

22 July 2026

FOI Ref 23126

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

This request forms part of research into how police forces electronically record information relating to victims with learning disabilities, autism and mental health conditions in investigations of offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. It has been carefully drafted to seek only recorded information already held electronically and capable of being retrieved through existing searches, reports or queries of your force's crime recording or case management systems.

The purpose of this request is to obtain recorded management information already capable of being retrieved electronically. It is not intended to require manual examination of individual crime records or the creation of new information. This request does not require:

- manual examination of individual case files;
- creation of new information; or
- the exercise of judgement about individual cases.

Where an existing electronic report or query is available, I would be grateful if that could be supplied rather than creating a new dataset.

For the avoidance of doubt, I am content for the force to rely upon any existing report, dashboard, business intelligence query or other electronic management information already produced for operational or performance purposes. I am not requesting the creation of any bespoke report or statistical analysis.

Question 1 – Recording of Victim Characteristics

Please confirm whether, for offences recorded under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 during 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2025, your force records the victim as having any of the following as searchable electronic fields, vulnerability markers, disability markers, electronic flags or other searchable identifiers: learning disability; autism; mental health condition; or another vulnerability marker indicating cognitive impairment or mental impairment. For each category, please indicate whether it is recorded as a searchable electronic field, vulnerability marker, disability marker, electronic flag, other searchable identifier (please specify), or is not recorded in a searchable electronic format.

Question 2 – Recorded Sexual Offences

Where an existing electronic search, report or query can identify offences falling within Question 1 without the manual examination of individual case records, please provide annual figures (2021–2025) broken down, where available, by Home Office offence code and offence description. If your force already produces management information or performance reports containing these data, those reports may be supplied in satisfaction of this part of the request.

Question 3 – Final Recorded Outcomes

Where held electronically, please provide the final recorded Home Office Outcome Code (or local equivalent where Home Office Outcome Codes are not used) for the offences identified in Question 2.

Question 4 – Victim Support Measures

Where held electronically, please provide the number of cases identified in Question 2 in which an Appropriate Adult, Registered Intermediary or any other communication support measure was recorded as a searchable electronic field, marker, flag or other searchable identifier.

Question 5 – Policies, Guidance and Training Please provide copies of any current policy, current operational guidance, training or other guidance documents relating to recording learning disabilities, autism or mental health conditions for victims of sexual offences; investigating such offences; reasonable adjustments; communication support; safeguarding; and specialist victim support.

Question 6 – Internal Reviews

Please state whether your force undertook any internal audit, quality assurance exercise, internal review or inspection (whether undertaken internally or commissioned externally) between 1 January 2021 and 31 December 2025 relating to the recording of these characteristics or the investigation of such offences. Where held electronically and not exempt, please provide copies.

Question 7 – Recording System Policies, Reviews and Plans

Please provide copies of any recorded policy, audit, review, strategy, programme documentation, project documentation, business case or implementation plan held between 1 January 2021 and 31 December 2025 relating to improving the recording or electronic searchability of learning disability, autism or mental health conditions within crime recording or case management systems, where held and not exempt.

Clarification

This request has been intentionally drafted to minimise the cost of compliance. If answering every part of this request would exceed the appropriate limit under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I would ask that you provide any parts that can be answered within the limit rather than refusing the request in its entirety.

In accordance with your duty under section 16, please indicate:

- which parts of the request could be answered within the cost limit;
- what modifications would enable the remainder to be answered; and
- whether an alternative electronic search, report or query would substantially address the purpose of this request.

If different parts of this request are held by different business areas, I would be grateful if they could be processed separately wherever possible. If any requested information is already publicly available, please provide the relevant URL in accordance with section 21 of the Act.

If the requested information is held in Microsoft Excel, CSV or another commonly used electronic format, I would be grateful to receive it in that format where reasonably practicable.

SP received your request on 13/07/2026 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.

