

4 June 2026

FOI Ref 22937

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

I'd be very grateful for disclosure of the following information under the Freedom of Information Act.

Please provide the total FTE headcount of specialist officers and staff at the Economic Crime Unit within the Regional Organised Crime Unit for the West Midlands Region (ROCUWM), for each year in the previous 5 years.

If possible within the cost threshold, for the same time period please also provide:

a) the total annual budget for the ROCUWM;

b) the total annual budget for the Economic Crime Unit within the ROCUWM.

SP received your request on 01/06/2026 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 provide the total FTE headcount of specialist officers and staff at the Economic Crime Unit within the Regional Organised Crime Unit for the West Midlands Region (ROCUWM), for each year in the previous 5 years. – **Withheld, Section 31. Please see below.**

If possible within the cost threshold, for the same time period please also provide:

- a) the total annual budget for the ROCUWM; – **Withheld, Section 31. Please see below.**
- b) the total annual budget for the Economic Crime Unit within the ROCUWM. – **Withheld, Section 31. Please see below.**

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 this particular request.

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

Information is exempt from disclosure under section 31(1)(a)(b) where the release of Information would, or would be 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, we are required to evidence the harm in disclosure and apply the public interest test.

Harm:

To disclose the requested information relating to ROCUWM would undermine ongoing and future operations, investigations, and policing tactics across the region. Revealing specific operational details would provide insight into how resources are deployed and how investigations are conducted. Disclosure would enable those involved in criminal activity to better understand policing methods and potentially adapt their behaviour to avoid detection. This would weaken the effectiveness of law enforcement activity and compromise the prevention and detection of crime.

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 this information would provide those intent on committing criminal acts with valuable intelligence regarding policing capabilities, tactics, and operational focus. This could enable offenders to evade law enforcement, disrupt operations, or target vulnerabilities, thereby increasing the risk of criminal activity. Maintaining the integrity of covert policing methods is essential, and disclosure in this case would be likely to prejudice law enforcement activity and public safety.

Balance test

When considering whether disclosure is appropriate, we 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, we 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.

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.



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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 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, taking into account 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