



October 2017

Freedom of Information Request Reference N°: FOI 006221/17

I write in connection with your request for information received by Norfolk Constabulary on the 23rd August 2017 in which you sought access to the following information:

Re:- Traveller's Closing North Norfolk Economy

- 1 I want detailed information related to the events of Friday 18 August to Monday 21 August. I wish to have full details of all the incidents reported to the police;
- 2 full details of police number available to deal with incidents;
- 3 who made what operational decisions to manage incidents and why;
- 4 what advice was given by the police to local businesses and why.

Response to your Request

The response provided below is correct as of 5th September 2017.

Norfolk Constabulary has located the following information as relevant to your request.

Research has been undertaken of recorded incidents reported to Norfolk Constabulary during the weekend of 18th and 21st August. Any incident which has no relevance or link to the Travellers at Cromer has been removed. Where it is not possible to tell from the details within the report, these have been included in the response below.

Date	Details of Incident Report
18/08/2017	Report of shoplifting of a bottle of vodka.
18/08/2017	Report of approximately 7 caravans on car park. Rubbish being thrown onto the ground. Further motorhomes arriving. Environmental Health aware. An offer made to open temporary traveller sites but this was turned down. <u>Incident report updated on 19th August</u> Report of travellers drinking in local public house all day and starting to get rowdy. East Runton car park will not open tonight due to traveller presence. Putting green and Café shut today due to ASB and offences. Local businesses all given crime prevention advice and reassured. Local pubs advised of last night's disorder and suggestion made that they carefully consider who they serve/how much they serve in terms of alcohol. Reassured that we will assist if necessary.
18/08/2017	Caller reporting a motorhome parked near to driveway blocking the drive
18/08/2017	Report that 2 males had 2 pints of drink and left without paying. Officers located the males and took them back to the pub to pay for drinks
18/08/2017	Call from Environmental Health Officer
18/08/2017	Group of 7-8 males drinking & standing in the road. Males had later moved onto the path.

18/08/2017	Report of 6 males taking drinks from behind the bar. Males then moved onto another public house, taking beer bottles from behind the bar and refusing to pay. Caller closed the bar. Group were cleared from the pub. Full payment was later received.
18/08/2017	Report of a sexual offence.
18/08/2017	Report that 3 young males had stolen ice-creams from store.
18/08/2017	Report of a group of males running into store, grabbing phone charges and running out
18/08/2017	Group of females/children shoplifting sunglasses & other items
18/08/2017	A group of 10-12 youths hanging around. Believed to be intoxicated and heading towards Social Club. Further update, approx. 40-50 persons, all intoxicated and refusing to leave. All persons left peacefully and were escorted back to motorhomes
19/08/2017	A call from a male concerned that 2 males drove past whilst filming his vehicle
19/08/2017	Report of children committing criminal damage at a café. On attendance no damage had been committed.
19/08/2017	Local units deployed in anticipation that a group of male travellers, drinking at location, will be told to leave and may not take it well
19/08/2017	Group of young males causing issues in the arcade. Riding their bikes which is not allowed. Abusive to staff when asked to leave. 4/5 males, aged approx. 11/12 years. The manager had already made a decision to close earlier than usual.
19/08/2017	Call from public house. Currently 20 travellers on site. Had been asked to leave but were refusing. No offences committed.
19/08/2017	Possible witness coming forward in relation to sexual offence of previous day
19/08/2017	Hotel manager reporting that 2 travellers had been refused service and had left. A number of others then arrived and were outside. Caller concerned that a breach of the peace may occur. The group left the location.
19/08/2017	Caller reporting a large group of people outside the bar have left and are leaning on peoples cars in the car park.
19/08/2017	Caller says travellers at the location are looking around and scouting out the place. 2/3 of them. States they are the only pub open in Cromer at the moment. Note - please advise informant to shut the bar – this is the only reason they are still being targeted. We have suggested that they close their doors.
19/08/2017	Further call from staff above. They were expecting officer attendance from linked CAD. They have a group of approx. 5/6 outside. They have refused to serve them and they are becoming irate. *Units are already on scene. Dealing already*
19/08/2017	Approx 10 travellers (male & female) in the hotel bar refusing to leave – have been asked to leave. Caller then states – it's ok, they are leaving. Also confirms no offences have been committed. They will now close & lock doors.
19/08/2017	Possible witness coming forward in relation to a sexual offence.
19/08/2017	Restaurant stating that travellers who stole drinks are still walking around drinking the stolen items and police no longer there. Caller not happy with the police response to the incident.
19/08/2017	2 males on a small trials bike. Driving around with no lights/helmets.
19/08/2017	Report of numerous travellers in the club house. Taking drinks & causing issues. States around 20-30 travellers have piled onto the resort, taken over the bar area and it is getting out of hand. States it is not violent at present but they are just doing whatever they want. They have closed the bar. Travellers have legitimately bought some drinks and they are being allowed to finish them. Allegation that alcohol had been taken without being paid for was remedied by the persons involved paying for what they had consumed. No one had left the premises making no attempts to pay so dishonest appropriation cannot be proven. There were no other offences disclosed, no assaults or damage. Happy that due recompense for drinks has been received and states no damage has been caused.
19/08/2017	Further call relating to above.
19/08/2017	Informant advised that there are 3 lads, aged 10-12, at putting green, stealing clubs and balls, etc and throwing them into the sea.
19/08/2017	Large group of people have come into restaurant and are 'ransacking the place'
19/08/2017	Report of a residential burglary – there are no offences, there are children here but no property damaged or entered. Words of advice given.

