

7 January 2026

FOI Ref 22313

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

This is a request for information made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I am seeking information about vetting outcomes, continued employment, and related correspondence within your police force.

Please provide the following information for the most recent ten full calendar years:

1. The number of individuals who applied for a role within the force (including police officer, police staff, PCSOs, or specials) and failed to meet the required vetting standards for that role, but who:

- o remained employed by the force in a different role, or
- o were subsequently appointed to a different role within the force that required a different level of vetting.

2. Where available, a breakdown of the figures in question 1 by:

- o the role originally applied for,
- o the role in which the individual remained or was later employed,
- o whether the vetting failure related to recruitment vetting, management vetting, or another vetting category.

3. Whether your force has any policy, guidance, or procedure that permits individuals who fail vetting for one role to remain employed in another role within the force.

- o If so, please provide the title of the policy and the date it came into effect.

4. Details of any formal correspondence between your force and any relevant labour force unions or staff associations (including, but not limited to, the Police Federation, UNISON, Unite, GMB, or other recognised bodies) that relates to:

- o vetting failures and continued employment within the force, or
- o policies or practices allowing redeployment or retention following a vetting failure.

For this question, I am seeking:

- o the existence of such correspondence,
- o the dates, parties involved, and general subject matter of the correspondence.

Copies or extracts of the correspondence may be provided where disclosure is possible, with any personal data appropriately redacted.

I am not seeking any personal data. Aggregate figures and policy-level information only are sufficient.

If any part of this request is exempt from disclosure, please provide:

- * the specific exemption(s) relied upon, and
- * the information that can be disclosed within the scope of the request.

If the cost limit is likely to be exceeded, please advise how the request could be refined to remain within the statutory limit.

SP received your request on 05/01/2026 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

SP'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 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:

There is no method by which SP can readily retrieve information from systems to answer this request. To retrieve this information, SP would need to manually review each employee's vetting record. This figure is approximately 4,000 for SP's current employees. Further checks would then need to be conducted into each employee's HR file in case any such information was present. To extract this data would therefore require a very labour-intensive manual trawl through each record.

From dip sampling, it has been estimated that it would take 5 minutes to review each record to answer this request, this would equate to over 333 hours for current staff alone. To achieve this task would therefore exceed the 18-hour time and cost threshold of the Freedom of Information Act by some considerable margin.

Advice and assistance

Section 16 of the Act places an obligation upon the Authority to provide advice and assistance, to comply with this obligation please see below.

Unfortunately, SP cannot suggest a way in which your request could be simplified or pared down to bring it within the confines of the time and cost threshold.

Please note that SP do not hold any information for questions 3 and 4.

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:



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

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 Force's 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 20 working days. In more complex cases the review may take up to 40 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