



Information Rights
Bedfordshire Police Headquarters,
Woburn Road, Kempston,
Bedford, MK43 9AX

Telephone: 01234 842547
Email: foi@bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk

23rd August 2019

Our Ref: FOI2019/04809

REQUEST UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 Ref No: FOI2019/04809

I write in connection with your request for information received on 26th July. I note you seek access to the following information:

Using the Home Office's definition of a police station is a police building which has a counter open to the public for at least part of the day...

Please list all police stations to have been sold, or which are currently for sale*, in your police authority area during the period January 2000 to July 2019.

Stating the:

- **The address of each station**
- **The date the station was sold**
- **The amount each station was sold for**
- **The name of the company/individual to have purchased the property**
- ***The address of the station and the current asking price**

I am required by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (The Act) to handle all requests in a manner that is blind to the identity of the requestor. Any information released in response to a request is regarded as being published and therefore, in the public domain without caveat.

RESPONSE – Following enquiries conducted by Bedfordshire Police and their Estates Department within the Force please see our response below: -

Leighton Buzzard Police Station, Hockliffe Road, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire, LU7 3FG
Sale date: 4th November 2016

Amphill Police Station, Amphill, Woburn Road, Bedfordshire MK45 2HX
Sale completed on 9th January 2019

Bedfordshire Police do not currently have any other properties for sale.

Bedfordshire Police can confirm that they hold additional information in relation to your request however, I am not obliged to supply the information you have requested. Such information is exempt under the following exemptions:

Section 43(2) Commercial Interests

The Section 43 exemption is a class based qualified exemption. This means that the legislators when writing the legislation considered that the release of such information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 would cause harm to the public authority or individual concerned. There is therefore no requirement to carry out a HARM Test in respect of such information. However there is a requirement to carry out a Public Interest Test in order to establish whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption may be outweighed by a wider public benefit in disclosure.

Public Interest Test

Factors in favour of disclosure

The public has a legitimate interest in information about how Bedfordshire Police generate and spend public funds.

Factors in favour of non-disclosure

The commercial interest of the purchasers of Police properties would be damaged if purchase information which encompasses prices were released to the public. The provision of contractual information including charges would hinder the ability of the current purchasers to negotiate with other customers, which would damage the commercial interests of our current buyers.

Where a purchase of a Police property is subject to any future sale, the amount paid and other specific information about a purchase should be withheld in order to preserve the Force's ability to negotiate best value for money in future sales.

Balance Test

The balance test is to determine if the benefits to the public outweigh the harm that would or may be caused if the information were to be disclosed. Whilst there is a need for openness and transparency regarding how public funds are being managed, it is essential that the Force can negotiate their business for sales of Police properties in a competitive market place so that we obtain best value for public money. Publication of contractual purchase information would hinder the competitive nature of any future selling of Police properties process by allowing other potential buyers to tailor their bids based on what they know the Force is currently paying, or prepared to accept and on what they know their competitors are currently prepared to pay. This could result in a reduction of income and an increased cost to the public purse.

As well as the commercial interests of the Force, we have a duty to protect the commercial interests of third parties by not publishing their commercially sensitive information, and thereby allowing the market competitors to have access to information that they could use to their own advantage, and to the detriment of our potential future buyers.

It is our opinion that for these issues the balancing test for disclosure is not made out.

Should you have any further enquiries concerning this matter please do not hesitate to contact me quoting the above reference number.

Yours sincerely

Information Rights

Bedfordshire Police provides you the right to request an independent review of this response under its review procedure. If you require such a review you must notify us within two months from the date of this letter. After lodging a complaint with Bedfordshire Police if you are still dissatisfied with the decision you may make an application to the Information Commissioner. For information on how to make a complaint please visit their website at <https://ico.org.uk/concerns/> or contact them on 0303 123 1113.