

14th November 2018

Freedom of Information Request – Reference No:20182006

REQUEST

- 1. How many arrests were made in Sheffield between 1st January 2016 and 31st October 2018 for prostitution and sex trafficking offences?***
- 2. How many raids have been carried out on pop-up brothels in Sheffield since January 2018 and what were the locations of the raids?***

CLARIFICATION

Please could you clarify the following point(s): -

In regards to Arrests, we can provide data up to Dec 4th 2017 but due to a change of recording systems in December we currently are unable to extract Arrest data after that date. Would this be sufficient?

Also the Arrest System doesn't give a reason of a Pop up Brothel on the data.

As an alternative would you like us to respond with Crime Data as from the Crime Management System we could provide to date the Offence/Crime Titles, Location, and the Outcomes to those Offences. From this it may be possible to do a Free text search within the data for "Pop Up Brothels"

FROM THE REQUESTER

Data up until the 4th Dec 2017 will be sufficient, thanks. Is there anywhere else that data from Jan 18 can be accessed?

Please respond with Crime Data from the Crime Management System regarding sex trafficking offences.

RESPONSE

I approached our IT Department for assistance with Q1 – as advised due to a change of the recording systems in December 2017 we are currently unable to extract data from the system which holds it. Our IT Department is working to rectify this problem as soon as possible.

They were however able to provide the figure for 01.01.2016 to 04.12.2017

Q1 – *Count of 15*

Q2 - I approached our Specialist Crime Services, Modern Slavery Team for assistance with Q2.

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 exemptions apply to the disclosure of the information:

Section 40(2) Personal Information.

Section 31(1) Law Enforcement

Section 40(2) Personal Information

This is an absolute exemption and therefore a Public Interest Test is not relevant. However, for clarity, I will explain my rationale for engaging this exemption.

Section 40(2) provides that information is exempt if it is the personal data of someone other than the applicant and disclosure would breach any of the data protection principles. The term 'personal data' means data that relates to a living individual who can be identified. Information disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act is disclosed into the public domain, effectively to the world, not just to one individual. Although not naming individuals, the effect of releasing address or location details may likely lead to the identification of those involved. This would be breaching the right to privacy afforded to persons under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Section 31(1) Law Enforcement

Section 31 is a prejudice based qualified exemption and there is a requirement to articulate the prejudice (harm) confirming or denying information exists as well as considering the public interest.

Overall Harm

It is important to stress that disclosures under the Freedom of Information Act are disclosures to the world, not just to the individual making the request, and such responses may be published on a public facing disclosure log. Disclosing details of incidents at a specific location in the given time and date parameters, could be viewed by those involved, living or working in the community as a breach in confidentiality. This could jeopardise the work done within communities to increase the public's confidence in reporting and giving assistance to the Force.

Disclosing the information could lead to more crimes being committed which would impact on police resources and place individuals at risk – including those reporting incidents, victims, witnesses etc., who may be 'recognised' or indeed, mis-identified by a disclosure.

Section 31 – Factors favouring confirmation or denial for S31

- Members of the public would be confident that any reports made to South Yorkshire Police are being attended and dealt with.
- Better public awareness of incidents may lead to more information from the public

Section 31 – Factors against confirmation or denial for S31

- Members of the public will not report incidents to the Police for fear of confidentiality

- Damage to the Force's ability to prevent and detect crime if they are not aware what is on going in the community.

On Balance

The Police Service is charged with enforcing the law, preventing and detecting crime and protecting the communities we serve. Although I am fully aware of the need for Public Authorities to demonstrate a level of openness and transparency, the reduction and detection of crime is of paramount importance and the Police service will not divulge information that would compromise law enforcement or place at risk members of the public or officers.

It is therefore my opinion that releasing this information in full may engaged the above exemptions.

With this in mind, I am prepared to disclose as much detail as possible without triggering the above exemptions.

The Modern Slavery Team, have provided the following:

Q2 - We refer to them as safeguarding visits and not 'raids'. There have been thirteen safeguarding visits since 1st Jan 2018.

You may also find this link useful for your research:

<https://www.southyorkshire.police.uk/find-out/news/2018/october-2018/pop-up-brothels-and-the-signs-to-look-out-for/>