



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2023-01635

Keyword: Organisational Information Police/Staff Recruitment and Promotion

Subject: PSNI Recruitment

Request and Answer:

Your request for information has now been considered. In respect of Section 1(1)(a) of the Act we can confirm that the Police Service of Northern Ireland does hold some information to which your request relates and this is being provided to you. We do not however hold information in relation to request numbers 1, 5 and 6.

Request 1

Following the NI budget being decided, when will PSNI next have a recruitment campaign for student officers?

Answer

The Freedom of Information Act requires PSNI to provide a response to a request for 'recorded' information which is held (s.1 FOIA). Under Section 1 (1) of the Act, a request which asks PSNI to speculate on something and is not seeking recorded information is not a valid request under the Freedom of Information Act. PSNI does not hold information on the speculative element of your request and does not consider this to be a valid request under the Freedom of Information Act. To assist we can advise the Police Service of Northern Ireland are facing significant financial pressures as a result of the recent budget. The organisation is currently considering the impact this will have on a number of our functions, including the recruitment of Student Officers.

At this time, it has not been determined when we will be in a position to plan our next Student Officer recruitment campaign.

Request 2

I note in previous answers you have stated in line with available budget and operational need, could you provide further explanation of what this means and also provide figures where possible?

Clarification Sought

Regarding your Request 2 can you clarify what FOI response(s) you are referring to please?

Clarification Received

Previous request F-2023-00167:

"The timing of our next Student Officer recruitment campaign will be determined by the available budget and operational demand."

Answer

The Police Service of Northern Ireland is required to operate within our allocated budget which determines the funding available to maintain our police officer numbers. Our Student Officer recruitment forecast is continually reviewed against the budget available, the number of leavers from the service, and the demand for policing.

Request 3

What is the current operational demand?

Answer

This is a time of unprecedented demand for policing, with increased levels of paramilitary crime and organised crime gangs, together with increasing levels of domestic and sexual offences. All of which is set against a backdrop of increasing threat from violent dissident republicans.

Request 4

And has the available budget been confirmed?

Answer

Yes an available budget has been confirmed.

Request 5

If so- what is the date of next student officer recruitment campaign?

Answer

Your request for information has now been considered. In respect of Section 1(1)(a) of the Act we can confirm that the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) does not hold information in relation to your requests. Enquiries made in relation to your request failed to locate any records or documents relevant to your request based on the information you have provided.

A timescale for our next Student Officer recruitment campaign has not yet been determined.

Accordingly, we have determined that the Police Service of Northern Ireland does not hold the information to which you seek access.

Request 6

If not- when do you anticipate this information to be available?

Answer

The Freedom of Information Act requires PSNI to provide a response to a request for 'recorded' information which is held (s.1 FOIA). Under Section 1 (1) of the Act, a request which asks PSNI to speculate on something and is not seeking recorded information is not a valid request under the Freedom of Information Act. PSNI does not hold information on the speculative element of your request and does not consider this to be a valid request under the Freedom of Information Act. However in order to be of assistance we can advise as per our response to Request 1, the Police Service of Northern Ireland are currently considering the impact the recent budget will have on a number of our functions, including the recruitment of Student Officers.

At this time it has not been determined when we will be in a position to plan a future Student Officer recruitment campaign.

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 Corporate Information Branch, 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 Corporate Information Manager, Corporate Information Branch, PSNI Headquarters, 65 Knock Road, Belfast, BT5 6LE or by emailing foi@psni.police.uk.

If, following an Internal Review carried out by an independent decision maker, you remain unhappy about how your request has been handled you have the right to apply in writing to the Information Commissioner, under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, at 'Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. There are a number of other platforms you can use to contact the ICO and these can be found on the ICO's website at the following link: [Make a complaint | ICO \(https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/\)](https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/).

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 their discretion.

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

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