

Our Ref: IM-FOI-2022-0367
Date: 24 February 2022



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 2002

I refer to your recent request for information which has been handled in accordance with the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

For ease of reference, your request is replicated below together with the response.

Please provide the following information for the financial years 2020 to 2021, and 2021 to the present date:

The number of times individuals have been interviewed by your force regarding offensive social media posts, and the typical length of these meetings.

Having considered your request in terms of the above Act, I regret to inform you that I am unable to provide you with the information you have requested, as it would prove too costly to do so within the context of the fee regulations. As you may be aware the current cost threshold is £600 and I estimate that it would cost well in excess of this amount to process your request. As such, and in terms of Section 16(4) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 where Section 12(1) of the Act (Excessive Cost of Compliance) has been applied, this represents a refusal notice for the information sought.

By way of explanation, the only way to provide you with this information in an accurate and consistent manner would be to individually examine each recorded crime on our systems for Communication offences for the period requested. This would be a significant task and would exceed the cost threshold.

To illustrate the extent of this task for Group 2 Communicating Indecently (SOSA 2009) and Communication Act 2003 2003 21/22 Q2 alone there were 950 recorded crimes. If we estimate that it would take 5 mins to review a report 950 x 5 mins would total over 80 hours and at £15 an hour this task would exceed the time and cost thresholds set by ministers.

By way of assistance, Police Scotland does publish quarterly information reports.

Please see the link below for more information.

<https://www.scotland.police.uk/spa-media/cucg0gbd/force-area-quarter-2-official.pdf>

Time and money spent on campaigns specifically targeted against hate crimes and offensive posts, an example would be the [advertising van used by Merseyside police](#).

In 2019/20 Police Scotland delivered a hate crime campaign and utilised out of home and digital advertising to encourage reporting of disability hate crimes. The cost of this campaign was £29,705.55.

2020/21 – There was no hate crime campaign.

2022/23 – A hate crime campaign is due to be launched in March 2022 this year, costs relating to this campaign have not yet been committed.

In relation to time spent on campaigns, I can advise that Police Scotland does not hold the above requested information and In terms of Section 17 of the Act, this letter represents a formal notice that information is not held

By way of explanation, I can advise that staff undertake duties within the Corporate Communication unit and the time and cost for each campaign is not separately recorded.

Time and money spent collecting, removing, and investigating posters, leaflets or similar material with offensive content, as well as a brief summary of their content.

I can advise that Police Scotland does not hold the above requested information. In terms of Section 17 of the Act, this letter represents a formal notice that information is not held.

By way of explanation, the total costs and time relating to an individual investigation are not recorded. The nature of policing means that when officers are on duty they will be deployed to wherever their services are most required and as such are not recorded as a specific expense to a particular investigation.

As such, there is no definitive information in relation to cost or time to which officers were specifically assigned cases for the period requested.

As by way of assistance, we can advise that the removing of posters would be the responsibility of the councils.

Should you require any further assistance concerning this matter please contact Information Management – Glasgow at foi@glasgow@scotland.police.uk quoting the reference number given.

If you are dissatisfied with the way in which Police Scotland has dealt with your request, you are entitled, in the first instance, to request a review of our actions and decisions.

Your request must specify the matter which gives rise to your dissatisfaction and it must be submitted within 40 working days of receiving this response - either by email to foi@scotland.police.uk or by post to Information Management (Disclosure), Police Scotland, Clyde Gateway, 2 French Street, Dalmarnock, G40 4EH.

If you remain dissatisfied following the outcome of that review, you are thereafter entitled to apply to the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner within six months for a decision.

OFFICIAL

You can apply [online](#), by email to enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info or by post to Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9DS.

Should you wish to appeal against the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner's decision, there is an appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law only.

As part of our commitment to demonstrate openness and transparency in respect of the information we hold, an anonymised version of this response will be posted to the Police Scotland Freedom of Information [Disclosure Log](#) in seven days' time.