



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2010-02764

Keyword: Operational Policing

Subject: Cost of a Leaflet Drop in Londonderry

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 answer to question 1 in full; and
- fully exempt information in answer to question 2 pursuant to the provisions of section 42 of the Act.

Question 1

In Londonderry a leaflet drop was undertaken in which images of young people were dropped into homes across the City.

Can you tell me: How many leaflets were printed in total? What areas were targeted in the exercise? What were the full costs of the operation - ie. specifically how much did it cost to publish the leaflets? I also wish to know how were they distributed and how much did distribution cost in addition to the cost of publication?

Answer

35000 leaflets were printed. Leaflets were distributed in the entire west bank area of the city (excluding Culmore) plus Nelson Drive and Gobnascale in the Waterside. The cost of the leaflets was £1925. The leaflets were distributed by a private company at a cost of £2100.

Question 2

There was at least one image of a child published twice under Operation Exposure in Londonderry. Can you confirm this and can you confirm that this was a deliberate decision to do so?

Answer

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 exemption/s, as well as the factors the Department considered when deciding where the public interest lies, are listed below:

Section 42(1) – Legal Professional Privilege

Section 42 is a Class Based exemption. This means that if the type of information is covered by the exemption then the exemption will be engaged and it is not necessary to consider the harm. It is also a Qualified exemption which means that a Public Interest Test must be applied.

The information you have requested is in issue in a current Judicial Review and therefore will fall under the Litigation privilege category of this exemption which applies when a legal action is before a Court.

Public Interest Test

Factors Favouring Release

This question involves the decision making process in relation to a police operation that involved the release of photographs of individuals into the public domain. There is some general public interest in the promotion of transparency, accountability and involvement in public process.

Factors Favouring Retention

The public interest inherent in the exemption will always be strong due to the importance of the principle behind Legal Professional Privilege.

There is also a strong public interest in maintaining the exemption due to the possibility of prejudicing the outcome of important pending legal proceedings if the information were to be released into the public domain.

Balancing Test

The general considerations surrounding openness and accountability will be addressed by the holding of legal proceedings so therefore the public interest favours maintaining the exemption and the information should be withheld at this time.

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.