Freedom of Information Request 1382/18

Response Date: 16th January 2019

Under the Freedom of Information Act, I would like to request the following information;

Q1. Amount of Officers by rank (Inc Detective ranks) Employed by your organisation.

Q2. Amount of civilians in your organisation (please include Community Support Officers as a separate figure)

Q3. Amount of Officers based in each station

Q4. Amount of Civilians based in each station

Q5. Amount of PCSO's based in each station

Q6. How many police officers are assigned to non-operational departments (i.e. Control Room, Enquiry Offices, Staff Officers.)

Q7. How many police officers are assigned to all operational departments within your organisation. For example... (Response & Patrol, Neighbourhoods, Traffic Officers, Investigations etc)

RESPONSE

Questions 1 and 2

In relation to your request for the number of police officers and civilian staff employed by South Wales Police, I am not obliged to provide this information as the following exemption applies:

Section 21 – Information Reasonably Accessible by Other Means

The below link details the numbers of police officers and civilian staff in every police force broken down by rank and also contains information on police community support officers:


Questions 3, 4 and 5

Your request for information on the numbers of police officers and police community support officers based in each police station has been considered and I am not obliged to supply this.

Continued…….
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In relation to this particular part of your request, the following exemption applies:

**Section 31 (1) (a) (b) – Law Enforcement**

Section 31 is a qualified, prejudice-based exemption and the legislators accept that there may be harm if released. The authority is therefore required to articulate the harm that may be caused and consider the public interest arguments for and against the disclosure of the information.

**Overall Harm**

Under the Act, we cannot and do not request the motives of any application for information. We have no doubt that the vast majority of requests made under the Act are legitimate and the applicants do not have any ulterior motives. However, in disclosing information to one applicant, we are expressing willingness to provide it to anyone in the world. This means that a disclosure to a genuinely interested and concerned person automatically opens it up for a similar disclosure, including those who would use the information to gain an advantage over our ability to exercise our core function which is law enforcement.

Disclosing the number of police officers and police community support officers based at individual police stations identifies operational information, policing tactics and highlights force vulnerabilities. It may also potentially endanger front line officers.

**Factors favouring Section 31**

Disclosing the requested information would allow greater transparency into how and where public funds are being allocated.

**Factors against Section 31**

The security of both the public and public servants is of paramount importance and the Police Service will not divulge information if to do so would compromise law enforcement.

**Balancing Test**

Whilst there is a public interest in transparency with regards to allocation of police resources, there is a strong public interest in safeguarding information which could assist those who seek to disrupt the police service.

Therefore it is our opinion that for these issues the balance test lies in favour of withholding the information.

In accordance with the Act, this is a refusal notice for this part of your request. Continued…..
Question 4

Please see the attached document entitled ‘Response Data 1382_18_Q4’ which provides information on the number of civilian staff attached to each police station within South Wales Police.

Question 6

A total of 286 police officers are assigned to non-operational departments within South Wales Police.

Question 7

A total of 2676 police officers are assigned to operational departments within South Wales Police.