

8 June 2026

FOI Ref 22960

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

1. The total recorded costs incurred by the force in responding to and investigating animal-related crimes, including:
 - the cost of officer time spent responding to incidents and carrying out investigations
 - costs associated with gathering evidence (e.g. statements, site visits, seizure support)
 - use of specialist units (e.g. rural crime or wildlife crime officers/teams)
 - custody-related costs where suspects are detained
2. The total recorded volume of police activity relating to animal-related crimes, such as:
 - number of incidents
 - recorded offences
 - use of specialist wildlife or rural crime officers
3. Total costs recovered, or liable to be recovered, for recorded animal-related crimes, including:
 - whether any of these costs are recoverable from offenders (e.g. through court orders)
 - any income received related to enforcement activity (if applicable)
 - any information on the proportion of liable costs that is not recovered

If exact financial data is not held, I would be grateful for any proxy measures (e.g. officer time, incident counts) or relevant internal documents that provide insight into the resource impact.

Please provide the above information for the following financial years: 2023/24 (01/04/2023 - 31/03/2024), 2024/25 (01/04/2024 - 31/03/2025), 2025/26 (01/04/2025 - 31/03/2026).

If you cannot provide the information requested above in financial years, please provide it in calendar years (2023, 2024, 2025) or however your data is stored. If you do not have this data for all the years requested, please provide the data for the years you have. If the requested years are missing altogether, please provide data for the latest available time period.

SP received your request on 04/06/2026 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 our systems to answer this request. For the period requested, there have been in excess of 2,700 incidents, from which 1,800 offences have been recorded which relate to animals. In order to determine the total recorded costs incurred by the force in responding to and investigating animal-related crime, and the total costs recovered or liable to be recovered for such crimes, the record for each incident or offence would require manual review. Further review would also be required to determine whether specialist wildlife or rural crime officers were involved in the incidents or offences.

Additionally, where identified, officers' duty hours would need to be individually interrogated in order to determine the amount of time spent on each incident or offence. Officers' attendance at such incidents would form part of their regular tour of duty and therefore would not necessarily be separately recorded, costed or itemised against a specific cost centre code. We may therefore be required to contact individual officers to see whether they had recorded their time at such incidents separately. To extract this data would therefore require a very labour-intensive manual trawl through investigation/incident logs, custody records and officer duty logs.

From dip sampling, it has been estimated that it would take approximately 10 minutes to review each record to answer this request, this would equate to over 750 hours. Further time would then be required to attribute the number of officer hours spent on such investigations and incidents. To achieve this task would therefore exceed the 18-hour time and cost threshold of the Freedom of Information Act by a 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.

If your request was refined, SP would be able to provide the following:

1. The number of recorded incidents between 01/04/2023 and 31/03/2026 with a call type description of 'Pets/Domestic Animals', 'Wildlife' or 'ASB – Animals', broken down by financial year and call type description.
2. The number of recorded offences relating to animals between 01/04/2023 and 31/03/2026, broken down by financial year and offence.

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, 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