

MONITORING NUMBER: M-2015-006

OFFICE OF POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

LEAD CHIEF OFFICER: Deputy Chief Constable Guildford

TITLE: Freedom of Information Department - Annual Report

DATE: 5th May 2015

TIMING: Annual

PURPOSE: For Monitoring

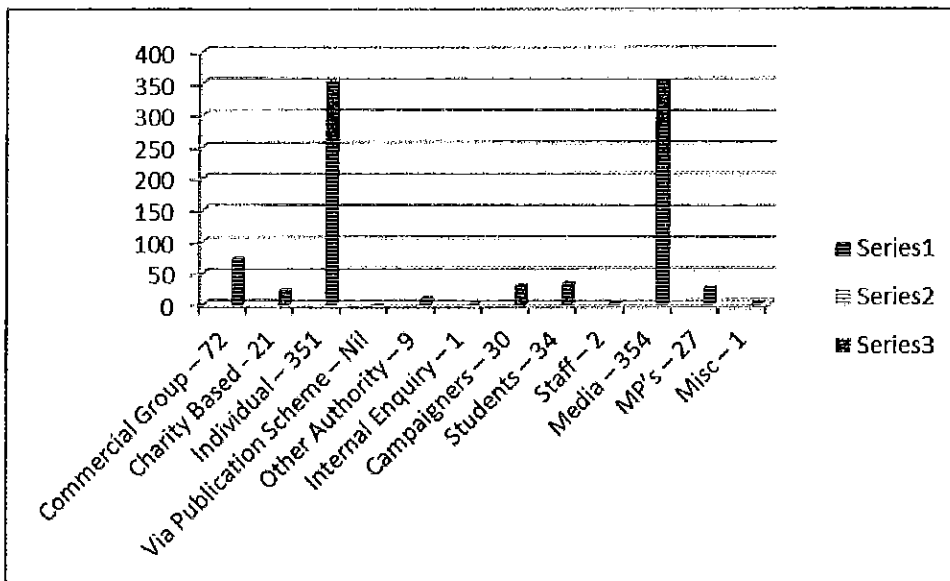
1.	<u>RECOMMENDATION</u> This annual report presents the Freedom of Information (FOI) Department's performance for handling requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
2.	<u>INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND</u> The FOI Department sits within the portfolio of the Head of Corporate Communications. The Department comprises two members of staff, an FOI Officer and FOI Assistant (P/T) who ensure that the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act (2000) are met by the Force. Information requested for release under FOI is compiled locally by a network of Single Point Of Contacts (SPOCs) who verify whether information is held and ensure the integrity of the information to be released. All responses are checked by Corporate Communications in case a wider context needs to be added to the information to be released and to ensure any reputational risks are highlighted to Chief Officers. The FOI Department is responsible for handling requests received for Gwent Police and also provides professional expertise to the Office of Police & Crime Commissioner when required. Gwent Police currently holds the chair for the FOI Wales & West Region and also sits on the National Portfolio Group representing the region.
3.	<u>ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION</u> For reporting purposes, both the financial year and calendar year figures are shown below as figures are reported differently depending on the comparison organisation. Gwent Police was 100% compliant for the year 2014/15, and are one of the top performing forces in the country having been fully compliant since 2010.

Requests received

	Financial Year		Calendar Year
2014/15	902 (+30)	2014	934 (+99)
2013/14	872 (+166)	2013	835 (+187)
2012/13	706 (+60)	2012	648 (-12)
2011/12	646 (+39)	2011	660 (+92)
2010/11	607 (+52)	2010	568 (-28)
2009/10	555	2009	596

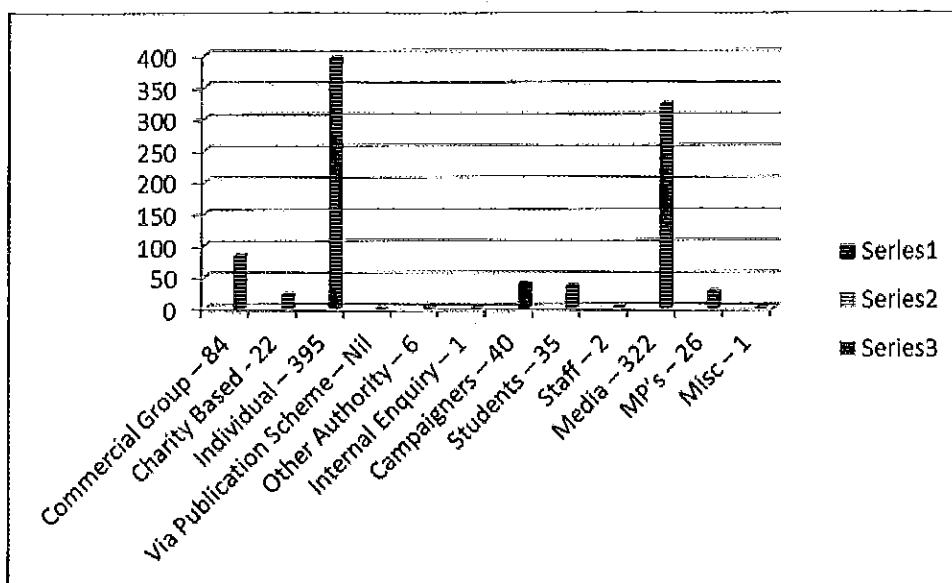
Breakdown – 2014/15 Financial Year

- Commercial Group – 72
- Charity Based - 21
- Individual – 351
- Via Publication Scheme – Nil
- Other Authority – 9
- Internal Enquiry – 1
- Campaigners – 30
- Students – 34
- Staff – 2
- Media – 354
- MPs – 27
- Misc – 1



Breakdown – 2014 Calendar Year

Commercial Group – 84
 Charity Based - 22
 Individual – 395
 Via Publication Scheme – Nil
 Other Authority – 6
 Internal Enquiry – 1
 Campaigners – 40
 Students – 35
 Staff – 2
 Media – 322
 MPs – 26
 Misc – 1



Journalists remain one of the main users of the FOI legislation. It should be noted that within the 'Individual' category there are also a large number of journalists who are either freelance or do not wish to identify themselves as journalists. Applicants are not required to identify themselves specifically as 'Media' under FOI legislation.

