

23 September 2026

FOI Ref 23355

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

This request concerns the "Thinking Skills" course/intervention used by Staffordshire Police in connection with Out of Court Resolutions.

Please provide:

- a) the full name of the Thinking Skills course/intervention currently used;
- b) the organisation which provides or supplies it;
- c) whether Staffordshire Police delivers it itself or refers participants to an external provider;
- d) the types of Out of Court Resolution for which it may be used, including Community Resolutions and/or Conditional Cautions; and
- e) if the provider or course has changed since 1 January 2023, the previous provider/course and approximate date of the change.

Please provide copies of any current policies, guidance, instructions, referral criteria, decision-making documents or other recorded material held by Staffordshire Police which explains when an officer or decision-maker should select the Thinking Skills intervention.

I am particularly interested in guidance identifying the behaviours, offending patterns, circumstances or offence types for which Thinking Skills is considered appropriate.

Please provide copies of any materials for the Thinking Skills intervention held by Staffordshire Police, including, where held:

- * participant workbooks or handouts;
- * course/module outlines and learning objectives;
- * presentation slides;
- * questions and exercises;
- * video/audio transcripts;
- * assessment material;
- * facilitator/instructor guidance; and
- * completion or pass criteria.

If Staffordshire Police does not hold the full course materials because they are retained by an external provider, please identify which of the above categories Staffordshire Police does hold.

For each calendar year 2023, 2024, 2025 and 2026 year-to-date, please provide:

- a) the number of people referred to or required to undertake the Thinking Skills intervention;
- b) where recorded, a breakdown by the offence or offence category associated with the referral; and
- c) where recorded, a breakdown by the type of Out of Court Resolution used.

If this information is not held in precisely these categories, I would be grateful for the nearest equivalent information that can be readily extracted from your records.

I am seeking statistical information only and do not require personally identifying information.

Please state whether, from 1 January 2023 to the date of this request, Staffordshire Police has used the Thinking Skills intervention in connection with alleged offences principally involving:



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- * speech or expression;
- * social-media or other electronic communications;
- * protest or campaigning activity; or
- * public-order offences involving words, communications or expression.

Where this information is recorded in a manner that can be readily retrieved, please provide the number of such referrals and the associated offence or offence categories.

I am seeking statistical information only and do not require names or other personally identifying information.

Please provide copies of any documents held by Staffordshire Police concerning:

- a) evaluations or assessments of the effectiveness of the Thinking Skills intervention;
- b) equality impact assessments, human-rights assessments or data-protection impact assessments specifically relating to its use;
- c) Out of Court Resolution scrutiny-panel reports, minutes or findings which specifically discuss or assess cases in which Thinking Skills was selected, with personal information redacted as necessary; and
- d) the current contract, purchase order, service specification or other procurement document identifying the provider and cost of the Thinking Skills intervention.

Where responsive information is already publicly available, I would be happy to receive a link or reference identifying the relevant document instead of a duplicate copy.

If complying with the entirety of this request would exceed the appropriate cost limit, I would be grateful for advice and assistance under section 16 of the Freedom of Information Act as to how the request could be narrowed while preserving as much of the requested information as possible.

Please provide the information electronically.

Clarification received on 22/09/2026:

My request relates specifically to the contracted Thinking Skills course/intervention used in connection with Out of Court Resolutions, rather than wider external training undertaken by staff which may contain Thinking Skills modules.

SP received your request on 07/09/2026 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.

This request concerns the "Thinking Skills" course/intervention used by Staffordshire Police in connection with Out of Court Resolutions.

