



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

Our Ref: FOI 21750
Your Ref: FOI 21739

Date: 18 August 2025

Internal Review

Re: Request for internal review of response to application for information under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

We refer to the above request which was received on 13th August 2025 (ref 21739) and was expressed in the following terms:

I am making this request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Your published news releases of 16 May 2025 ("Former officer pleads guilty after investigation") and 12 August 2025 ("Former officer jailed for improper use of police powers") state that former officer Owen Mills, aged 22, of Higher Wharf, Bude, Cornwall, who worked at Tamworth Police Station, was arrested in January 2023, immediately suspended, and "resigned shortly after."

For the period 1 June 2023 to 12 August 2025, please confirm:

1. Whether Owen Mills held any role (permanent, temporary, agency, restricted, or otherwise) with Staffordshire Police during this period, and if so, provide the exact start and end dates of that role, including any dates that fall partially outside this period.

This request relates only to factual matters already partly in the public domain through Staffordshire Police's own published statements.

Further to the above, we also note the following comments made within your request for Internal Review, received on 15th August 2025:

I am writing to request an internal review of the response to my Freedom of Information request, FOI Ref 21739, dated 13 August 2025, regarding Owen Mills.

In your response, you stated that the requested information for the period 1 June 2023 to 12 August 2025 has been withheld under Section 40(2) FOIA – Personal Information, on the grounds that disclosure would breach data protection principles. You identified these principles as:

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

Below, I explain why disclosure in this case would comply with each principle, while addressing the legitimate public interest in confirming Mr Mills' role-holding status.

1. Lawful and fair processing

Disclosure would be lawful under Article 6(1)(f) UK GDPR – legitimate interests. There is a compelling public interest in confirming whether Mr Mills held any role with Staffordshire Police during the period 1 June 2023 to 12 August 2025, given:

- His criminal convictions for serious offences committed while employed as a police officer, widely reported in the press.*



- *Staffordshire Police press releases on his charges, guilty plea, and sentencing.*

The information requested is limited to role-holding status and relevant dates, concerning professional activities and factual employment history. It does not include private or sensitive data. Disclosure in this context is therefore fair and proportionate.

2. Processing in line with individual's rights

The rights of the data subject are minimally impacted because:

- *The requested data does not include sensitive personal information (e.g., home address, medical records).*
- *The information concerns professional conduct and employment, where expectations of privacy are reduced, particularly following criminal conviction and public reporting.*
- *Confirmation of employment status directly supports public confidence in policing and safeguards vulnerable individuals.*

Notably, the period 1–6 June 2023 covers the gap between Mr Mills' guilty plea (16 May 2023) and his resignation (6 June 2023), which raises legitimate public concern about whether he continued to hold any role. Likewise, confirmation of any role after 6 June 2023 addresses the question of potential reinstatement, further supporting transparency and accountability.

3. Data security

No security risk arises from confirming factual employment status. The information requested is limited and can be disclosed in a controlled manner consistent with data protection principles.

4. Necessity, proportionality, and minimal intrusion

Disclosure is necessary because only Staffordshire Police can confirm whether Mr Mills was employed in any capacity during the period 1 June 2023 to 12 August 2025. Alternative sources, such as policy statements or media reports, cannot provide authoritative verification.

The request is minimal: it seeks only whether he held any policing role and the relevant dates. This is proportionate and non-intrusive, and does not reveal any sensitive personal information.

Even if exact dates cannot be disclosed, I request confirmation of whether Mr Mills held any role (permanent, temporary, agency, restricted, or otherwise) during the period 1 June 2023 to 12 August 2025. This satisfies the legitimate public interest while minimizing intrusion.

5. Conclusion

Because disclosure would:

- *Be lawful and fair under Article 6(1)(f) UK GDPR,*
- *Respect the rights of the data subject, and*
- *Present no security risk,*

...the application of Section 40(2) FOIA is not justified. I respectfully request that Staffordshire Police provide factual confirmation regarding Mr Mills' role-holding status for the full period requested.

I look forward to your internal review outcome.

Our Response

Upon review of your request for information under the Freedom of Information provision referenced above, we are of the opinion that the application of the exemption outlined within the response letter was fully justified.



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Please be advised that all FOI requests and response letters are published on the Staffordshire Police website although personal details are not included.

If you are not content with the outcome of the review, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner to investigate. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

ICO Website for complaints link: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/foi-and-eir-complaints/foi-and-eir-complaints/>

Central Disclosure Unit Management Team
Central Disclosure Unit
Staffordshire Police