



Freedom of Information Request Reference N^o: FOI 005053-17

I write in connection with your request for information received by the Norfolk and Suffolk Constabulary on the 24 May 2017 in which you sought access to the following information:

- 1) *"The cost of purchasing and installing the equipment in the suite*
- 2) *The ongoing overhead costs of the space used*
- 3) *The cost of maintaining the equipment*
- 4) *The cost of civilian and police staff to operate the equipment and to supervise defendants and offenders while they use the room*
- 5) *The cost of any extra time defendants and offenders may spend in police custody while waiting to use the video equipped room (vs being transported to court)*
- 6) *The cost of police officers processing defendants and offenders who have finished their virtual appearance (inc their processing into prison vans)*
- 7) *Any comparisons of the cost to the police of facilitating virtual justice compared to having offenders and defendants transported to court for their hearings."*

Response to your Request

The response provided below is correct as of 24 May 2017

Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies have located the following information as relevant to your request.

Norfolk and Suffolk Joint Custody have two video enabled facilities at each of the six Police Investigation Centres (PICs) using the PSN network, linked to the Courts and other users. One facility per PIC is the designated 'Virtual Court room' for defendants use, the second is a remote 'Live Link facility', for the use of officers and staff when giving evidence.

- 1) Each set of VC hardware and the initial subscriptions/connections necessary, cost £12K when installed in 2015. The annual support and service package costs is £2300 pa per unit.
- 2) The VC room is within the secure area of the Police Investigation Centre at each site, there is no specific overhead cost.
- 3) The annual support and associated service package costs is £2300.

- 4) There is no additional staff employed to operate/support Virtual Court. It is conducted as part of normal business within Joint Custody across Norfolk and Suffolk.
- 5) There is no breakdown of specific costs associated with such periods of time in police custody. The PICs are resourced based on an agreed deployment plan. Whilst in custody awaiting hearing, defendants are visited, fed and afforded their rights and entitlements just as any other detainee would be. The PICs have ample cell capacity to lodge these defendants.
- 6) As above, there is no specific costs breakdown associated with such periods of time in police custody. The PICs are resourced based on an agreed deployment plan. Whilst in custody awaiting hearing defendants are visited, fed and afforded their rights and entitlements just as any other detainee would be. When defendants who are sentenced/remanded to prison by the Court, are locked out by HMP, we can levy a nationally agreed lockout fee of £55/night. The PICs have ample cell capacity to lodge these defendants.
- 7) Whilst operation of Virtual Courts shifts physical responsibility for looking after and processing defendants from HMCTS to police, as set out above, this is currently absorbed within our existing resource structure. Overall savings are achieved across publicly funded bodies across the Criminal Justice service compared to physically transferring defendants.

Should you have any further queries concerning this request, please contact Clair Pack, FOI Decision Maker, quoting the reference number shown above.

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/>

Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies are 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 the Norfolk and Suffolk Constabulary to review their decision.

Ask Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies to look at the decision again.

If you are dissatisfied with the decision made by Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies under the Freedom of Information Act (2000), regarding access to information, you must notify the Norfolk and 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*

In all possible circumstances Norfolk and 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 Norfolk and 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 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