



Freedom of Information Request Reference N°: FOI 007700-17

I write in connection with your request for information received by Suffolk Constabulary on the 15 December 2017 in which you sought access to the following information:

1. *"The dates on which the board/panel has met since March 2014 or, if the board meets on a regular basis, the frequency of those meetings (ie, every week/month/quarter?)*
2. *The average length of time between an application being submitted and the applicant being informed of disclosure/non-disclosure. If it would be easier and quicker to find, the shortest time and the longest time would suffice.*
3. *Of the requests made under the DVDS – "Right to Ask" – in the 12 months to June 2017 that resulted in no information being disclosed:*
 - a) *how many were refused because there was no information to pass on?*
 - b) *how many were refused because disclosure was not deemed appropriate or necessary?*
4. *Of the requests made police or other agency under the DVDS – "Right to Know" – in the 12 months to June 2017 that resulted in no information being disclosed:*
 - a) *how many were refused because there was no information to pass on?*
 - b) *how many were refused because disclosure was not deemed appropriate or necessary?"*

Response to your Request

The response provided below is correct as of 15 December 2017

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

In relation to your request for information and in accordance with Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), this response serves as a formal notification of refusal for your request. Suffolk Constabulary does not hold, for the purposes of FOIA, the information you require in a retrievable format.

It is estimated that to attempt to retrieve all of the information you require would take a considerable amount of retrieval time, which would exceed 18 hours. This would exceed the appropriate limit for dealing with Freedom of Information requests, in terms of costs and therefore Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 applies.

The Constabulary is unable to confirm the length of time between an application being submitted and a decision being sent to the applicant, owing to the data not being recorded centrally. Each



application will have the date on which it was received and the relevant disclosure / non-disclosure date. However, we would have to review each application individually to establish the longest and shortest response times.

We consider it would take in excess of 20 hours per year to extract this data at a reserved 4 minutes per application.

Additionally, reporting on the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS) does not differentiate between whether a refusal has been as a result of no information or is being not deemed appropriate / necessary. In order to extract this information we would need to review a further 119 non-disclosure records to establish the reason why.

We consider that this research could take up to 10 minutes per record, considering the amount of information we would need to review, and consequently deduce it would take an additional 17 hours.

Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 states that a Public Authority is not obliged to: *"...comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit."* The Freedom of Information (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations, defines the 'appropriate limit' for the Suffolk Constabulary as £450 and specifies that this sum equates to 18 hours work at a standard rate of £25 per hour.

In accordance with Section 17(5) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this letter serves as a refusal notice for this part of your request.

By requesting *all* information your request is too broad to be complied with within the £450 limit imposed on Freedom of Information requests.

Although excess cost removes the Force's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act, as a gesture of goodwill, I have supplied information, relative to your request, retrieved or available before it was realised that the fees limit would be exceeded. I trust this is helpful, but it does not affect our legal right to rely on the fees regulations for the remainder of your request.

Suffolk Constabulary holds weekly meetings conducted in the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), via a threshold discussion process.

There have been a total of 13 non disclosures made under the DVDS – Right to Ask.

There have been a total of 106 non disclosures made under the DVDS - Right to Know.



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*

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 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