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Our Ref: IM-FOI-2022-0262
Date: 30th March 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.

Tackling domestic abuse is a priority for Police Scotland and we are committed to working with our partners to reduce the harm it causes and ultimately eradicate it.

Domestic abuse is a despicable and debilitating crime which affects all of our communities and has no respect for ability, age, ethnicity, gender, race, religion or sexual orientation.

Police Scotland will not tolerate it.

Police Scotland will proactively target perpetrators and support victims to prevent domestic abuse from damaging the lives of victims and their families.

Police Scotland defines domestic abuse as:

“Any form of physical, verbal, sexual, psychological or financial abuse which might amount to criminal conduct and which takes place within the context of a relationship. The relationship will be between partners (married, cohabiting, civil partnership or otherwise) or ex-partners. The abuse may be committed in the home or elsewhere including online”

This definition is included in the Joint Protocol between Police Scotland and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS), “*In partnership challenging domestic abuse*” which is a public document that can be found at the Police Scotland website on <https://www.scotland.police.uk/> or on the COPFS website on <http://www.copfs.gov.uk/>.

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

- 1. How many domestic abuse offences have been recorded in your force area in the past six years (2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021)?**
- 2. What was the gender of the perpetrator?**
- 3. What was the gender of the victim?**
- 4. How many controlling and coercive behaviour offences have been recorded in the past six years (2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021)?**
- 5. What was the gender of the perpetrator?**
- 6. What was the gender of the victim?**

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Following a clarification request you confirmed that the information in financial years and specifically 2015/16 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22 to end of December 2021 would be sufficient.

In regards to questions 1-3 for the full period and 4-6 from the 2019/20 financial year onwards, please find the requested information in the attached spreadsheet. I would ask you to note the caveats provided below each data table.

In regards to questions 4-6 for the period 2015/16 to 2018/19 I regret to inform you that I am unable to provide you with the information you have requested as this information is not held. As such, in terms of Section 17 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, this represents a notice that the information requested is not held by Police Scotland.

By way of explanation, prior to the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 which came into force on 1st April 2019 coercive behaviour was not a criminal offence in Scotland.

The new Act added to existing common law and statutory offences by making a range of abusive behaviours including those of a physical, sexual and psychological nature which are perpetrated within a domestic relationship, an offence.

This represented a significant change in the law and now enables Police Scotland to focus on the full extent of abusive behaviours and the devastating impact such a course of conduct can have within a domestic relationship.

For the period after 01/04/2019 we have provided offences under the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018.

Should you require any further assistance please contact Information Management 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.pnn.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.