

16 August 2024

FOI Ref 16999

Request - You asked us the following:

Who is the IT and Digital officer / Device procurement manager that manages the mobile devices in your police force?

Can you supply full contact details?

How many mobile devices are currently in use?

What type of mobile devices are being used: manufacturer and model?

How are these mobile devices being repaired?

We received your request on 01/07/2021 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

Please find below our response.

Staffordshire Police holds the following requested information.

- Who is the IT and Digital officer / Device procurement manager that manages the mobile devices in your police force? – **Information held.**
- Can you supply full contact details? – **Information held.**
- How many mobile devices are currently in use? – **Information held.**
- What type of mobile devices are being used: manufacturer and model? – **Information held.**
- How are these mobile devices being repaired? – **Information held.**

Staffordshire Police discloses/withholds the following information.

- Who is the IT and Digital officer / Device procurement manager that manages the mobile devices in your police force? – **Withheld.**
- Can you supply full contact details? – **Withheld.**
- How many mobile devices are currently in use? – **Disclosed, 2,600.**
- What type of mobile devices are being used: manufacturer and model? – **Withheld.**
- How are these mobile devices being repaired? – **Disclosed, repairs are carried out by an external third party.**

Please note that this data has been provided to the best of our ability, subject to the limitation of current recording protocols and systems/software.

Every effort is made to ensure that the data presented is accurate and complete. However, it is important to note that this has been extracted from multiple sources, developed for specific policing purposes, for which data extraction methods have not been specifically designed to directly correlate with the terminology of this request. Therefore, the data presented is subject to the inaccuracies and idiosyncrasies inherent in any large-scale recording system.

As a consequence, care should be taken in the interpretation and presentation of this data, so as to not misrepresent the whole or any part of the data disclosed.

The above information has been withheld for the following reasons:

To provide manufacturers and models of mobile devices being used within the force could undermine existing or future investigations, operations and police tactics. Disclosure of this information would provide valuable intelligence to the criminal fraternity and other adversaries, allowing them to research any known security weaknesses of the devices identified. This could then allow those with ill intent to potentially initiate a cyber-attack to cause maximum disruption to operational policing. This would clearly have an impact upon police resources and would be exceedingly likely to increase criminal activity, prejudice the prevention and detection of crime and the administration of justice. This type of information would be extremely beneficial to the criminal fraternity and other adversaries, including terrorists and terrorist organisations.

To release personal or third-party information held by Staffordshire Police, would breach the data protection principles; namely –

- Data is lawfully and fairly processed.
- Processed in line with an individual's rights.
- Data is secure.

Personal and third-party information cannot be released under the Freedom of Information Act.

Disclosure under Freedom of Information is a release of information to the world in general and not an individual applicant.

The following exemptions have been applied:

- Section 24(1) National Security
- Section 31(1) Law Enforcement
- Section 40(2) Personal Information

Sections 24(1) and 31(1) are qualified and prejudice-based exemptions and, as such, we are required to evidence the harm in disclosure and apply the public interest test.

Section 40(2) is an absolute exemption which means that there is no need to quantify the harm that may arise from the disclosure; neither is it subject to a public interest test.

Public Interest Test

Factors favouring disclosure under Section 24(1)

In addition to adhering to the basic principal of being open and transparent, the public are entitled to know how public funds are spent and how resources are distributed within Staffordshire Police.

Factors favouring non-disclosure under Section 24(1)

Security measures are put in place to protect the community we serve. The public entrust the Police Service to make appropriate decisions with regard to their safety and protection and the only way of reducing risk is to be cautious with what information is placed into the public domain. To provide the manufacturers and models of mobile devices used within Staffordshire Police could allow a potential cyber-attack on force systems or allow individuals to research known weaknesses of any identified technology to maximise any disruption. Any incident that results from such a disclosure would, by default, affect National Security.

Factors favouring disclosure under Section 31(1)

To disclose this information would adhere to the basic principle of being open and transparent, it would also lead to a better public awareness of the workings of the police force and the communications used with operations and during routine policing.

Factors favouring non-disclosure under Section 31(1)

Releasing such data would give those individuals with the intent to do so, the intelligence required to disrupt police activity. This knowledge would allow members of the criminal fraternity to target their offending more effectively which would inevitably lead to an increased likelihood of criminal activity and increased the danger posed to the public. Any disclosure of information which is likely to undermine the ability to serve the public in preventing and detecting crime or which would place individuals at an increased risk of harm, can only be considered as being harmful to the public.

Balancing Test

When considering whether disclosure is appropriate, we must weigh the strongest reason for disclosure against the strongest reasons for non-disclosure. In this case, whilst the factors



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favouring disclosure are important in that it would adhere to the basic principle of being open and transparent, we believe when weighed against the risk of disclosure undermining our ability protect national security, prevent and detect crime, administer justice or hinder our ability to protect the public, then non-disclosure takes precedence.

Next steps

You can ask us to review our response.

If you would like us to carry out a review of our response, please let us know within two months of the date of receipt of this email, review requests should be addressed to:

foi@staffordshire.police.uk

Or by Post to:

Central Disclosure Unit
Staffordshire Police HQ
PO Box 3167
Stafford
ST16 9JZ

Please remember to quote the reference number in any future communications.

Freedom of Information
Central Disclosure Unit