



Altogether Better Policing

Information Rights and Disclosure
Digital Data and Technology Command
Police Headquarters
Aykley Heads
Durham
County Durham
DH1 5TT

Web Site: www.durham.police.uk

E-mail: freedomofinformation@durham.police.uk

Phone: 0191 3752582



**Request to Durham Constabulary under the Freedom of Information Act
Received on 06/05/2022 Our Ref: FOI/443/22**

Date: 08/06/2022

Your request:

Please disclose, preferably by PDF, the precise date when Durham Police received the 'significant new information' in relation to so-called Beergate, the date it was decided an investigation would be conducted (but announcement delayed until after the English local elections), copies of any communications relating to delaying the announcement and any communications relating to the decision that an investigation will be conducted.

Response:

Durham Constabulary can neither confirm nor deny that it holds any information relevant to your request as the duty in Section 1 (1) (a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) does not apply by virtue of the following exemptions under the Freedom of Information Act 2000:

Section 30 (3) Investigations

Section 31 (3) Law Enforcement

Section 30 (3) Investigations

Section 30 (3) is a class based exemption, this exemption requires me to perform a Public Interest Test and describe harm that could be caused if the constabulary was to either confirm or deny that the requested information is held:

Harm

The harm in confirming or denying that the requested information is held would be that it could affect / hinder an ongoing police investigation.

Please follow below link to access Durham Constabulary's (The Force's) press statement issued on the 6th May 2022 regarding the confirmation of the commencement of an investigation:

<https://www.durham.police.uk/News/News-Articles/2022/May/Durham-Constabulary-Press-Statement.aspx#:~:text=Durham%20Constabulary%20Press%20Statement%20Post>



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[ed%20on%20Friday%206.gathering%20in%20Durham%20City%20on%20April%2030%202021.](#)

Public interest in favour of confirming or denying the requested information is held:

It is acknowledged there is a public interest in this investigation.

Investigations are funded with public money.

The public are entitled to know that Durham Constabulary is conducting investigations in an effective manner.

Public interest in favour of neither confirming or denying that the requested information is held:

This investigation is currently ongoing, to disclose **any** information (or even confirm if it is or isn't held) could affect and possibly undermine that investigation.

The greater public interest is that police investigations should be allowed to continue unaffected and unhindered by any release of information (or to confirm or deny specific information is held)

Balancing Test

As this is currently an active / open investigation, the public interest balance has fallen in favour of not confirming or denying that any information is held in relation to your request.

An ongoing investigation must be allowed to continue unhindered.

S.31 (3) Law Enforcement

Section 31 (3) is a prejudice-based exemption, this exemption requires me to perform a Public Interest Test and describe harm that could be caused if the constabulary was to either confirm or deny that the requested information is held:

Harm

The harm in confirming or denying that the requested information is held would be that it could affect / hinder an ongoing police investigation.

Public interest in favour of confirming or denying the requested information is held:



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It is acknowledged there is a public interest in this investigation.

Investigations are funded with public money.

The public are entitled to know that Durham Constabulary is conducting investigations in an effective manner.

Public interest in favour of neither confirming or denying that the requested information is held:

This investigation is currently ongoing, to disclose **any** information (or even confirm if it is or isn't held) could affect and possibly undermine that investigation and subsequently reduce Durham Constabulary's Law enforcement capabilities.

To confirm or deny any information is held in relation to your request would in essence by disclosing evidence that may or may not be held in relation to a live investigation, this would undoubtedly affect the law enforcement capabilities of Durham Constabulary.

Balancing Test

As this is currently an active / open investigation, the public interest balance has fallen in favour of not confirming or denying that any information is held in relation to your request.

It is also in the Public Interest that Durham Constabulary maintains its Law Enforcement capabilities.

CONCLUSION

This Section 17 (1) FOI Refusal Notice does not confirm or deny that Durham Constabulary holds the information that you have requested, and this decision is in no way an indication that the information requested is or is not held by the force.

Please note that Durham Constabulary's response to your request is unique and should not be used as a comparison with any other Force response you receive.

COMPLAINT RIGHTS

Your attention is drawn to the below link to our website, which details your right to complain:

[Freedom of Information Requests \(contensis.com\)](http://contensis.com)

If you have any further enquiries concerning this matter, please write or contact me on the above telephone number.



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I hope this is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely
Freedom of Information Decision Maker
Information Rights and Disclosure Unit