| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 24-3158  Responded to: 09 January 2024 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## With reference to your rebuttal of our Freedom of Information request on 29 October we would state as follows:

## Your response suggests that an Island Impact assessment was not carried out before the decision was made to go ahead with the plans to charge for Police Housing with the Isle of Mull.

## Can you please confirm if this is a correct interpretation of your response.

## If this is the case, please confirm why an Island Impact assessment was not carried out, which appears contrary to the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018.

Our response to FOI 24-2542 confirmed that the information requested (the Island Impact Assessment) was held by the Force but that it was considered exempt from disclosure in terms of section 30(b) of the Act. As was explained in the response, the reason for that was that the document was incomplete and only existed a draft, yet to be considered and ratified by Police Scotland.

The Island Communities Impact Assessment is an iterative process which is still ongoing.  This process has been concurrent with the requirement to consult regarding the creation of the Police Housing National Guidance which documents the key policy decisions and governance arrangements affecting the workforce.

## If as assessment has been carried out please confirm the date of the assessment.

The date on the current draft is October 2024, but as explained above, the Island Communities Impact Assessment is an iterative process which is still ongoing.

## If an assessment will be available for consideration at a future date, please confirm the date when this document will be made available to [the Isle of Mull Community Council].

In terms of section 17 of the Act, the information sought is not held.

There is no date planned to make the document available to the Isle of Mull Community Council specifically.

## Alternatively, if no document will be available to us in the near future, please provide a precis of how the decision was made not to consider the very real impact of the withdrawal of accommodation to Officers may have for the isles.

There has been no decision *not to* consider the impact that withdrawal of officer accommodation may have for the Isles. Section 17 of the Act therefore applies as the information sought is not held by Police Scotland.

On the contrary, such considerations form a key part of the assessment process.

Whilst there is a need to develop the governance arrangements in relation to Island Communities Impact Assessments, clear guidance on the rules and conventions for the creation and review of policy are in place within Police Scotland.

This includes opportunities for individuals and diversity staff associations to comment through the mandatory consultation process to provide feedback and inform the development of material.

All new and revised policy, procedure and national guidance includes the completion of an Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment, which captures risks and mitigations.

The Police Housing National Guidance is a new procedure however the provision of police housing to police officers is not a new concept.

Police housing has been provided to police officers for decades and, notably, has existed since the inception of Police Scotland in 2013.

Since 2013, the terms/conditions of occupancy for police houses, accepted by officers, have advised as to work ongoing to constitute an agreed housing policy which may include the imposition of a charge.

Following on from this, the intention to introduce a charge was included within the 2022 Housing Strategy and the identified HMRC position of benefit-in-kind (which position exemplified the inequity of a small number of officers being provided with the benefit of free housing or significantly subsidised shared accommodation), the process of implementing such a charge has been ongoing since 2022, it having been proposed, initially, to introduce a charge by 01 April 2023 in order to ensure future housing sustainability.  The introduction of occupancy charges will, in most cases, negate any benefit-in-kind tax liability from the implementation date on 01 September 2024.

If you require any further assistance, please contact us quoting the reference above.

You can request a review of this response within the next 40 working days by [email](mailto:foi@scotland.police.uk) or by letter (Information Management - FOI, Police Scotland, Clyde Gateway, 2 French Street, Dalmarnock, G40 4EH). Requests must include the reason for your dissatisfaction.

If you remain dissatisfied following our review response, you can appeal to the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner (OSIC) within 6 months - [online](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal), by [email](mailto:enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info) or by letter (OSIC, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, KY16 9DS).

Following an OSIC appeal, you can appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law only.

This response will be added to our [Disclosure Log](http://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/freedom-of-information/disclosure-log) in seven days' time.

Every effort has been taken to ensure our response is as accessible as possible. If you require this response to be provided in an alternative format, please let us know.