

OFFICIAL



Heddlu Police

DYFED-POWYS

FOI Reference: 636/2020

Request:

I would like to make an application under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 for the following information:

- 1) How many sexual grooming crimes on children (people under 18 years old) were recorded by your police force in 2018, 2019 and up until August 31st 2020?
- 2) How many of those sexual grooming crimes on children happened online? Please provide details of the forum they took place on if possible: (provide a breakdown for 2018, 2019 and up until August 31st 2020)
 - a) social media networks (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.)
 - b) through text messages and messaging apps (Whatsapp etc.),
 - c) email
 - d) text, voice and video chats in forums, games and apps.
- 3) How many of those sexual grooming crimes on children happened in person? (provide a breakdown for 2018, 2019 and up until August 31st 2020)

Response 1 – 3:

I can confirm that Dyfed-Powys Police does hold the information requested, the details of which are as follows:

Year	Q1	Q2					Q3
	Total	A	B	C	D	Not stated	In person
2018	57	6	13	0	1	32	5
2019	41	9	6	0	2	18	4
2020 (Up to and including 31/08/2020)	43	8	9	0	2	6	5

Section 30(1)(a) applies x 15

Explanation of applied exemption:

Section 30(1)(a) Investigations and Proceedings conducted by Public Authorities

The Section 30(1)(a) exemption is a class-based qualified exemption. This means that the legislators when writing the legislation considered that the release of such information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 would cause harm to the public authority or individual concerned. There is therefore no requirement to carry out a HARM Test in respect of such information. However there is a requirement to carry out a Public Interest Test in order to

establish whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption may be outweighed by a wider public benefit in disclosure.

Section 30(1)(a) Investigations and Proceedings conducted by Public Authorities:

(1) Information held by a public authority is exempt information if it has at any time been held by the authority for the purposes of -

(a) Any investigation which the public authority has a duty to conduct with a view to it being ascertained (i) whether a person should be charged with an offence, or (ii) whether a person charged with an offence is guilty of it

Public Interest Test

Considerations favouring disclosure:

Disclosure of the information would improve the public's knowledge and awareness in relation to crimes of a sexual nature involving children within the Dyfed-Powys Police area and would provide satisfaction to the public that these cases are investigated thoroughly and offenders are being dealt with accordingly.

Considerations favouring non-disclosure:

This exemption covers information held at any time for the purpose of an investigation, whether the case is ongoing, closed or abandoned. To release details of ongoing investigations, as in this case, could undermine and prejudice those investigations. This would impact on the forces' future law enforcement capabilities by hindering the prevention or detection of crime.

Balancing Test

After considering the advantages and disadvantages in disclosure, it falls upon Dyfed-Powys Police to conduct a balance test on the issues. The strongest argument for disclosure, which is public awareness, needs to be weighed against the strongest arguments for non-disclosure, which in this case is that the release would undermine and prejudice ongoing investigations, which would impact on the forces' future law enforcement capabilities by hindering the prevention or detection of crime.

Therefore, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

It should be noted that owing to the systems adopted by Dyfed-Powys Police in relation to the recording of such matters the information provided may or may not be accurate.

Police Forces in the United Kingdom are routinely required to provide crime statistics to government bodies and the recording criteria is set nationally. However, the systems used for recording these figures are not generic, nor are the procedures used locally in capturing the data. It should be noted that for these reasons this Force's response to your questions should not be used for comparison purposes with any other response you may receive.

(This is a response under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and disclosed on 02/11/20)