

18 January 2026

FOI Ref 22277

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

1. FOI Request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000

Please provide all recorded information (internal emails, decision logs, policy references, guidance, memoranda, referrals, escalation notes, complaint logs, Professional Standards records, crime-recording entries and related documentation) held by your force concerning the following:

A. Crime Recording & Investigation of Corruption Allegations

1. Any internal policy or guidance governing how allegations of corruption, collusion, or regulatory misconduct are to be recorded and investigated, including any linked to:

- o Professional Standards Department (PSD)
- o Anti-corruption units
- o Economic Crime Units

2. Any records of training, guidance, or policy documents referring to the duty to record and investigate serious allegations, including those involving public officials, regulated professionals, or persons of special status.

3. Any records relating to the handling of credible allegations of corruption submitted by members of the public, including:

- o Correspondence acknowledging receipt;
- o Initial assessments;
- o Decisions not to record a crime;
- o Records of rationale for not progressing to investigation; and
- o Any referrals, internal or external, arising from such allegations.

4. Any records of cross-force information or referrals relating to allegations of corruption or regulatory misconduct involving this force.

If any part of the requested information is held but you claim it is exempt from disclosure under FOIA, please cite the specific exemption and provide a public-interest justification for its application.

2. Legal & Professional Obligations

I am also writing to remind your force of the fundamental obligations placed upon all UK police forces to record and investigate allegations of criminal conduct when credible information is presented.

A. Duty to Investigate Crime

Under the Police Act 1996, the Code of Practice for Ethical Policing (issued under section 39A, Police Act 1996) requires chief officers to lead their forces in upholding ethical and professional behaviour, including actively identifying and responding to misconduct and corruption when it occurs.

While specific statutory text does not contain a single “duty to investigate corruption” clause, it is inherent in UK policing law that:

- Police forces have a duty to prevent and detect crime under relevant legislation and common law principles, and to record reported offences in accordance with national standards.
- The Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996 and associated College of Policing guidance make clear that police officers are obliged to conduct investigations where there is reasonable cause to suspect a criminal offence, to record information and retain relevant evidence.

B. Professional Standards and Accountability



The College of Policing's Ethical Code specifically places responsibility on chief officers to ensure necessary action is taken when staff become aware of misconduct or corruption, not to ignore or suppress reporting.

C. Investigation of Allegations Impacting Public Confidence

Serious allegations of corruption — particularly where they implicate professionals, regulators, or oversight bodies — may engage public confidence and trust obligations. UK policing professional practice contemplates escalation of serious internal or external allegations to Professional Standards Departments and appropriate investigative units.

D. Information Sharing & Crime Recording Standards

Guidance such as the Police Information and Records Management Code of Practice promotes consistent recording and availability of information for policing purposes across UK forces.

3. Request for Action

I respectfully request that:

1. You confirm in writing whether your force has received any credible allegation of corruption or related misconduct submitted by me (or associated individuals) and whether it has been:
 - o logged as a crime,
 - o recorded in your systems,
 - o or otherwise considered for investigation.
2. If not, please explain the legal basis upon which your force has declined to record or investigate such credible allegations.
3. Your response must include:
 - o whether or not your force holds the information requested under FOIA;
 - o any internal policies or guidance applicable to this domain;
 - o and confirmation that procedures have been followed lawfully.

Clarification received on 15/01/2026:

I am not requesting statistical figures.

For the avoidance of doubt, my request relates to rationale, decision-making, policies, guidance, records, and documented assessments, not numerical data.

Specifically, I am requesting recorded information concerning:

- how allegations of corruption and misconduct are assessed;
- how decisions are made to record (or not record) such allegations;
- how decisions are made to investigate (or not investigate);
- and how such matters are escalated internally or externally.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- decision logs;
- internal correspondence;
- professional standards records;
- policy documents and guidance;
- referrals, assessments, and recorded rationales;
- records explaining why matters were not progressed, recorded, or investigated.

Date range

Please apply the following date range for searches:

1 January 2015 to 31 December 2025.

This timeframe is reasonable, proportionate, and aligned with the period during which the relevant issues arise.

