

Our Ref: IM-FOI-2022-1164
Date: 27 Jun 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.

This information relates to Girvan police station in South Ayrshire.

- 1. Ranks and number of officers stationed at Girvan.**
- 2. Number of male and female officers.**
- 3. Vehicle type and numbers.**
- 5. Number of special police officers and gender volunteering at Girvan station.**
- 6. Specialist units/staff based at Girvan station.**

In terms of Section 16 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, I am refusing to provide you with the information sought.

Section 16 requires Police Scotland when refusing to provide such information because it is exempt, to provide you with a notice which:

- (a) states that it holds the information,
- (b) states that it is claiming an exemption,
- (c) specifies the exemption in question and
- (d) states, if that would not be otherwise apparent, why the exemption applies.

Section 35 (1) (a) & (b) – Law Enforcement

The information requested is exempt, as its disclosure would or would be likely to prejudice substantially the prevention or detection of crime and apprehension or prosecution of offenders. If the number of police officers based at a specific station were disclosed, experience has shown that it would allow those intent on committing crime or causing disorder to gauge the likelihood of detection or to take measures to negate the likelihood of detection. It would allow criminals to plan how best to engage or occupy existing police resources in an effort to maximise their chances of committing serious crime, therefore harming the efficient and effective conduct of the service.

This is a non-absolute exemption and requires the application of the public interest test.

Section 39 (1) – Health, safety and the environment

The disclosure of the information requested may have the potential to increase the number of attacks on operational police officers by those being arrested or who have committed crime or who are involved in disorder. This will be particularly relevant in geographic areas with a lower number of officers.

This is a non-absolute exemption and requires the application of the public interest test.

Public Interest Test

As you will be aware, the exemptions listed above are non-absolute and require the application of the Public Interest Test.

I would suggest that public accountability would favour disclosure, given that the information concerns the efficient and effective use of resources by the Service. Likewise, disclosure of the information would also inform the public debate on the issue of policing and contribute to the accuracy of that debate.

Furthermore, the applicability of the exemptions listed above, the need to ensure the effective conduct of the service in relation to prevention and detection of crime and, the public safety considerations involved in the delivery of operational policing clearly favour non-disclosure of the information requested.

On balance I would contend that the public interest in disclosing the information is outweighed by that in maintaining the exemptions listed, as, it is doubtful if it can ever be in the public interest to disclose information which would prejudice the prevention or detection of crime or, which would jeopardise the delivery of operational policing and the safety of officers and staff.

By way of assistance, data can be provided down to divisional level. Figures for all Police Scotland officer numbers are provided on the force website via the following link:

<https://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/police-scotland/police-scotland-officer-numbers/>

4. Facilities at Girvan police station.

Office space, locker/changing room, kitchen/dining area.

5. Communities covered by Girvan police station.

Girvan South and Carrick.

I have provided below a link to the section of Police Scotland's website that covers South Ayrshire which may be of assistance:

[South Ayrshire - Police Scotland](#)

Should you require any further assistance please contact Information Management - Glasgow at – foiglasgow@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.

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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. 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.