9 April 2026 **FOI Ref 22743**

Request - You asked Staffordshire Police (SP) the following:

Please confirm/deny if you had any involvement in the SkyBet League Two fixture between Port Vale and Walsall in December 2024.

If so, please provide me with the risk assessment for this fixture.

SP received your request on 08/04/2026 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

SP's response to your enquiry is as follows:

SP holds the requested information.

- Please confirm/deny if you had any involvement in the SkyBet League Two fixture between Port Vale and Walsall in December 2024. **– Disclosed, yes.**
- If so, please provide me with the risk assessment for this fixture. **– Withheld, please see the below exemptions.**

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

The following exemptions have been applied:

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

- Section 31 (1)(a)(b) Law Enforcement

Information is exempt from disclosure under S31(1)(a)(b) 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, SP are required to evidence the harm in disclosure and apply the public interest test.

- Section 38 (1)(b) Health and Safety

Information is exempt information it its disclosure under this Act would or would be likely to (b) endanger the safety of any individual. This exemption is qualified and prejudice-based and, as such, SP are required to evidence the harm in disclosure and apply the public interest test.

Harm:

To provide specific operational tactics and intelligence documents or details related to this risk assessment could undermine existing or future investigations, operations, and police tactics regarding football matches

that SP attend. It would allow those with ill intent to cause disruption to operational policing and prejudice the prevention and detection of crime. Knowing the finer details of what risk is assessed with regards to these types of events and any other associated information would allow individuals to commit offences or cause disruption more easily and may also aide criminals in not being detected. Additionally, this may also place the safety of any officers or even members of the public who may be attending at a significantly increased risk of harm.

Public Interest Test

Factors favouring disclosure under Section 31(1)(a)(b)

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 and the communications used with operations and during routine policing.

Factors favouring non-disclosure under Section 31(1)(a)(b)

Releasing such data would give those individuals with the intent to do so, the intelligence required to disrupt police activity and investigations. This knowledge would allow those with ill intent to target their offending more effectively which would inevitably lead to an increased likelihood of criminal activity and an increased danger to the public and victims. 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 to the public.

Factors favouring disclosure under Section 38(1)(b)

In addition to the basic premise of being open and transparent, disclosure of the possible risks and safety measures taken at these types of events would allow for greater public awareness around the football community employed by SP and inform public debate upon how public funds are being spent.

Factors favouring non-disclosure under Section 38(1)(b)

Specific risk assessments for these types of events are kept confidential for security reasons; this is to ensure the safety and security of officers and members of the public. Disclosure of detailed information relating to the measures that have been taken to prevent any disruption could be detrimental and would therefore be of harm to these functions and unnecessarily place the wellbeing of staff and the public at risk.

Balance test

When considering whether disclosure is appropriate, SP 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, SP 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.

STAFFORDSHIRE POLICE

Freedom of Information Request Appeals Procedure

1. **Who Can Ask for a Review**

Any person who has requested information from SP, 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:

IAT@staffordshire.police.uk

Or by Post to:

Information Access Team
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 Information Access Team within two months of the SP response to the original FOI request.

3. **Review Procedure**

Receipt of a request for review will be acknowledged in writing. The review will be conducted by a supervisor who is independent from the original Decision Maker. The Information Access Team 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 twenty working days. In more complex cases the review may take up to forty working days.

The independent supervisor 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, considering the matters raised by the complaint.

4. **Conclusion of the Appeal**

On completion of the review the independent supervisor will reply to the appellant with the result of the review. If the appellant 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 link: https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/foi-and-eir-complaints/foi-and-eir-complaints/

Freedom of Information
Information Access Team