Clarification on scope

To be clear, this request does not seek:



- personal data disclosure beyond what FOIA lawfully permits;
- intelligence assessments;
- or speculative analysis.

It seeks documented governance and accountability records demonstrating how Staffordshire Police discharges its statutory duties when credible allegations of corruption or misconduct are received.

SP received your request on 23/12/2025 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

SP's response to your enquiry is as follows:

SP holds/does not hold the requested information.

FOI Request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000

Please provide all recorded information (internal emails, decision logs, policy references, guidance, memoranda, referrals, escalation notes, complaint logs, Professional Standards records, crime-recording entries and related documentation) held by your force concerning the following:

- Crime Recording & Investigation of Corruption Allegations
 1. Any internal policy or guidance governing how allegations of corruption, collusion, or regulatory misconduct are to be recorded and investigated, including any linked to:
 - o Professional Standards Department (PSD)
 - o Anti-corruption units
 - o Economic Crime Units – **No information held.**
 2. Any records of training, guidance, or policy documents referring to the duty to record and investigate serious allegations, including those involving public officials, regulated professionals, or persons of special status. – **Withheld, please see below.**
 3. Any records relating to the handling of credible allegations of corruption submitted by members of the public, including:
 - o Correspondence acknowledging receipt;
 - o Initial assessments;
 - o Decisions not to record a crime;
 - o Records of rationale for not progressing to investigation; and
 - o Any referrals, internal or external, arising from such allegations. – **No information held.**
 4. Any records of cross-force information or referrals relating to allegations of corruption or regulatory misconduct involving this force. – **No information held.**
- 3. Request for Action
I respectfully request that:
 1. You confirm in writing whether your force has received any credible allegation of corruption or related misconduct submitted by me (or associated individuals) and whether it has been:
 - o logged as a crime,
 - o recorded in your systems,
 - o or otherwise considered for investigation.



2. If not, please explain the legal basis upon which your force has declined to record or investigate such credible allegations.
3. Your response must include:
 - o whether or not your force holds the information requested under FOIA;
 - o any internal policies or guidance applicable to this domain;
 - o and confirmation that procedures have been followed lawfully. – **Neither confirm nor deny, please see below.**

Please note that the FOI Act 2000 only extends to requests for recorded information. It does not require public authorities to create information to answer questions generally; only if the information is already held in recorded form. The Act does not extend to requests for information about policies or their implementation, or the merits or demerits of any proposal or action - unless, of course, the answer to any such request is already held in recorded form.

The following exemption has been applied:

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

- Section 21(1) - Information reasonably accessible by other means.

Section 21 is an absolute, class-based exemption and as such there is no requirement to quantify the harm that may arise from the disclosure, nor is there a requirement to perform a Public Interest Test.

Advice and assistance

In order to comply with our obligations under Section 16 of the Act, the obligation to provide advice and assistance, please find below links to the information requested.

- https://www.policeconduct.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/2020_statutory_guidance_english.pdf
- <https://www.policeconduct.gov.uk/learning-lessons-44-corruption>
- <https://www.college.police.uk/app/professional-standards/counter-corruption>
- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/693313d80cf0b7e681ff4345/crime-recording-rules-for-frontline-officers-and-staff-2025_26-november-2025-update.pdf
- <https://crimestoppers-uk.org/news-media/news/2024/mar/new-national-line-to-root-out-corruption-and-abuse-within-the-police>

SP can neither confirm nor deny that it holds some of the information you requested as it believes that the duty under s1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the duty to confirm whether the public authority holds information of the specified description) does not apply.

The following exemption has 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 40(5) Personal Information

Section 40(5) is an absolute exemption which means that there is no need to quantify the harm that may arise from the disclosure; neither is it subject to a public interest test.

To release personal or third-party information that may or may not be held by SP, would breach the data protection principles; namely –

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

Personal and third-party information cannot be released under the Freedom of Information Act.

Disclosure under Freedom of Information is a release of information to the world in general and not an individual applicant.

Please be advised that all Freedom of Information request responses are published on the SP 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 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



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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