

21st March 2019

**Freedom of Information Request – Reference No:20190448**

**REQUEST**

I am sending this request under the Freedom of Information Act to ask for the following information:

- 1) How many **police stations** have been:
  - a) Permanently closed and/or mothballed
  - b) Opened...in your force area since 2010.

**NB: Please provide the data in calendar years up to the end of 2018?**

***We are using the Metropolitan Police definition of 'police station' which is an operational building that has a front counter.***

- 2) How many **custody suites** have been:
  - a) Permanently closed and/or mothballed
  - b) Opened...in your force area since 2010.

**NB: Please provide the data in calendar years as above.**

- 3) How many **custody cells** have been:
  - a) Permanently closed and/or mothballed
  - b) Opened...in your force area since 2010.

**NB: Please provide the data in calendar years as above.**

4) What was the **net loss or gain** to the force in terms of the overall number of **custody cells** since 2010?

- 5) How many:
  - a) Police stations **(using the same definition as my original FOI)**
  - b) Custody suites
  - c) Custody cells

...did you have within your force area on 31/12/09?

**NB: I would like individual totals to be provided for the above three categories.**

**For example, if your reply to Question 1 of my original FOI request (submitted on 20/02/19) was that you had closed down or mothballed 1 police station and opened none within the calendar year 2010, I want to know how many police stations you started out the year with. The same goes for custody cells and custody suites.**

**CLARIFICATION**

South Yorkshire Police has received a number of similar requests to yours in the past.

<https://www.southyorkshire.police.uk/find-out/accessing-information/request-information-under-the-freedom-of-information-act/police-building-closures-ref-20180694/>

<https://www.southyorkshire.police.uk/find-out/accessing-information/request-information-under-the-freedom-of-information-act/custody-suites-1ref20171329/>

<https://www.southyorkshire.police.uk/find-out/accessing-information/request-information-under-the-freedom-of-information-act/custody-suites-2-ref2017-1402/>

## **FROM THE REQUESTER**

However there are a number of problems with the data that you have already published. For example:

- It is not in the format I requested.
- The timeframes are different. I have asked for the data to be provided in 'calendar years' from 2010 up to the end of 2018. And none of the previous requests that you have sent me below go through to the end of 2018.
- You do not include details of the number of police stations, custody suites and custody cells that were opened, or 'mothballed'. Only those that have closed...
- ...And, even then, these FOI requests have not used the same definitions as me, for example, of 'police station'.

## **CLARIFICATION**

I have contacted the information holders for your request to attempt to retrieve some data. For the Police Station element, I have been advised by our facilities manager that we do not record if a building has or hasn't got a "counter" (as the Met Police) we can provide a list of operational building in the past which have closed/opened but it is not recorded if they had a counter. An operational building can be a building officers clock on or visit or work from. Can you tell me how you wish to proceed? Will operational buildings list be suitable for your research?

## **RESPONSE**

As advised we do not record if a building has specifically got a counter as a building may be open to the public but perhaps as a drop in centre for info/surgery and not a counter as such. Each force in the country uses different systems to record data whether crime or assets and therefore information is not always retrievable in the same or even similar format.

As you didn't respond to the last clarification, we have proceeded to retrieve operational buildings which is the format we record here at South Yorkshire Police.

Our Facilities Manager has provided the attached spreadsheet to answer your request.