19/08/2017	Report of 4 children running around on the putting green, taking balls and throwing them off the cliffs.
19/08/2017	Member of the public reporting some disturbance inside the premises. Persons shouting at the bar staff. 3/4 males – 1 particularly intoxicated.
19/08/2017	Informant had to shut the café early due to the travellers children running around. Officers had advised the informant that the environmental department had served notice. Caller therefore enquiring whether he will be able to reopen tomorrow.
19/08/2017	Informant reporting a mixed group of 20 adults refusing to leave the pub.
19/08/2017	Caller and partner woken up by a noise at the side of their property. Have seen a male outside and concerned as to why male has been checking around properties. Nothing stolen or damaged.
19/08/2017	Cromer carnival security – about 30-40 travellers trying to get through the perimeter fence. Travellers had left and no offences.
19/08/2017	Call from a local business asking for advice on whether they should close their bar. Caller was initially advised to close their bar. They were further advised that patrons already at location could continue to be served but if they saw others heading their way, looking for an open bar, they may want to consider closing the bar and not allowing them entry.
19/08/2017	Crime report of a set of stolen headphones by male youths.
20/08/2017	Report of a caravan or campervan parked up in a layby at Beeston Regis.
20/08/2017	Initial report of an intoxicated male outside property (person known to caller). Caller later reports they don't think anyone was there.
20/08/2017	Car has been damaged whilst parked. Travellers were on scene when parked but have since moved off. No proof the travellers have caused the damage.
20/08/2017	Due to ongoing issues in town with the travellers, informant did not open business until 1000hrs. Has received a call regarding a group of males wanting to make a booking. Advised that units are in the area, currently patrolling and providing reassurance.
20/08/2017	Group of travellers, approx. 10 of them, in the arcades throwing things about and messing with the 2p machines. Dealt with by way of a Community Resolution.
20/08/2017	Caller reporting group of travellers congregating. Informant has refused entry. They left and kicked signs.
20/08/2017	Items stolen from the store. Cans of drink and ice creams.
20/08/2017	2 young males entered location and headed to sandwich counter. They pocketed a couple of packets of crisps and ice creams. Made no attempts to pay and then left.
20/08/2017	Theft of crates of lager worth in excess of £80-£90 previous night. Caller believes this was the travellers that were causing issues in Cromer. There had been around 8 of them in the store.
20/08/2017	One of caller's friends has been assaulted by a traveller.
20/08/2017	Crime report. When re-stocking shelves, staff noticed empty packets. These included phone charger banks, screwdrivers & underwear.
22/08/2017	Crime of shoplifting reported on 22 nd August but refers to incident date of 18 th August. Theft of buckets/spades and body boards by a group of travellers.
23/08/2017	Crime of theft reported on 23 rd August but refers to incident date of 18 th August. Theft of balls by a group of youths.
24/08/2017	Crime of shoplifting reported on 24 th August but refers to incident date of 18 th August. Group of traveller children in the company of an adult male, entered store, selected canned drinks and left without paying

Q2 All officers on duty could potentially respond to reported incidents but the details of the specific number of officers on duty, throughout the weekend, will not be provided, due to exemptions within the Act.

