| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 23-3193  Responded to: xx January 2024 |
| --- | --- |

Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

On the 11th December 2023 it was reported in the Greenock Telegraph that Greenock Police Station could possibly be closed within the next six to nine months. Based on that information, I am seeking the information below.

I must first clarify the statement attributed to the Greenock Telegraph above and advise you that the assumptions made in their report are not factually correct.

I can confirm that the Greenock site is currently subject to consultation in relation to the possible closure of the building and therefore no formal decision has been made to close the site.

1. The current total cost of repairs or updates that Police Scotland police stations require. In other words, the amount of money that Police Scotland has either estimated or been told it would cost to repair or modify all current police stations that require repairs or modifications.  
Based on condition surveys carried out on Police Scotland buildings in March 2020 (with some reports which were flagged for further investigations being updated in November 2023), it is estimated that the total cost of bringing 245 police stations up to or above ‘Upper Quartile B’ condition is circa £224m.

Please note that surveyors define ‘Upper Quartile B’ as ‘Satisfactory – Performing Adequately but Showing Minor Deterioration’.

2. The five police stations with the most expensive estimation of required essential repairs, modifications or updates. In other words, the five stations that Police Scotland estimate would have the highest repair/update/required modification bill.

Based on the above-mentioned condition surveys, the following stations were identified as having the highest cost to bring up to a ‘Condition B+ standard’:

i) Bucksburn, ii) Danestone, iii) Nelson Street, iv) Torry and v) Kincorth police stations.

The estimated costs attributed to each of these five properties are considered to be exempt in terms of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (the Act).

Section 16 of the Act requires Police Scotland 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.

Where information is considered to be exempt, this letter serves as a Refusal Notice that information is held and an explanation of the appropriate exemption is provided.

I can confirm that Police Scotland holds the information requested. The exemption that I consider to be applicable is:

Section 33(1)(b) - Commercial Interests

This provides that information is exempt information if its disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice substantially the commercial interests of any person (including, without prejudice to that generality, a Scottish public authority).

It is considered that disclosure would prejudice Police Scotland in that it would be considered commercially and/or operationally sensitive until those properties were formally being declared surplus/marketed.

It could be argued that disclosure of the requested information would allow greater scrutiny of the way public funds are spent or disposed and would increase accountability and transparency in terms of this spending. Police Scotland is a publicly funded organisation and therefore the Service has an obligation to obtain best value for money with particular services.

That said, it is essential to maintain best value in all circumstances and the public interest would not be served if it were no longer possible to make good financial decisions in accordance with the most appropriate and timeous marketing process, particularly if this would result in any confidential financial information being released.

3. The latest piece of Police Scotland correspondence (either in email or letter form) regarding the decision to close Police Stations. (This correspondence would presumably be between the decision makers within Police Scotland who are responsible for overseeing budgets and workforce planning. The time frame for this request is between July 1st 2023 and December 11th 2023.) To clarify, I understand that Police Scotland will be currently reviewing station closures, therefore some decisions will yet to be made however I believe Police Scotland will have definitively decided to close some stations within the next year. If Police Scotland has made a definitive decision to close some then please reveal which ones.

In 2019 the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) approved the Police Scotland Estate Strategy which provides a framework for our transformation, supporting the long-term policing vision by reviewing the demand and opportunities within our estate.  The Police Scotland Estate Transformation Team use this framework as a basis for changes to the Police Scotland estate portfolio.

When an opportunity or site is identified for disposal, which could include a ‘lease’ conclusion, declaring a site surplus to operational requirement or a co-location opportunity, there is a formal process Police Scotland must adhere to as part of the disposal process.  Part of this process, will include a public consultation with the community and local partners to gather views and feedback on the proposal.

Final approval for a site’s disposal or transfer to a community group, as part of the Community Asset Transfer programme, will come from within the SPA or an approved authoritative level within Police Scotland as per the SPA Financial Regulations and Police Scotland Scheme of Financial Delegation.

I can confirm that between 1st July 2023 and 11th December 2023, Police Scotland made no formal decision to close any of its sites in 2024. On that basis section 17 of the Act applies and I can confirm that the information sought is not held by Police Scotland.

To be of further assistance, on 14th December 2023, Police Scotland announced plans to consult on proposals to close a number of properties across the country – full details can be found via the link:

[Police Scotland launches consultation and engagement on proposed estate disposals - Police Scotland](https://www.scotland.police.uk/what-s-happening/news/2023/december/police-scotland-launches-consultation-and-engagement-on-proposed-estate-disposals/)

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.