

27 January 2025

FOI Ref 17713

Request - You asked us the following:

REQUEST 1:

What would you like to know?: How many spiking related incidents were reported by men in each of the following years respectively; 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024?

REQUEST 2:

What would you like to know?: How many spiking related incidents reported by men in the following years respectively; 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024, led to a charge?

We received your request on 23/01/2025 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 exemption has 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:

Firstly we interpreted 'reported by men' to mean incidents where the victim of the offence was male.

Unfortunately, there is no method by which we can readily retrieve the information because there is no specific offence of 'spiking'. This type of offence would likely be recorded as, 'administering poison', 'administering a substance with intent' or 'administering poison so as to endanger life'.

For the time period specified, over 425 such occurrences were recorded within the Staffordshire Police area. In order to determine whether each occurrence involved some form of 'spiking' or not, each of these occurrences would need to be reviewed individually and the data manually collated. To extract this data would therefore require a very labour-intensive manual trawl through each record in turn. From dip sampling, it has been estimated that it would take approximately 5 minutes to review each record to answer this request which equates to over 35 hours. To achieve this task would therefore exceed the 18-hour time and cost threshold of 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.

Please note that with regard to Q1 we would be able to provide the number of the following offences recorded in the calendar years 2020 to 2024 inclusive where the victim was male:

088/05 – Administering a substance with intent
008/02 – Administering poison with intent to injure or annoy
005/10 – Administering poison so as to endanger life

Please be advised however, that not all of these recorded crimes would not necessarily mention the keyword 'spiking' or might not be considered to be 'spiking' offences.

If you would be content to receive this dataset, we would also be able to provide a further breakdown of the number of offences listed in Q1 where an individual was charged (Q2).

Please be advised that all Freedom of Information request responses are published on the Staffordshire Police website although personal details are not included.

Freedom of Information Request Appeals Procedure

1. Who Can Ask for a Review

Any person who has requested information from Staffordshire Police, which has been dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act, is entitled to complain and request an internal review, if they are dissatisfied with the response they received.

2. How to Request a Review

Requests for review of a Freedom of Information request must be made in writing within two months of the date of receipt of this email, and should be addressed to:

foi@staffordshire.police.uk

Or by Post to:

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

The reference number, date of the request and details of why the review is being requested must be included. Requests for review should be brought to the attention of the Central Disclosure Unit within two months of the Force's response to the original FOI request.

3. Review Procedure



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

Receipt of a request for review will be acknowledged in writing. The review will be conducted by another Decision Maker who is independent from the original Decision Maker. The Central Disclosure Unit will set a target date for a response. The response will be made as soon as is practicable with the intention to complete the review within 20 working days. In more complex cases the review may take up to 40 working days.

The independent Decision Maker will conduct a review of the handling of the request for information and of decisions taken, including decisions taken about where the public interest lies in respect of exempt information where applicable. The review enables a re-evaluation of the case, taking into account the matters raised by the complaint.

4. Conclusion of the Appeal

On completion of the review the Independent Decision maker will reply to the complainant with the result of the review. If the complainant is still dissatisfied following the review they should contact the Information Commissioner to make an appeal. The Information Commissioner can be contacted via the following details:

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/>

Freedom of Information
Central Disclosure Unit