



Public
Prosecution
Service

Policy and Information Unit
Public Prosecution Service
Belfast Chambers
93 Chichester Street
Belfast BT1 3JR

[REDACTED]

FOI 16/24-25

10 May 2024

[REDACTED]

I refer to your email dated 19 April 2024 in which you asked for information in respect of PPS 1150543. Your request has been dealt with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Freedom of Information Act 2000

The Freedom of Information Act creates rights of access for any person making a request for information to a public authority. The rights of access are twofold. First, to be informed by the public authority if it holds information of the description specified in the request, and if that is the case, secondly, to be provided with that information. These rights are subject to important limitations, which are designed to achieve a proper balance between the right to know and considerations of law and policy in the broader public interest.

You had asked the following:

"I am seeking to discover the cost to your organisation of the legal action over a sewage spillage in Banbridge in 2021 which ended in a £250 fine at Newry Magistrates' Court on Monday, April 15.

That means the cost of external legal help (lawyers, counsel), and - to the extent it's possible - the rough cost in either manhours or wages of the work done on the case by your internal staff".

In response I can advise that Counsel costs were approximately £375 net. and in respect of internal costs, I can advise that in the absence of detailed records of time spent on individual cases it is not possible to produce precise costs for a particular case or even average costs for a particular type of case. This is because the amount of time required to take individual decisions as to prosecution will vary depending upon a range of factors including the complexity of the case, the extent of the case papers and any other work in hand. As the PPS does not charge for work done there is no business need for such detailed records to be maintained. Therefore, in terms

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of the Freedom of Information Act, I can confirm that under Section 1(1)(a) of the Act we do not hold the information you have requested.

If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review in accordance with our review procedure. You should do this as soon as possible or in any case within two months of the date of this response and you can do so by writing to the Head of Policy and Information, Public Prosecution Service, Belfast Chambers, 93 Chichester Street, BELFAST, BT1 3JR or alternatively by sending an e-mail to info@ppsni.gov.uk. You should state clearly the grounds on which you are requesting the review.

Alternatively, you may wish to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely,

Information Management Team
Public Prosecution Service