Section 1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) places two duties on public authorities. Unless exemptions apply, the first duty at section 1(1)(a) is to confirm or deny whether the information, specified in a request, is held. The second duty at section 1(1)(b) is to disclose information that has been confirmed as being held.

Section 17 of the FOIA requires the Constabulary, when refusing to provide such information (because the information is exempt) is to provide the applicant with a notice in which:-

- (a) States that fact
- (b) Specifies the exemption(s) in question and
- (c) States (if that would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemption(s) apply.

The requested information is exempt from disclosure by virtue of the following exemption:-

- **Section 31(1)(a)(b) - Law Enforcement**

Section 31 is a qualified prejudice based exemption and we are therefore obliged to articulate the harm in disclosure and carry out a public interest test.

Harm in Disclosure

Disclosure of information under the Freedom of Information Act is considered to be a release of information to the world, because once information is released, it will be published on the disclosure log pages of the Constabulary's website. The Constabulary has no control over who has access to that information. Whilst not questioning an applicant's motives for requesting this information, it would be of interest to persons who are involved in criminal activity.

The information could be used to gauge the level of policing resources in a particular area of the County at a specific time. This could be used in conjunction with other information already in the public domain, or information released under the FOIA, to plan criminal activities for times when they perceive, correctly or incorrectly, that uniformed officer deployments are lower, or resources engaged elsewhere in the County.

This would undermine the Constabulary's law enforcement capabilities therefore section 31 is engaged.

Factors favouring disclosure

Police Officer numbers will fluctuate depending on shifts, times and operational requirements. Disclosing this information would allow individuals to contribute to more accurate public debate regarding officer numbers. The policing of the County is dependent on public funds and is therefore of public interest.

Releasing these details would reassure the public that the Constabulary is allocating the appropriate resources to the policing of North Norfolk.

Openness and transparency are fundamental elements of the Freedom of Information Act.

Factors favouring non-disclosure

Providing any information regarding police officer numbers at a specific location, at a specific time, would invariably provide criminals with advanced knowledge of the Constabulary's capabilities.

It could be argued that this information will vary depending on times of higher demand or planned events and the figures would not include members of the Special Constabulary. Also, future working patterns will, of course, change due to operational requirements. However, the provision of this information would be a guide of the officer numbers in this particular area, which could be used to determine projected officer numbers on an average day or night.

Providing these figures may encourage applicants to request information for other days and areas and thereby map resources of front line officers across the County.

Norfolk is a relatively small area and the provision of this data could lead to individuals, correctly or incorrectly, to draw conclusions as to when the County has less uniformed officers on duty.

Balance Test

There is always a public interest in the numbers of Police Officers within the Constabulary. It is recognised that, at this time, there is particular public interest in the number of Officers and PCSOs who are stationed in North Norfolk and how the Constabulary allocates resources in this area.

However, the release of any specific details of officer duties must be carefully considered. Any such information would be of interest to individuals who commit crime or plan to commit crime. This would undermine the Constabulary's law enforcement function and would result in the need for additional planning and resources. This would not be in the public interest.

The Constabulary has a duty to ensure public safety is not compromised and this has to be a consideration when processing requests under the Freedom of Information Act.

Therefore, at this moment in time, for these reasons, the balance lies in non-disclosure of the requested information by virtue of the exemption at section 31, law enforcement.

Q3 It is generally recognised that the Police Service uses the Gold, Silver & Bronze Command Structure to ensure incidents and operations are correctly managed. The GSB command structure is role, not rank specific. During the period of your request, appropriately accredited officers were aligned to the GSB model. Further details of the roles and responsibilities can be found within the College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice.

<https://www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/operations/command-and-control/command-structures/>

Under Section 21(1) of the Freedom of Information Act (2000), public authorities are not required to provide information that is reasonably accessible to the public by other means, in this case via the College of Policing website; therefore in accordance with Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act (2000), this serves as a Refusal Notice for this part of your request.

Q4 Where advice has been given to any local businesses, this information has been provided within the table above.