

5 November 2024

FOI Ref 17385

Request - You asked us the following:

1, Are you aware of any crimes that have been reported by people who have been victimised because they have changed their religion or belief?

For example, Yes or no / what was their former religion / did this lead to a charge or conviction?

2, Do you know how this type of crime may be handled within your police force?

For example would it be treated as hate crime, as domestic abuse, as honour based abuse?

3, What do you think the main challenges would be in developing policing practice for this type of crime?

For example underreporting, vulnerability of victims, lack of clarity around applicable legal frameworks?

Would you consider taking part in a short (approx. 30 min) online conversation around this question? It would be hugely beneficial to be able to explore this topic in more depth as a conversation. Your input would ensure that the recommendations arising from this research are practitioner focused, and of greatest usefulness. Responses will be presented anonymously so that no individual officer or force can be identified. Further information on use and storage of data will be provided to all participating.

Many thanks for taking the time to input to this research. Please also indicate if you would like further updates around the outcomes and recommendations of the research when the study is complete.

We received your request on 21/10/2024 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

Staffordshire Police's response to your enquiry is as follows:

In accordance with Section 17(1) of the Freedom of Information Act, this letter represents a refusal notice for this particular request.

The following exemptions have been applied:

- Section 12(1) where the cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit. Section 12(1) does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the prescribed limit'.

The above information has been withheld for the following reasons:

With regard to question 1, any such crimes would be classified as a 'Religiously Aggravated Hate Crime' but to establish this would require a very labour intensive manual trawl through ALL such recorded crimes. In the last 10 years, there have been in excess of 390 occurrences. From dip sampling, it has been established that it would take approximately 5 minutes to review each record which equates to over 32 hours. This would exceed the 18-hour time and cost threshold stipulated by the FOI Act.

Advice and assistance

Section 16 of the Act places an obligation upon the Authority to provide advice and assistance, in order to comply with this obligation please see below.

With regard to questions 2 and 3 please note that the FOI Act 2000 only extends to requests for recorded information. It does not require public authorities to create information to answer questions generally; only if the information is already held in recorded form.

We are therefore, not in a position to offer any advice or assistance on how you could realistically refine your request.

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