



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

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

22nd May 2020

Our Ref: FOI2020/02466

REQUEST UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 Ref No: FOI2020/02466

I write in connection with your request for information received on 27th April. I note you seek access to the following information:

Can you tell me in the first 4 weeks of the lockdown we are currently having, how many incidents of domestic abuse have been-

- 1- reported?**
- 2- recorded?**

CLARIFICATION REQUESTED & REC'D: -

The specific dates I was referring to was starting from the 23rd of March- 20th of April 2020.

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 crime and incident recording systems within the Force please see our response below: -

Recorded Domestic Abuse Incidents/Crimes 23.03.2020 - 20.04.2020			
	2020		Grand Total
Row Labels	Mar	Apr	
Non-Crime	166	409	575
Violence Against The Person	140	332	472
Damage And Arson Offences	17	32	49
Public Order Offences	5	19	24
Theft Offences	2	19	21
Sexual Offences	8	13	21
Misc Crimes Against Society	2	5	7
Other		1	1
Grand Total	340	830	1170

Bedfordshire Police made a significant investment in a new ICT system, Athena, in May 2018, when fully implemented, will help keep Bedfordshire safe, bring more offenders to justice and improve outcomes for victims. Updating our ICT was absolutely necessary to ensure Bedfordshire Police remains as effective and efficient as possible. The public should be reassured crime continues to be reported and investigated as normal but whilst colleagues become more comfortable and familiar with how Athena works Bedfordshire Police has some concerns around data quality for which reason some of the data provided concerning events recorded after 23 May 2018, may include some inaccuracies. We apologise for the situation and are working to resolve it as soon as possible.

The numerical data presented in this response is an un-audited snapshot of un-published data sourced from "live" systems and is subject to the interpretation of the original request by the individual extracting the data.

Any further information held by Bedfordshire Police is exempt under the following exemptions: -

Section 30(1) – Investigations and Proceedings conducted by Public Authorities

Section 40(2) – Personal Information

Section 30 Investigations - The Section 30 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.

Section 40 Personal Information - The Section 40 exemption is a class based absolute exemption. This means that the legislators have identified that there would be harm in disclosure and there is no need to evidence this or carry out a public interest test.

Public Interest Test

S30 - Factors favouring disclosure

Providing information relevant to this request would lead to a better-informed public, improving their knowledge and understanding of how the Police service respond and deal with such types of investigation. Public confidence would be maintained and the public may be encouraged to assist more readily with such investigations.

S30 - Factors against disclosure

Any information generated by an investigation, particularly in some circumstances needs to be treated with sensitivity. In some cases providing information which could disclose facts which would prejudice the evidence gathering within an investigation. In addition, the police service would not disclose information which could identify investigative activity, and subsequently undermine those processes. To do so would hinder the prevention or detection of crime.

S30 Public Interest Test

Whilst providing information would reassure the public, including information as to how public funds are spent, confirming details of any investigation would compromise that investigative process.

Anything which would jeopardise future court proceedings would not be disclosed prior by Bedfordshire Police, as to do so would undermine police investigations and hinder the prevention and detection of crime. It would not therefore be in the public interest to reveal that such investigations are being undertaken.

Balance Test

The strongest reason favouring disclosure is the public interest in disclosing information that would provide the public awareness of action taken by Bedfordshire Police, which would increase transparency and accountability.

The strongest reason favouring non-disclosure is the significance and sensitivity of the requested information as it relates to ongoing investigations and may identify victims of crime, which may interfere with the course of justice and any subsequent court procedure and potential links to other investigations and the wider law enforcement.

On weighing up the competing interests, the public interest favours non-disclosure of the requested information. This decision is based on the understanding that the public interest is not what interests the public but what is considered to be an appropriate disclosure in the circumstances.

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.