Leicestershire Police can confirm 2 investigations within the time period specified in which 'mines' were identified; however, we cannot be sure that these are the only cases involving mines.

Leicestershire Police provides you the right to ask for a re-examination of your request under its review procedure. Letters should be addressed to the 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