

7<sup>th</sup> May 2021

## **Freedom of Information Request – Reference No:20210526**

### **REQUEST**

**1/ The monthly number of incidents (allegations or complaints) of stalking since 1st January 2018 up to and including the end of February 2021.**

**2/ The annual number of incidents (allegations or complaints) of stalking where the alleged victim was a child (aged under 18) in a) 2019 and b) 2020.**

**3/ The monthly number of arrests for stalking since 1st January 2018 up to and including the end of February 2021.**

**4/ The youngest age of a person alleging they were stalked since April 1st 2020 to date.**

**5/ The monthly number of arrests for domestic abuse-related incidents and crimes since 1st January 2018 up to and including the end of February 2021.**

### **Clarification**

We could provide you with incidents with a closing code of stalking. Incidents are a running commentary provided to our Communications Centre. However, ages may not be recorded on these as this is not mandatory requirement, and therefore each incident would need to be manually reviewed to see if the age of the victim had been recorded. Which, depending on the numbers returned, may trigger Section 12.

We can provide data on arrests, although these may or may not have resulted in a charge.

You may therefore prefer us to provide you with data from our Crime Management system. This is used to record complaints or allegations of those matters, which the Home Office specify should be recorded as 'crimes', and would provide Offences and Outcomes and the ages of the victims. Would this be more beneficial to your research?

### **Reply to Clarification**

Please do not provide an age in that case. Please ignore that single question but provide a full response otherwise. I can send you multiple completed requests if helpful?

### **RESPONSE**

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires South Yorkshire Police, 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 that would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemption applies.

The following exemption applies to the disclosure of the information:

**Section 12(2) – Exemption where cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit**

I have contacted several departments for assistance with your request.

A Sergeant in the Custody Performance and Governance Unit has advised that we don't have a specific 'Stalking' arrest reason. Instead we record stalking arrests as harassment. There are over 3500 custody records for the date parameter you have requested. These would need to be retrieved, and then manually reviewed to see if it was recorded in the free text that they were related to 'stalking' and relevant to your request.

There are two incident management systems used over the date parameter you are requesting, PROCAD, our previous system, which recorded calls received up until 13<sup>th</sup> November 2018, and SMART after this date. There are 1233 incidents between 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 and 13<sup>th</sup> November, that have 'stalking' mentioned within the log of the incident. An incident is a running commentary of a call in to our Communications centre. Each of these would also have to be manually reviewed to ascertain if they were again relevant to your request.

The Communications Analyst has stated that our new incident management system, shows 1030 incidents with a closing code for Stalking. However, these would have to all be manually reviewed to see if the victim was a child as age is not a mandatory requirement. Again, as highlighted above, and incident is a running commentary of a call coming in to our Communications centre.

In essence, to extract the level of detail to meet the criteria of your request; this process would take much longer than 18 hours of work.

The Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 provide that the cost limit for non-central government public authorities is £450. This must be calculated at the rate of £25 per hour, providing an effective time limit of 18 hours.

Guidance from the Information Commissioner to public authorities is that where one part of a request is reasonably estimated to exceed the appropriate limit then the authority is not obliged to consider or comply with the remainder of the request up to the point at which the appropriate limit has been reached. Please note point 30 of the below link:-

[https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1199/costs\\_of\\_compliance\\_exceeds\\_appropriate\\_limit.pdf](https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1199/costs_of_compliance_exceeds_appropriate_limit.pdf)

**Although excess cost removes the force's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act, as a gesture of goodwill, I have supplied information, relative to your request, retrieved or available before it was realised that the fees limit would be exceeded. I trust this is helpful, but it does not affect our legal right to rely on the fees regulations for the remainder of your request neither does it bind South Yorkshire Police to any commitment that it will release information in such a manner in the future**

I can provide you with the Arrest data as per the attached spreadsheet, which I hope may be useful to your research.