



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2010-03002

Keyword: Finance

Subject: Cost and Resources for Policing Parades in Keady

Request and Answer:

I am writing to confirm that the Police Service of Northern Ireland has now completed its search for the information.

I have today decided to:

- disclose information in relation to the cost of parades and exempt information pursuant to the provisions of section 31 and 38 of the Freedom of Information 2000 (the Act) in relation to the number of police on duty.

Question 1

The total cost of policing the parade held in Keady District LOL No' 8 and the total number of police personnel dispatched to cover the parade on Sunday 11th July 2010.

Answer

The cost of policing the parade in Keady on Sunday 11th July 2010 was £19,662.19.

Question 2

The total cost of policing the parade held in Keady District LOL No' 8 and the total number of police personnel dispatched to cover the parade on Sunday 12th July 2009.

Answer

The cost of policing the parade in Keady on Sunday 12th July 2009 was £29,549.17.

Question 3

The total cost of policing the parade held in Keady District LOL No' 8 and the total number of police personnel dispatched to cover the parade on Sunday 6th July 2008.

Answer

The cost of policing the parade in Keady on Sunday 6th July 2008 was £9,785.24.

Question 4

The total cost of policing the parade held in Keady District LOL No' 8 and the total number of police

personnel dispatched to cover the parade on Sunday 8th July 2007.

Answer

The cost of policing the parade in Keady on Sunday 8th July 2007 was £23,091.29.

Question 5

The total cost of policing the parade held in Keady District LOL No' 8 and the total number of police personnel dispatched to cover the parade on Sunday 9th July 2006.

Answer

The cost of policing the parade in Keady on Sunday 9th July 2006 was £25,801.12.

Disclosure of the number of personnel as asked for in questions 1-5 has been refused.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the Police Service of Northern Ireland, when refusing to provide such information (because the information is exempt) to provide you the applicant with a notice which:

- (a) states that fact,
- (b) specifies the exemption in question and
- (c) states (if not otherwise apparent) why the exemption applies.

The exemptions, as well as the factors the Department considered when deciding where the public interest lies, are listed below:

Section 31(1)(a)(b)(c) Law Enforcement
Section 38(1)(a)(b) Health and Safety

Section 31 and 38 are prejudice-based, qualified exemptions and therefore this means it is the Public Authority's responsibility to evidence the harm and a Public Interest Test must be carried out.

Harm

There may be security issues in relation to release of information on resources especially due to heightened activity of dissidents. Disclosure of this information would provide details of the number of officers deployed to police such events and this could be used by criminals/dissidents should they want to mount an attack or cause disruption in future parades.

Public Interest Test

Section 31

Factors favouring disclosure

The information concerns efficient and effective use of resources by the service and the proper allocation of resources is a matter that the service should hold up to public scrutiny.

Disclosure of the cost information would illustrate to the public how funds are being spent.

Factors favouring non-disclosure

The disclosure of resource information may allow criminals to plan how best to engage or occupy police resources used in future similar parades in Keady, in an effort to maximise their chances of committing serious crime. As a service we have considerable experience of this where organised criminal groups create diversionary calls to divert police resources (e.g. hoax call or activating intruder alarms) or deliberately create disturbances or commit minor crime with the same aim. 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.

The current or future law enforcement may be compromised by releasing resource information. A clear link exists between knowledge available to criminals and the way they operate, with the resultant impact to the service. An example of this is that we know that criminals have previously struck (e.g. ATM's and warehouses) at times when they believe officers to be on meal breaks or when there are likely to be fewer police (e.g. early hours of morning).

Section 38

Factors favouring disclosure

The release of this information would lead to a better awareness for the community ensuring them that such parades are policed appropriately.

Factors favouring non-disclosure

The disclosure of resource information could increase the number of attacks on operational police officers. Criminals/dissidents may plan their attacks on the belief that a large number of officers will be present in one particular area.

Release of this information could also jeopardise the safety of the public in the Keady area thereby the public would lose confidence in the Police Service and their ability to protect the wellbeing of the community.

The release of information concerning police resources at any time, taken on its own or together with other information, either already available or subject of further requests, could place police officers at risk of attack.

Decision

Public awareness and debate are strong arguments in the spirit of the legislation favouring release of this information. This however is weighed against the need to ensure the efficient and effective conduct of the police service in relation to the prevention and detection of crime and the public and officers' safety consideration involved in the delivery of operational policing which clearly favour non-disclosure.

In balance I would maintain that the public interest in disclosing the information is outweighed by that in maintaining the exemptions listed. It would never be in the public interest to disclose information which would prejudice the prevention or detection of crime, or which would jeopardise the health and safety of any individual.

If you have any queries regarding your request or the decision please do not hesitate to contact me on 028 9070 0164. When contacting the Freedom of Information Team, please quote the reference number listed at the beginning of this letter.

If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review. You should do this as soon as possible, or in any case within two months of the date of issue of this letter. In the event that you require a review to be undertaken, you can do so by writing to the Head of Freedom of Information, PSNI Headquarters, 65 Knock Road, Belfast, BT5 6LE or by emailing foi@psni.pnn.police.uk.

If following an internal review, carried out by an independent decision maker, you were to remain dissatisfied in any way with the handling of the request you may make a complaint, under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to the Information Commissioner's Office and ask that they investigate whether the PSNI has complied with the terms of the Freedom of Information Act. You

can write to the Information Commissioner at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. In most circumstances the Information Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out, however the Commissioner has the option to investigate the matter at his discretion.

Please be advised that PSNI replies under Freedom of Information may be released into the public domain via our website @ www.psni.police.uk

Personal details in respect of your request have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.