- Question 1 – Recording of Victim Characteristics



Please confirm whether, for offences recorded under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 during 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2025, your force records the victim as having any of the following as searchable electronic fields, vulnerability markers, disability markers, electronic flags or other searchable identifiers: learning disability; autism; mental health condition; or another vulnerability marker indicating cognitive impairment or mental impairment. For each category, please indicate whether it is recorded as a searchable electronic field, vulnerability marker, disability marker, electronic flag, other searchable identifier (please specify), or is not recorded in a searchable electronic format. – **Partially disclosed, SP have the following Person flags as searchable electronic fields: 'Vulnerable Person' and 'Learning Disability'. No further information is held.**

- **Question 2 – Recorded Sexual Offences**
Where an existing electronic search, report or query can identify offences falling within Question 1 without the manual examination of individual case records, please provide annual figures (2021–2025) broken down, where available, by Home Office offence code and offence description. If your force already produces management information or performance reports containing these data, those reports may be supplied in satisfaction of this part of the request. – **Partially disclosed, please see the accompanying file titled 'FOI 23126 Electronic Recording of Victims Data.xlsx'.**
- **Question 3 – Final Recorded Outcomes**
Where held electronically, please provide the final recorded Home Office Outcome Code (or local equivalent where Home Office Outcome Codes are not used) for the offences identified in Question 2. – **Partially disclosed, please see the accompanying file titled 'FOI 23126 Electronic Recording of Victims Data.xlsx'.**
- **Question 4 – Victim Support Measures**
Where held electronically, please provide the number of cases identified in Question 2 in which an Appropriate Adult, Registered Intermediary or any other communication support measure was recorded as a searchable electronic field, marker, flag or other searchable identifier. – **No information held. SP do not have a readily retrievable electronic field in relation to appropriate adults, registered intermediaries or any other communication support measures linked to a victim recorded on an occurrence. In order to obtain this data, a manual review of each record would be required.**
- **Question 5 – Policies, Guidance and Training** Please provide copies of any current policy, current operational guidance, training or other guidance documents relating to recording learning disabilities, autism or mental health conditions for victims of sexual offences; investigating such offences; reasonable adjustments; communication support; safeguarding; and specialist victim support. – **No information held.**
- **Question 6 – Internal Reviews**
Please state whether your force undertook any internal audit, quality assurance exercise, internal review or inspection (whether undertaken internally or commissioned externally) between 1 January 2021 and 31 December 2025 relating to the recording of these characteristics or the investigation of such offences. Where held electronically and not exempt, please provide copies. – **No information held.**



- Question 7 – Recording System Policies, Reviews and Plans
Please provide copies of any recorded policy, audit, review, strategy, programme documentation, project documentation, business case or implementation plan held between 1 January 2021 and 31 December 2025 relating to improving the recording or electronic searchability of learning disability, autism or mental health conditions within crime recording or case management systems, where held and not exempt. – **No information held.**

Please note that there are a number of offences that are still being investigated so with regard to these cases Section 30(1)(a)(b) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, has been applied – Investigations conducted by Public Authorities.

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 30(1)(a)(b) – Criminal Investigations
Section 30 is qualified and class based and, as such, we are required to apply the public interest test.

Public Interest Test

Factors favouring disclosure under Section 30(1)(a)(b)

Disclosure of the information would improve the public's knowledge and understanding of the investigatory process and, as all police investigations are publicly funded, would show how public funds are being spent.

Factors favouring non-disclosure under Section 30(1)(a)(b)

Disclosure of the requested information would prejudice how investigations are carried out in the future. SP is charged with enforcing the law, preventing and detecting crime and protecting the communities SP serves. Any release of information relating to ongoing investigations could prejudice and undermine those investigations. The prevention and detection of such matters could therefore be hindered and therefore risk interference with evidence, which could have detrimental impact on future investigations. In addition, the right to a fair trial could be undermined.

Balance test

Disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act is a release of information to the world in general and not an individual applicant. Having considered the public interest factors SP are required to determine whether on balance the factors favouring disclosure outweigh those which are against disclosure. It is SP's view that the factors favouring disclosure do not outweigh those which favour non-disclosure.

These figures have been provided to the best of the ability of SP, subject to the limitation of current recording protocols and systems/software. Additional offences may have been recorded during these timescales but are awaiting finalisation and input onto these systems and would not be present within this dataset.

Every effort is made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate and complete. However, it is important to note that data is extracted from multiple sources, developed for specific policing purposes, for which data extraction methods have not been specifically designed to directly correlate with the terminology of this request. Therefore, the data presented is subject to the inaccuracies and idiosyncrasies inherent in any large-scale recording system.

As a consequence, care should be taken in the interpretation and presentation of this data, so as to not misrepresent the whole or any part of the data disclosed.

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 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



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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