



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

Our Ref: FOI 23241
Your Ref: FOI 22951
Date: 12/08/2026

Internal Review

Re: Request for internal review of response to application for information under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, original request first notified to Staffordshire Police on 03/06/2026.

SP refers to the above request which was expressed in the following terms:

I am writing to submit a formal request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I am a researcher with The *****. We are currently developing a documentary podcast series examining the 1980 murder of *****. The project is being produced *****, and our goal is to build an accurate, respectful historical record of the investigation and the subsequent 1981 trial at Stafford Crown Court.

As part of our background research, I recently contacted Forensic Archive Ltd (FAL) to establish what files still survive. They have confirmed that they hold relevant historical Forensic Science Service (FSS) records on behalf of Staffordshire Police, but advised that any request for access must be authorized and processed directly through your force.

I would be grateful if you could review and disclose the following specific records held under your authority at FAL:

*FSS Reference *****: The hard copy case file and electronic microfiche records (FAL noted this includes bite-mark photographs, as well as blood grouping and fibre analysis documentation).

*FSS Reference *****: The electronic copy of the microfiche record.

Given that 46 years have passed since the trial, we hope that the age of these files allows for their release to support our historical research. If full disclosure is not possible, I would appreciate the release of any redacted or partial summaries that can be provided. Thank you very much for your time and assistance.

Further to the above, SP also note the following comments made within your request for Internal Review:

I am writing to request an internal review of the response to my Freedom of Information request (Ref 22951), dated 6 August 2026.

When I submitted my original request, I had no idea how much material was held under those reference numbers. Had I known the files ran to over 300 pages, I would never have requested them in such broad terms. There was simply no way for me to know the size of the archive from the information available.

My request was made in good faith as part of historical research into a 1980 murder investigation and the subsequent 1981 trial. It related to two specific forensic file references that Forensic Archive Ltd had confirmed were held on behalf of Staffordshire Police. In my original request, I also made it clear that, if full disclosure was not possible, I would welcome any redacted material or partial summaries that could reasonably be released.

Now that I understand the scale of the archive, I completely appreciate your concern about the amount of work involved in reviewing every page. I hope you will agree that it is reasonable for me to ask whether there is a more proportionate way of making my request.

If possible, I would be grateful for some guidance on how I could refine my request so that it would be more manageable. For example, if there is a file index, document schedule or another way of identifying particular reports within the archive, I would be very happy to submit a more targeted request. My aim has always been to obtain whatever information can reasonably be disclosed, rather than create unnecessary work for Staffordshire Police.

I would therefore be grateful if the decision could be reviewed in light of the above, and whether there may be a practical way of progressing my request in a more limited form.

Thank you again for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

SP Response

Upon reviewing your request for information under the Freedom of Information provision referenced above and all corresponding communication, SP are of the opinion that the response issued, alongside all clarification provided, fully answers the terms of your request.

SP also confirms that the application of all exemptions outlined within this response are fully justified, and that the explanations and rationale for their application conveyed clearly and unequivocally.

To clarify and to assist, SP confirms that there is no file index or document schedule so a review of all documents would need to be carried out to establish what, if anything is able to be disclosed so the application of the exemption used still stands.

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:

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

Information Access Team Management

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