Please provide:

- a) the full name of the Thinking Skills course/intervention currently used; - **Disclosed, Thinking Skills Course.**
- b) the organisation which provides or supplies it; - **Disclosed, Softcat, Advent and Red Snapper.**



- c) whether Staffordshire Police delivers it itself or refers participants to an external provider; - **Disclosed, external provider.**
- d) the types of Out of Court Resolution for which it may be used, including Community Resolutions and/or Conditional Cautions; and – **Disclosed, conditional cautions and Community resolutions.**
- e) if the provider or course has changed since 1 January 2023, the previous provider/course and approximate date of the change. – **Not applicable.**
- Please provide copies of any current policies, guidance, instructions, referral criteria, decision-making documents or other recorded material held by Staffordshire Police which explains when an officer or decision-maker should select the Thinking Skills intervention.
I am particularly interested in guidance identifying the behaviours, offending patterns, circumstances or offence types for which Thinking Skills is considered appropriate. – **No information held.**
- Please provide copies of any materials for the Thinking Skills intervention held by Staffordshire Police, including, where held:
 - * participant workbooks or handouts;
 - * course/module outlines and learning objectives;
 - * presentation slides;
 - * questions and exercises;
 - * video/audio transcripts;
 - * assessment material;
 - * facilitator/instructor guidance; and
 - * completion or pass criteria.If Staffordshire Police does not hold the full course materials because they are retained by an external provider, please identify which of the above categories Staffordshire Police does hold. – **No information held.**
- For each calendar year 2023, 2024, 2025 and 2026 year-to-date, please provide:
 - a) the number of people referred to or required to undertake the Thinking Skills intervention;
 - b) where recorded, a breakdown by the offence or offence category associated with the referral; and
 - c) where recorded, a breakdown by the type of Out of Court Resolution used.Please state whether, from 1 January 2023 to the date of this request, Staffordshire Police has used the Thinking Skills intervention in connection with alleged offences principally involving:
 - * speech or expression;
 - * social-media or other electronic communications;
 - * protest or campaigning activity; or
 - * public-order offences involving words, communications or expression.Where this information is recorded in a manner that can be readily retrieved, please provide the number of such referrals and the associated offence or offence categories. – **Disclosed, please see the accompanying file titled 'FOI 23355 Thinking Skills Course Data.xlsx'.**

Please provide copies of any documents held by Staffordshire Police concerning:



- a) evaluations or assessments of the effectiveness of the Thinking Skills intervention; - **No information held.**
- b) equality impact assessments, human-rights assessments or data-protection impact assessments specifically relating to its use; - **No information held.**
- c) Out of Court Resolution scrutiny-panel reports, minutes or findings which specifically discuss or assess cases in which Thinking Skills was selected, with personal information redacted as necessary; and - **No information held.**
- d) the current contract, purchase order, service specification or other procurement document identifying the provider and cost of the Thinking Skills intervention. – **Withheld.**

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 43(2) Commercial Interests

This is a prejudice based qualified exemption which means there is a requirement to provide evidence of harm and a public interest test needs to be considered.

Harm:

The information relating to the contract with the provider of the Thinking Skills intervention, if released into the public domain, would harm SP's negotiating position with regards to future contracts for equipment or services. There are commercially confidential clauses within the Thinking Skills contracts which are not permitted to be shared to the wider public.

Public Interest Test

Factors favouring disclosure under Section 43(2)

Disclosure of the requested information would allow the public to be aware of how public funds are spent or allocated and thereby would provide transparency and accountability, showing that funds from the public purse are used appropriately and proportionally.

Factors favouring non-disclosure under Section 43(2)

Through disclosure of the requested information, SP would find that its negotiating position would be greatly impaired through the release of details that would not only likely be prejudicial to SP but also to the agencies/companies involved. Releasing this information would be expected to have a detrimental effect on their ability to be competitive in the future and would be exceedingly likely to deter further enterprises submitting offers for tender in the future. This then would impede SP obtaining the most competitive or appropriate services in the future and negatively impact upon the public purse.

Balance test



It is the responsibility of SP, when dealing with commercial businesses, to not only protect their commercial interest but also that of SP. Commercial interests must be protected so that the best possible value for money is obtained through open competition, both for businesses and SP. This would not be achieved if full details were to be made available to the market.

Although the use of public funds must be open and transparent, SP is accountable for the money that it spends and utilises and if to release the information means the force is unable to negotiate future tendering and have the ability to secure value for money due to business relationships having been impaired, then this would not be in the public interest.

Having considered the public interest test factors, we are required to determine whether, on balance, the factors favouring disclosure outweigh those which are against disclosure. It is our view that the factors favouring disclosure do not outweigh those which favour withholding the details. Therefore, SP declines to provide the information for the reasons stated above.

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 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



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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