



5th May 2021

Freedom of Information Request Reference N°: FOI 001226/21

I write in connection with your request for information received by the Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies on the 6th April 2021 in which you sought access to the following information:

For March 2020 onwards, information on every planned protest or march ('protest') in your area that police have been formally made aware of, including:

- 1 Whether the protest was authorised by the police,
- 2 The purpose or affiliation of the protest,
- 3 The date and location of the protest,
- 4 Whether the protest took place,
- 5 If the protest took place:
 - A The number of arrests made at the protest,
 - B The number of cautions made at the protest,
 - C Whether any fine was issued to the organisers.

Response to your Request

Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies have considered your request and our response is below.

When responding to a request for information under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act, a public authority is not obliged to provide information if the authority estimates that the cost of the retrieval of the information requested would be in excess of £450 (equivalent to 18 hours work).

The costs criteria relates to a request in its entirety, which means that if we cannot retrieve all of the information requested within the costs limit, we are not obliged to retrieve *any* of the information requested.

The Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies estimates that to retrieve all the information you have requested for both forces would exceed cost in excess of £450 (per force).

The Constabularies do not approve or reject a protest, if a march is involved we must be notified and, if appropriate, we can apply conditions, but we do not approve it.

Between March and December 2020, the Constabularies were notified of approximately 40 events, taking place across Norfolk and Suffolk. So far, in 2021, 6 events have been recorded. Of the number in 2020, 6 were cancelled or postponed.

In order to respond to Q5, we would need to undertake a manual review of custody records, on the relevant dates, as we are not able to electronically identify the requested information. The event locations would be too broad, for example, Ipswich, Norwich, to allow us to narrow down the search criteria. Therefore, this would be a significant task and we would be relying on the freetext field of the custody record to refer to a march, protest, etc.

This research would therefore exceed the appropriate limit for dealing with a Freedom of Information request, in terms of costs, and therefore Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act applies.

Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act states that a public authority is not obliged to:

“...comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit”.

The Freedom of Information (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004, defines the ‘appropriate limit’ for the Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies as £450 for each Constabulary, and specifies that this sum equates to 18 hours work at a standard rate of £25 per hour.

In accordance with Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act (2000), this serves as a Refusal Notice for your request.

Advice and Assistance

If you were to remove Q5, we could look to provide the information for the remainder of your request.

Should you have any further queries concerning this request, please contact Amanda Gibson, FOI Decision Maker, quoting the reference number shown above.

A full copy of the Freedom of Information Act (2000) can be viewed on the ‘Office of Public Sector Information’ web-site;
<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/>

Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies are not responsible for the content, or the reliability, of the website referenced. The Constabulary cannot guarantee that this link will work all of the time, and we have no control over the availability of the linked pages.

Your Right to Request a Review of Decisions Made Under the Terms of the
Freedom of Information Act (2000).

If you are unhappy with how your request has been handled, or if you think the decision is incorrect, you have the right to ask the Norfolk and Suffolk Constabulary to review their decision.

Ask Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies to look at the decision again.

If you are dissatisfied with the decision made by Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies under the Freedom of Information Act (2000), regarding access to information, you must notify the Norfolk and Suffolk Constabulary that you are requesting a review within 40 days of the date of its response to your Freedom of Information request. Requests for a review should be made in writing and addressed to:

*Freedom of Information Decision Maker
Information Management Department
Norfolk Constabulary
Operations and Communications Centre
Jubilee House
Falconers Chase
Wymondham
Norfolk NR18 0WW
OR
Email: freedomofinformation@norfolk.pnn.police.uk*

In all possible circumstances Norfolk and Suffolk Constabulary will aim to respond to your request for us to look at our decision again within 20 working days of receipt of your request for an internal review.

The Information Commissioner.

After lodging a request for a review with Norfolk and Suffolk Constabulary, if you are still dissatisfied with the decision, you can apply to the Information Commissioner for a decision on whether the request for information has been dealt with in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

For information on how to make application to the Information Commissioner please visit their website at www.ico.org.uk or contact them at the address shown below:

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Telephone: 01625 545 700