



Definition document for Police Forces

This guidance is for those police forces which are strategically managed by a Police Authority or Board. It gives examples of the kinds of information that we would expect them to provide in order to meet their commitments under the model publication scheme. Police forces which are managed in a different way may need to consult more than one definition document.

We would expect police forces to make the information in this definition document available unless:

- they do not hold the information;
- the information is exempt under one of the FOI exemptions or Environmental Information Regulations (EIRs) exceptions, or its release is prohibited under another statute;
- the information is archived, out of date or otherwise inaccessible; or,
- it would be impractical or resource-intensive to prepare the material for routine release.

The guidance is not meant to give a definitive list. The legal commitment is to the model publication scheme, and authorities should look to provide as much information as possible on a routine basis.

Who we are and what we do

Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts.

We would expect information in this class to be current information only.

- **Force structure**

An outline of the structure of the police force by reference to geographic and other divisions.

- **Profiles of the Chief Officer, Deputy Chief Constable or Deputy Commissioner, Assistant Chief Constables or Assistant Commissioners and Divisional or Area Commanders.**
- **Identity of senior civilian staff**
- **Location of police stations (including mobile units) and public opening hours**
- **Contact details**

Police forces should already be publishing as much information as possible about how they can be contacted in addition to emergency numbers. This should give some indication at least of the role of the contact, phone number

and where used e mail address. Where possible, give named contacts.

- **Relationships with other authorities**

It will assist members of the public to appreciate the role of the police force if partnership or joint board arrangements with other authorities, for example a road safety partnership or the local criminal justice board, are detailed and the relationships with the police authority, central government departments, the CPS and the IPCC are outlined.

- **Arrangements for special constables and civilian volunteers**
- **Sponsorship arrangements with businesses**

What we spend and how we spend it

Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit.

We would expect as a minimum that information for the current and previous two financial years should be available.

- **Annual statement of accounts**
- **Force budget (as agreed by Police Authority or Board)**
- **Procurement procedures**
- **Details of contracts currently being tendered**
- **List and value of contracts**

We do not expect that all information about all contracts to be included in this scheme. We would normally expect the force to publish details only of contracts that are large enough to have gone through formal tendering or are for capital items.

- **Expenses paid to or incurred by the Chief Officer, Deputy and Assistant Chief Constables or Commissioners**

We do not expect this to be broken down to individual claims but to give an adequate explanation of the overall position for each senior officer.

- **Evaluation of police use of resources**

To include any formal evaluation of the police use of resources.

- **Support for the provision of Community Support Officers**

Information about the employment of Community Support Officers (including details on how they are funded).

- **Financial regulations**

What our priorities are and how we are doing

Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews.

We would expect as a minimum that information for the current and previous two financial years should be available.

- **Strategic plans**

While the strategic plan is likely to be drawn up by the Police Authority or Board in conjunction with the Chief Officer, we would expect that there is ready access to it from the police force.

- **Annual policing plan**
- **Area policing plans**
- **Chief Officer's annual report**
- **Police performance assessments**
- **Police Force statistics**

We would expect police forces to make available to the public statistics which indicate the performance of the force and other statistical information that is used for force management decisions. Care should be taken to make sure that individuals cannot be identified, particularly where low numbers are recorded.

- **Neighbourhood policing arrangements**

Procedures and arrangements for neighbourhood policing together with contact details.

- **Reports from independent custody visitors**
- **Monitoring record of "Stop and Account"**

How we make decisions

Decision making processes and records of decisions.

We would expect as a minimum that information for the current and previous two financial years should be available.

- **Agenda and minutes for the senior decision making committee**
- **Feedback from public consultation and surveys**

We would not expect information that might damage the operations of the police to be revealed.

Our policies and procedures

Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities.

We would expect information in this class to be current information only.

- **Policies and procedures for the conduct of police force business**
- **Policies and procedures for the provision of policing services**
- **Policies and procedures about the recruitment and employment of staff**

Where police forces have written policies and procedures falling into these three categories there should be ready access to them. A number of policies, for example equality and diversity, health and safety and conduct, will cover both the provision of services and the employment of staff. A policy for outside business interests of officers would be both a policy for the conduct of business and an employment policy. If vacancies are advertised as part of recruitment policies, details of current vacancies will be readily available. It is recognized that releasing some policies or parts of them would impact adversely on the operational activities of the police and that these should not be generally available. As much information should be made available without damaging operational requirements. Policies and procedures for handling requests for information should be included.

Where procedures are developed in combination with other public authorities, these should also be available.

- **Records management and personal data policies**

This will include information security policies, records retention, destruction and archive policies, and data protection (including data sharing) policies.

- **Customer service standards and complaint procedure**

Standards for providing services to the public, including the complaint procedure. Complaints procedures will include those covering requests for information and operating the publication scheme.

- **Charging regimes and policies**

Details of any statutory charging regimes should be provided. Charging policies should include charges made for information routinely published. They should clearly state what costs are to be recovered, the basis on which they are made, and how they are calculated.

Lists and registers

We expect this to be information contained only in currently maintained lists and registers.

- **Information held in registers required by statute**

If police forces are required to maintain any register and make the information in it available for public inspection, the existing provisions covering access will usually be adequate. However, we expect forces to publicise which public registers they hold, and how the information in them is to be made available to

the public. Where registers contain personal information, police forces must ensure that they consider the data protection principles.

- **Asset registers and information asset register**

We would not expect police forces to publish all details from all asset registers. We would expect some information from capital asset registers to be available. If a police force has prepared an information asset register for the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2005, it should publish the contents.

- **Registers of interests**
- **Register of gifts and hospitality provided to senior personnel**
- **FOI disclosure log**

If a police force produces a disclosure log indicating the information provided in response to requests, it should be readily available. Disclosure logs are recommended as good practice.

Services provided by the police force

Information about the services provided by the police force, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced for the public and businesses.

We would expect information in this class to be current information only.

- **Advice and guidance for the general public**
- **Firearms and explosives licensing, firearms dealers licensing, abnormal load escort, keyholder services**
- **Police college or learning centre**
- **Ceremonial duties**
- **Museum**
- **Local campaigns**
- **Media releases**
- **Details of the services for which the police force is entitled to recover a fee together with those fees.**