Demand

Over the reporting period, the demand profile for the top five business areas was as follows:

Crime	21%
Service Development	13%
CJD	13%
Business Support	9%
Op Support	8%

Appeals

The Freedom of Information Department received two appeals from the Information Commissioner's Office in 2014. Both appeals found in our favour.

	<p><u>Publication Scheme</u> A Publication Scheme is in place http://corporate.gwent.police.uk/foi/overview0/ in an attempt to reduce the number of FOI requests. The Force proactively publishes all previous FOI requests received and also as much general information as is feasible in order to reduce administration demands. Weekly reports highlight demand for information and whether proactive publication should be considered.</p> <p>The Publication Scheme has helped the department to manage demand at a time of shrinking resources. There is considerable interest in the Publication Scheme and page view figures are as follows:</p> <p><u>Financial Year 2014/15</u> : Page Views Total: 24,565 <u>Calendar Year 2014</u>: Page Views Total: 25,818</p> <p><u>Scrutiny</u> The FOI Department produces a weekly breakdown of performance to the Head of Corporate Communications and the department is represented on the Information Assurance Board. FOI performance figures are also presented to the Public Confidence Board. The Department will be subject to its regular bi-annual internal audit by Deloitte in May 2015.</p>										
4.	<p><u>NEXT STEPS</u> It is likely that there will be a further increase in the number of FOI requests in the forthcoming year. This has been an on-going trend year-on-year.</p> <p>FOI (Department & Force-wide process) is scheduled for a Staying Ahead 8 Review once a series of other organisational changes have been completed.</p>										
5.	<p><u>FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS</u> Gwent Police along with all 43 forces contribute financially to an ACPO FOI Central Referral Unit (CRU) for matters of national policing interest or where FOI requests are sent to all forces. Our contribution in 2014/15 was £3,221 and is based on the size of the force.</p> <p>The budget for the FOI department is as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="268 1480 1390 1682"> <tr> <td colspan="2"><u>Staffing (including all on-costs)</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>FOI Officer (FTE/SO1)</td> <td>£35,134</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FOI Assistant (0.61FTE/SC2)</td> <td>£22,613</td> </tr> <tr> <td>CRU contribution</td> <td>£3,221</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FOI database</td> <td>£2,745</td> </tr> </table>	<u>Staffing (including all on-costs)</u>		FOI Officer (FTE/SO1)	£35,134	FOI Assistant (0.61FTE/SC2)	£22,613	CRU contribution	£3,221	FOI database	£2,745
<u>Staffing (including all on-costs)</u>											
FOI Officer (FTE/SO1)	£35,134										
FOI Assistant (0.61FTE/SC2)	£22,613										
CRU contribution	£3,221										
FOI database	£2,745										
6.	<p><u>PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS</u> See Next Steps – Staying Ahead 8 Review.</p>										
7.	<p><u>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</u> The Freedom of Information Officer manages the risk to the organisation as stipulated under the Freedom of Information legislation.</p>										

8.	<p><u>EQUALITIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS</u></p> <p>This document has been considered against the general duty to promote equality, as stipulated under the Strategic Equality Plan and has been assessed not to discriminate against any particular group.</p> <p>Consideration has been given to requirements of the Articles contained in the European Convention on Human Rights and the Human Rights Act 1998 in preparing this report.</p>
9.	<p><u>RISK</u></p> <p>Failure to comply with the Freedom of Information Act could lead to substantial financial penalties if inappropriate information is disclosed into the public domain.</p>
10.	<p><u>PUBLIC INTEREST</u></p> <p>No public interest issues.</p>
11.	<p><u>CONTACT OFFICER</u></p> <p>Mr Stuart John, Head of Corporate Communications Mr Dylan Collins, Freedom of Information Officer</p>
12.	<p><u>ANNEXES</u></p> <p>None</p>

For OPCC use only

Office of the Chief Constable	
I confirm that the Freedom of Information report has been discussed and approved at a formal Chief Officers' meeting. It is now forwarded to the OPCC for monitoring purposes.	
Signature: 	
Date: 05 May 2015	
	Tick to confirm (if applicable)
Financial The Chief Finance Officer has been consulted on this proposal.	✓
OPCC (insert name) The Head of Corporate Governance has reviewed the request and is satisfied that it is correct and consistent with the PCC's plans and priorities.	✓
Legal The legal team have been consulted on this proposal.	N/A
Equalities The Equalities Officer has been consulted on this proposal.	N/A
Chief Executive/ Deputy Chief Executive: I have been consulted about the proposal and can confirm that financial, legal, equalities etc... advice has been taken into account in the preparation of this report. I am satisfied that this is an appropriate report to be submitted to the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent.	
Signature: 	
Date: 18/05/15	
Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent I confirm that I have considered whether or not I have any personal or prejudicial interest in this matter and take the proposed decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct. I commend the work of the FOI team and congratulate them on their performance of responding to all requests within the statutory timescales.	
Signature: 	
Date: 26 5-15.	