



Your reference:

Our reference: FOI_2023_07732

E-mail: FOI

@gloucestershire.police.uk

Direct dial: 01452 754304

Postal Address: As above

Date: 08/09/2023

Dear

Gloucestershire Constabulary Freedom of Information request 2023.0732

On 16/07/2023 you sent an email constituting a request under the Freedom of Information Act asking the following:

I am a crime fiction author currently writing a detective series based in Gloucestershire. Do you have any information which would help me to describe the police HQ building layout, facilities and staffing at Waterways? I could easily pay a visit but I imagine that this is a secure site which I couldn't simply walk into.

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 s1, I can confirm that Gloucestershire Constabulary holds some relevant information.

I can confirm that Police Headquarters have a number of offices, a gym, meeting areas and restaurant facilities.

There are currently 568 members of staff based at the Headquarters.

With regards to the layout of Gloucestershire Constabulary's Headquarters, this information will not be disclosed.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires Gloucestershire Constabulary, when refusing to provide information (because the information is exempt) to provide you the applicant with a notice which: (a) states the fact, (b) specifies the exemption in question and (c) states (if not otherwise apparent) why the exemption applies.

The following exemption applies:

Section 31(1)(a) – Law Enforcement

The exemption above is qualified and prejudice based therefore both a Public Interest Test and Harm Test are required.

Evidence of Harm

To disclose the information on the Police Headquarters layout could cause subsequent harm to the Police service and its ability to protect members of staff as well as members of the public. By disclosing the layout of the building, this could leave the building vulnerable to potential criminals and/or terrorists, thus in turn leaving staff members and members of the public vulnerable to attacks and/or disruption in the area.

On a national level, criminals and terrorists would be able to identify specific areas of the building and use this knowledge to their own advantage by targeting Gloucestershire Constabulary. This would result in harm and disruption to members of staff as well as members of the public.

The disclosure of information is likely to undermine Gloucestershire Constabulary's ability to protect members of staff and members of the public, as it would be likely that the layout would allow criminals and terrorist to try and exploit any weaknesses.

Public Interest Test

Factors in Favour of Disclosure

The disclosure of this information would lead to public awareness on the layout of Gloucestershire Police's headquarters and what public money is spent on.

Factors against Disclosure

The disclosure of information of the Police Headquarters layout would compromise the building, members of staff and members of the public. Information released under the Freedom of Information Act is considered a release into the public domain, thus this disclosure may lead to criminals and potential terrorists being able to target and locate sensitive areas of the building leaving the estate vulnerable to attack. This would lead to members of staff and members of the public subject to harm from potential threats.

Balance Test

Whilst there is a public interest in the transparency on how monies from the public purse is spent on the police buildings and ensuring that it is spent appropriately and efficiently there is a very strong public interest in the safeguarding of the members of staff, members of the public and also the building from criminals and potential terrorists. Therefore it is in our opinion that the balance of the public interest test favours withholding the information.

In accordance with the Act, this letter represents a Refusal Notice for your request.

If you are not satisfied with this response or any actions taken in dealing with your request, you have the right to ask that we review your case under our internal procedure. Please note that a request for an internal review must be made within 20 working days of the response to your original request.

If you decide to request that such a review is undertaken and following this process you are still unsatisfied, you then have the right to direct your complaint to the Information Commissioner for consideration.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted via the following means:

Website - <https://ico.org.uk/>

Call their helpline - 0303 123 1113

Email - casework@ico.org.uk

Post –

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely,

Disclosure Officer
Gloucestershire Constabulary