



Your reference: n/a

Our reference: FOI_24_0721

E-mail: FOI

@gloucestershire.police.uk

Direct dial: 01452 754304

Postal Address: As above

Date: 22/08/2024

Dear

Gloucestershire Constabulary Freedom of Information request 2024_0721

On 01/08/2024 you sent an email constituting a request under the Freedom of Information Act asking the following:

I would like to request:

Q1. I would like to know how many reports of romance fraud the force has received this year and broken down for 2023, 2022 and 2021 please.

This crime type is described as the engineering of a supposed friendship or relationship for fraudulent/financial gain.

Q2. For each case, can I see if any arrests / charges were brought please.

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

Unfortunately, it's not possible to electronically search for the information you have requested.

I can confirm that the Constabulary records crimes as per the Home Office Counting Rules, however 'romance fraud' is not a specific offence. Having reviewed the [Home Office Counting Rules For Fraud](#) document, page 19 confirms that 'Dating Scams' are recorded as 53/40 – Fraud by False Representation.

I can confirm that a search has been conducted of the Crime Recording System from 01/01/2021 and 31/12/2023 for any crimes with the above offence. This has resulted in over 250 crimes, but in order to ascertain if any related specifically to 'romance fraud', each crime would need to be manually reviewed, which would take longer than the 18 hours prescribed by Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act.

Please see below for suggestions on how you may be able to refine your request to come within the cost constraints of Section 12 of the Act.

Section 17(5) 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.

In relation to your request Section 12 applies.

Section 12(1) – Fee Regulations states:

Section 1(1) of the Act does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit. (As detailed in the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Fees Regulations of 2004)

The appropriate limit at the moment is £450 calculated at an hourly rate of £25 per hour for all staff time incurred in:

- i. Determining whether information is held
- ii. Locating it
- iii. Retrieving it
- iv. Extracting the information to be disclosed from the other information.

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

Under Section 16, duty to assist, I can confirm that a free text search can be conducted of the MOs of the above crimes for specific terms. If this would be useful, please submit a new FOI request to foi@gloucestershire.police.uk specifying which terms you are interested in. Please be mindful of terms that may be used in everyday language or those that describe other, non-relevant offences.

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