

3 September 2024

FOI Ref 17054

Request - You asked us the following:

1. Between January 2024 and June 2024, how many businesses or individuals in your local area / jurisdiction, have faced legal action (charged/cautioned etc.) for selling vapes (or similar products) to people under the age of 18?
2. Between January 2024 and June 2024, how many times have the police been involved in (attended / charged / investigated etc.) cases of 'spiking' in relation to spiked vapes or similar products?

Clarification:

A 'spiked vape / e-cigarette' is a vape that has been laced with substances such as, but not limited to; vapourised LSD, synthetic marijuana, or painkillers, which can lead to serious health implications. Examples of spiking include; adding substances to a product without the knowledge and/or consent from the victim.

We received your request on 17/07/2024 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

Please find below our response.

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

The above request has been rejected for the following reasons:

There is no method by which we can easily identify or locate whether information is held within Staffordshire Police systems to answer this request. The information you require is not stored in a way which allows for easy identification or retrieval, this type of offence is non-recordable under the Home Office counting rules and therefore not recorded within our crime/occurrence recording database. To determine whether any other recorded offence involved a business or any sole traders who faced penalties for the sale of nicotine products to individuals under the age of 18, a manual search of all logs would be required.

Similarly, for question 2, there is no specific offence for 'spiking'; therefore, there is no method by which we can readily retrieve information from our crime/occurrence database to answer this request. This type of offence would likely be recorded as, 'administering poison or other noxious thing' or 'administering a substance with intent'. This would require manually sifting through many crime reports to see whether they are relevant to your request.

To achieve this task would therefore exceed the 18-hour time and cost threshold of the Freedom of Information Act by some considerable margin.



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

The following exemptions have been applied:

- Section 12(2) In order to identify whether or not information is or isn't held would exceed the cost threshold in accordance with Section 12(2) of the Freedom of Information Act as in order to satisfy S1(1)(a) of the Act would exceed the cost threshold.

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.

If question 1 was withdrawn, Staffordshire Police would be able to provide information for question 2, relating to offences of 'administering poison or other noxious thing' or 'administering a substance with intent' for cases of 'spiking' in relation to spiked vapes or similar products.

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