

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

22 March 2010

Your Ref:

Our Ref: 0133/2010

Mr Alastair Manderson

Email: request-29508-786108a6@whatdotheyknow.com

Force Disclosure Unit
Police Headquarters
173 Pitt Street
GLASGOW
G2 4JS

Tel: 0141 435 1217

Fax: 0141 435 1218

Dear Mr Manderson

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NUMBER 0133/2010

I refer to your request for information dated 21 February 2010, which was received by Strathclyde Police on 22 February 2010.

Your request for information has now been considered and on 22 March 2010, a decision was made to provide some of the information requested by you. Some of the information requested by you is, however, considered to be exempt in terms of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (the Act). Section 16 of the Act requires Strathclyde Police 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 and an explanation of the appropriate exemption is provided.

For ease of reference, I have provided a response to each of the questions posed by you, as detailed below.

Could you provide me with the policing costs for the following parade by the West of Scotland Band alliance which proposed the following route: Shamrock Street, Scott Street, West Graham, Cowcaddens Road, North Hanover Street, Kyle Street, Baird Street, Royston Road, Glenbarr Street, Rhymer Street, Tharsis Street, Roystonhill, Rosemount Street.

(Organisation West of Scotland Band Alliance, Date of Procession Sunday 21 February 2010, Start Time of Outward Route 10.30am)

The cost of policing this parade is £29,865.75

Could you also tell me how many police officers were involved in protecting the WOSBA and the general public from each other?

In relation to the number of officers deployed at this event, this information is exempt for the following reasons.

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Section 35 (1) (a) and (b) – Law Enforcement

The information requested is exempt as its disclosure would or would be likely to prejudice substantially the prevention or detection of crime and apprehension or prosecution of offenders. This West of Scotland Bands Alliance parade on Sunday 21 February 2010 and similar such parades are regularly policed by this Force. If the number of police officers involved in policing a parade was disclosed, experience has shown that it would allow those intent on committing crime or disorder at such events to gauge the likelihood of detection or to take measures to negate the likelihood of detection. The disclosure of the information will also allow criminals to plan how to disrupt future parades or events of a similar nature and also how best to engage or occupy existing police resources within the area of the parade to maximise their chances of committing serious crime elsewhere. As a service we have considerable experience of this where organised criminal groups create diversionary calls to divert police resources. In a similar vain we have evidence that criminals actively target such events especially if police numbers are considered to be low. While it could be argued that such criminal activity takes place without the numbers being known, it is reasonable to assume that confirmation of the number of officers involved would assist such activity by allowing more accurate judgements to be made by criminals therefore harming the efficient and effective conduct of the service.

Section 39 (1) – Health, safety and the environment

The disclosure of the information requested would or would be likely to endanger the physical health or safety of an individual. As previously described, to disclose police capability, would allow those persons intent on committing crime or causing disorder to gauge the likelihood of detection or to take measures to negate the likelihood of detection. This would leave participants of the parade and members of the public at an increased risk of being the victim of crime and jeopardise wider community safety. This could also lead to an increase in the number of attacks on operational police officers by those being arrested or who have committed crime.

Public Interest Test

As you will be aware, the exemptions listed above are non-absolute and require the application of the Public Interest Test. I would suggest that public accountability would favour disclosure as the information requested concerns the efficient and effective use of resources by the Force. Secondly, disclosure of the information would also contribute accurate information to the public debate on the issue of policing. That said I would contend that the need to ensure the effective conduct of the Force in relation to prevention and detection of crime and, the public safety considerations involved in policing favour non-disclosure of the requested information. On balance I would contend that public interest in disclosing the information is outweighed by that of maintaining the exemptions listed, as the maintenance of a safe and just society is a fundamental duty of the police.

Could you also provide me with any and all arrest figures and fines issued as a result of this parade?

I can advise that there were no arrests during this event.

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

I hope this information is helpful, however, if you are not satisfied with the way in which your request has been dealt with, you are entitled in the first instance to request a review of the decision made by the Force. Should you wish to request such a review, please write to Mrs Sheena Brennan, Disclosure Manager at the above address within 40 working days of receiving this letter. Once informed of the Review Panel's decision, if you are still not satisfied, then you are entitled to apply to the Scottish Information Commissioner within six months for a decision. Contact details are; Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9DS, telephone 01334 464610. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your interest in Strathclyde Police.

Should you require any further assistance concerning this matter please contact me directly on 0141 435 1217 quoting the reference number given.

Yours sincerely

Susan McGinlay
Sergeant

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED