

Chief Constable
Chief Constable Robert Carden
Police Headquarters
Carleton Hall Penrith,
Cumbria
CA10 2AU



25 July 2025

Dear XXXXXXXX

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST – FOI 690/25

I refer to your request for information received by Cumbria Constabulary on 2 July 2025.
I note you seek access to the following information:

I am writing to request information regarding the contracts held by your organisation for the provision of the following network services:

1. *Wide Area Network (WAN)*
2. *Local Area Network (LAN)*
3. *Wi-Fi and Wireless Networks*
4. *Internet Connectivity For each of the above services,*

I would be grateful if you could provide the following information:

1. **Supplier:** *The name of the company or organisation currently providing each the service*
2. **Service Details:** *A brief description of the services currently being provided under the contract (e.g., number of sites, bandwidth, technology used, number of access points, etc.). Please provide as much detail as possible without disclosing commercially sensitive information*
3. **Contract Cost:** *The total cost of the current contract (annual or contract term, whichever is readily available). If this information is commercially sensitive and exempt from disclosure, please explain the legal basis for the exemption.*
4. **Contract End Date:** *The date on which the current contract expires with any details of any remaining extension options*
5. **Who the senior officer** *or manager is for the service outside of procurement*

Your request for information has now been considered and I can confirm Cumbria Constabulary does hold some information relevant to your request, however the Constabulary is not obliged to disclose the requested information to you.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires Cumbria Constabulary when refusing such information (because the information is exempt) to provide you the applicant with a notice which

- (a) states the fact,
- (b) specifies the exemption and
- (c) states (if it would not be apparent) why the exemption applies.

The exemptions applicable in this case are:

Section 31 (1) (a)(b), Law Enforcement
Section 43(2) – Commercial Interests



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Section 31 (1) (a)(b), Law Enforcement.

Section 31(1)(a) exempts information if its disclosure would or would be likely to prejudice the prevention and detection of crime.

As a qualified and prejudice-based exemption, I am required to evidence the harm and apply the public interest test.

Evidence of Harm

Every effort should be made to release information under Freedom of Information. However, a FOIA response is considered to be a release to the world, as once the information is published, the public authority has no control over what use is made of that information.

The Police Service is charged with enforcing the law, preventing, and detecting crime and protecting the communities we serve. To achieve these objectives, all forces utilise Information Technology essential to front line services. Disclosure of the Constabulary's ICT infrastructure, including specific hardware/software applications and capabilities, or the lack thereof, would reveal intricacies of those systems, thereby highlighting vulnerabilities and compromising individual force information assurance.

Disclosure would also enable a geographical picture to be drawn up by those individuals who are intent on 'hacking' police systems; some of these individuals may include terrorists or terrorist organisations. In terms of duty of care, this would be detrimental to the public, as disclosure could assist a malicious actor by highlighting vulnerable forces and leaving those forces open to disruption of Information Technology systems; thus, compromising the effective delivery of operational law enforcement which in turn, is met by an increase of criminal offending.

Public Interest Test

Factors favouring disclosure – Disclosing the specific details of certain ICT infrastructure, would allow the public to be better informed on the health state and performance of each forces Information Technology platform. In addition, forces are required to demonstrate efficient services to local taxpayers and satisfy audit requirements. This would provide transparency regarding the use of public funds in so much as highlighting that funds are being used correctly and appropriately, to ensure all Data Centres have adequate software, which results in the smooth running of force Technology systems.

Factors favouring non-disclosure - Whilst there is public interest in providing reassurance that police forces are appropriately and effectively dealing with any threats, posed against police force Technology capabilities, there is a strong public interest in safeguarding the welfare and safety of the public. If ICT systems were successfully attacked, it could lead to the loss of confidentiality, integrity, and availability of police information. Any disclosure has the potential to undermine current and future technological integrity, which in turn compromises Law Enforcement, and could jeopardise the daily running of policing activity. The risk of affecting the function of the police service would be much greater. In addition, by revealing ICT hardware/software, this is intelligence to those who would wish to exploit vulnerabilities in the service. This may lead to the compromise of force IT systems which ultimately affects law enforcement capabilities and hinders the prevention and detection of crime or terrorism.



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Balance Test

The security of the country is of paramount importance and the Police service will not divulge any information, if to do so would undermine law enforcement and therefore compromise the work of the police service. Whilst there is a public interest in the transparency of policing and force infrastructure, including the Police ICT infrastructure, there is a very strong public interest in safeguarding the integrity of these systems in place.

The points above highlight the merits for and against disclosure of the requested information. Disclosure would undoubtedly provide a greater openness and transparency to the community at large regarding the Information Technology resources available to the police, and whilst there is always a public interest in the transparency of how a police force delivers effective law enforcement, there is a very strong public interest in safeguarding the intricacies and tactical capabilities of the hardware/software used when dealing with information.

I am aware of the immense importance for Public Authorities to demonstrate a level of openness and transparency, I am of the opinion that protecting the tactical capability of Cumbria Constabulary must take precedence in this case. With this in mind, it is my decision that the balance of the public interest lies in the non-disclosure of the exempted information.

Section 43(2) – Commercial Interests

Section 43(2) states information is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice commercial interests of any person (including the public authority holding it).

S43(2) is a class based qualified exemption which requires public interest considerations to be taken into account.

Public Interest Test

Factors favouring disclosure – Disclosing the requested information might help enhance transparency in respect of the specified contracts with regards to the use of public funds in so much as highlighting that funds are being used correctly and appropriately.

Factors favouring non-disclosure – Contracts contain detailed information around service provision, costing structures and service specifications which, if disclosed, would undermine the commercial activities of the company and may jeopardise the relationship between the Constabulary and suppliers.

Balance test

There is a strong public interest in the use of public funds and Cumbria Police strives to remain open and transparent with regards to this. However, this must be weighed against the factors favouring non-disclosure - the potential negative impact on the commercial interests of third parties if details were disclosed and the likelihood of jeopardising a relationship of trust and confidence and the free flow of information between the force and suppliers. The disclosure of the requested information may jeopardise such a relationship, which is fundamentally important in maintaining the most effective delivery of public services. As such, it is my decision that the balance of the public interest in this case lies in the non-disclosure of the requested information.



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Question 5

Stephen Haywood

Whilst every care has been taken in the retrieval of the information provided, please do not hesitate to contact us for clarification, if you do have any issues or queries relating to this data.

Complaint Rights

If you believe your request has not been properly handled, or you are otherwise dissatisfied with the outcome of your request, you have the right to request an internal review.

In the first instance, please email freedomofinformation@cumbria.police.uk quoting the FOI reference number and explain why you are dissatisfied. Your complaint will be considered and a response will be provided to you after your complaint has been investigated.

If you remain dissatisfied following conclusion of the internal review, you have the right, under section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to complain directly to the Information Commissioner.

The address for the Information Commissioner can be found below:

The Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Complaints to the Information Commissioner can also be made online:

[Make a complaint | ICO](#)

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your interest in Cumbria Constabulary



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