



## **Freedom of Information Request Reference N°: FOI 000038-18**

I write in connection with your request for information received by Suffolk Constabulary on the 3 January 2018 in which you sought access to the following information:

*“Under the Freedom of Information Act, please confirm the following details in relation to the Corrie McKeague missing person inquiry:*

- 1. How many officer hours have been spent on the case*
- 2. How many officers have worked on the case*
- 3. How much the investigation has cost in £*
- 4. How many overtime hours have been spent working on the case*
- 5. How much money has been spent in overtime payments in relation to the case*
- 6. How many reported sightings you have received of Corrie McKeague”*

### **Response to your Request**

The response provided below is correct as of 11 January 2018

Suffolk Constabulary has considered your request for information and the response is below.

1. The total number of police officer hours spent on the investigation is approximately 34,000 hours. This figure does not include police staff time or overtime hours.
2. Information concerning officer numbers is not held. The level of resources working on the case has varied throughout the investigation depending on the nature and number of live enquiries. Over 25 people have been involved in the investigation in a variety of ways including investigation enquiries, management of the information coming in to the investigation, CCTV reviewing and house to house enquiries.

In addition to this 10 police officers at a time worked full time on the initial search at the landfill site. During the phase two search, the Constabulary increased the level of resources mid-way through, which resulted in between 10 – 14 police officers working on the search each day.



3. To date, the investigation has cost £1,325,000 plus salary costs of £826,000.
4. The total number of police officer overtime hours spent working on the case is over 5,600 hours. Police staff overtime hours is not held.
5. The total expenditure specifically in overtime payments is £235,000. This figure excludes overtime that will be paid in January relating to December claims.
6. Information concerning the number of reported sightings received of Corrie McKeague has not been provided as a result of exemptions within the Act.

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.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires that Suffolk Constabulary, when refusing to provide such information (because the information is exempt) are to provide you the applicant with a notice which:

- (a) States that fact
- (b) Specifies the exemption(s) in question and
- (c) States (if that would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemption(s) applies.

The information is exempt from disclosure by virtue of the following exemption(s);

### **Section 30(1)(a)(b) – Investigations**

Section 30 is a qualified class-based exemption and I am therefore obliged to consider the public interest test.

#### Factors Favouring Disclosure

Investigations are expensive and use the resources provided from public funds. To disclose information about our investigation would highlight public money is being effectively allocated.

The public would want to be assured that the investigation process has been thoroughly and appropriately reviewed throughout the course of the investigation, ensuring the investigation has been, and is being, overseen and resourced in accordance with national guidance on major investigations.



The investigation has received a great deal of public attention and by releasing information concerning our investigation process, the public will be assured that the investigation is being suitably resourced.

### Factors Favouring Non-Disclosure

Information that relates to an on-going investigation will rarely be disclosed under the FOI Act.

Any disclosure of specific information at this stage, could risk prejudicing the investigation. The Constabulary would not wish for any disclosures to be made that could damage the flow of information to the Force, consequently damaging a thorough and comprehensive investigation.

The Section 30 exemption acknowledges that there is a public interest in recognising the importance for proper conduct of investigative processes and procedures carried out by public authorities, particularly those which may lead to criminal proceedings. However this exemption is in place to ensure the preservation and maintenance of a thorough investigation.

Whilst this case remains live, disclosures about the investigation may have a detrimental impact on the prevention and detection of crime and apprehension of offenders. We are law enforcers and we aim to provide a sufficient and positive approach to the way we conduct our investigations, we would not want a disclosure of this nature to compromise this in any way.

### Balancing Test

The information requested relates to an on-going investigation. Although there is a public interest in transparency and accountability, this should not be to the detriment of an ongoing investigation. For that reason, it is very unlikely that the public interest would favour disclosure if the investigation would be compromised in any way.

To maintain a thorough investigation process, it is vital that the Constabulary publishes information in relation to live cases in a controlled fashion, as and when such disclosures are required.

The Constabulary's press office will make disclosures in a timely and ordered manner, to ensure the disclosures assist the police in their enquiries. Disclosures under FOIA must not be to the detriment of this process.

A full copy of the Freedom of Information Act (2000) can be viewed on the 'Office of Public Sector Information' web-site;

<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/>



Suffolk Constabulary is not responsible for the content, or the reliability, of the website referenced. The Constabulary cannot guarantee that this link will work all of the time, and we have no control over the availability of the linked pages.



Your Right to Request a Review of Decisions Made Under the Terms of the  
Freedom of Information Act (2000).

If you are unhappy with how your request has been handled, or if you think the decision is incorrect, you have the right to ask Suffolk Constabulary to review their decision.

Ask Suffolk Constabulary to look at the decision again.

If you are dissatisfied with the decision made by Suffolk Constabulary under the Freedom of Information Act (2000), regarding access to information, you must notify Suffolk Constabulary that you are requesting a review within 20 days of the date of its response to your Freedom of Information request. Requests for a review should be made in writing and addressed to:

*Freedom of Information Decision Maker  
Information Management Department  
Suffolk Constabulary  
Police Headquarters  
Martlesham Heath  
Ipswich  
Suffolk  
IP5 3QS  
OR  
Email: [information@suffolk.pnn.police.uk](mailto:information@suffolk.pnn.police.uk)*

In all possible circumstances Suffolk Constabulary will aim to respond to your request for us to look at our decision again within 20 working days of receipt of your request for an internal review.

The Information Commissioner.

After lodging a request for a review with Suffolk Constabulary, if you are still dissatisfied with the decision, you can apply to the Information Commissioner for a decision on whether the request for information has been dealt with in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

For information on how to make application to the Information Commissioner please visit their website at [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk) or contact them at the address shown below:

The Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF  
Telephone: 01625 545 700