

22 August 2024

FOI Ref 17013

Request - You asked us the following:

Please can you provide answers to the following three requests:

1. How much has the force spent on the collection and ongoing secure care of dogs seized by the Police in each of the calendar years 2022 and 2023 and in the year to 1 July 2024?
2. What was the total capacity of your kennels and private kennels contracted by the force during the weekend 29th June and 30th June 2024?
3. How many seized dogs were in your kennels and in private kennels contracted by the force during the weekend 29th June and 30th June 2024?

I would like you to provide all the above information in digital format.

We received your request on 03/07/2024 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

Please find below our response.

Staffordshire Police holds the following requested information.

1. How much has the force spent on the collection and ongoing secure care of dogs seized by the Police in each of the calendar years 2022 and 2023 and in the year to 1 July 2024? - **Information held.**
2. What was the total capacity of your kennels and private kennels contracted by the force during the weekend 29th June and 30th June 2024? - **Information held.**
3. How many seized dogs were in your kennels and in private kennels contracted by the force during the weekend 29th June and 30th June 2024? - **Information held.**

Staffordshire Police discloses/withholds the following information.

- 1. How much has the force spent on the collection and ongoing secure care of dogs seized by the Police in each of the calendar years 2022 and 2023 and in the year to 1 July 2024? - **Disclosed – Please see below:**

2022 - £8,681.00

2023 - £35,967.00

Year to date to 1st July 2024 - £48,916.00

- 2. What was the total capacity of your kennels and private kennels contracted by the force during the weekend 29th June and 30th June 2024? – **Withheld**.
- 3. How many seized dogs were in your kennels and in private kennels contracted by the force during the weekend 29th June and 30th June 2024? - **Disclosed – 16**.

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 the capacity with regard to the number of dogs that can be housed in the kennels could undermine existing or future investigations, operations and police tactics. Disclosure of the specific capacity of each facility would enable individuals intent on disrupting police activity to conduct detailed research on the available facilities and therefore identify the locations of such kennels.

Members of the criminal fraternity, armed with such information could then take steps to disrupt operational policing; therefore, prejudicing the prevention and detection of crime, the administration of justice and placing both members of the public and police staff at a significantly increased risk of harm.

The following exemptions have been applied:

- Section 31 (1) (a)(b) - Law Enforcement.
- Section 38 (1) (a)(b) – Health & Safety

Information is exempt from disclosure under Section 31 and Section 38 where the release of Information would, or would likely to, prejudice the prevention and detection of crime and/ or the apprehension or prosecution of offenders. This exemption is qualified and prejudice-based and, as such, we are required to evidence the harm in disclosure and apply the public interest test.

Public Interest Test

Factors favouring disclosure - Section 31

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 how public funds are utilised.

Factors favouring non-disclosure - Section 31

Releasing such data would give those individuals with the intent to do so, the intelligence required to disrupt police activity. If a location was made public, or by dint of disclosure such locations could be identified, these locations could then be targeted by members of the criminal fraternity or other adversaries; seized dogs could be released into the public before any court procedures; therefore jeopardising our capacity to protect the public and bring offenders to justice. This would inevitably lead to an increased likelihood of criminal activity and unnecessarily endanger members of police staff and the public in general. Any disclosure of information which is likely to undermine the ability to serve the public in preventing and detecting crime can only be considered as being harmful.

Factors favouring disclosure - Section 38

In addition to the basic premise of being open and transparent, disclosure of the location of kennelling provision would allow for greater public awareness around the kennelling facilities employed by Staffordshire Police and inform public debate upon how public funds are being spent.

Factors favouring non-disclosure - Section 38

Our kennelling provision for seized dogs is kept confidential for security reasons; this is to ensure the safety and security of the staff and kennels, but also to ensure that seized dogs are cared for in a secure and safe environment. Disclosure of detailed information from which these locations could be determined would therefore be of detriment to these functions and unnecessarily place the wellbeing of staff, animals and the public at risk.

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 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 to prevent and detect crime and hindering 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



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

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