

FOI 2022-318

I write in connection with your request for information dated 2nd June 2022 concerning PCC's covert operation against hunt sabs and survey of Wiltshire residents.

I am required by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to handle all requests in a manner that is blind as to the identity and motives of the requestor. Any information released as a response to a request is regarded as being published and therefore in the public domain without caveat.

You wrote:

I understand that you have revealed to a member of the public that you attended two hunts covertly. Please answer the following questions:

1) In the survey you conducted amongst Wiltshire residents earlier this year, how many responses showed concern about anti-hunt groups and their behaviour?

You have stated that only .58% expressed concern about illegal hunting. You have not, in any of our previous communications, or in any communications with other Wiltshire residents that I know of, stated the number of residents that expressed concern about anti-hunting groups. You have stated that you will spend money on issues concerning residents. I am going to assume that either there were very few - or none at all.

2) Given that you used the figure of .58% to discount concerns about illegal hunting, why have you not ALSO discounted concerns about anti-hunting groups on the same basis?

3) You state that you have monitored anti-hunting groups covertly. Why did you do this covertly? When did you do this? Which anti hunting groups did you monitor? Where did this happen? What evidence do you have that this happened at all?

4) You claim that you saw "balaclava wearing thugs". What motivated you to use the emotive, judgemental word "thug"?

Internal review request:

I am writing to request an internal review of Wiltshire Police and Crime Commissioner's handling of my FOI request 'PCC's covert operation against hunt sabs and survey of Wiltshire residents'.

It is untrue that you have no information about the number of people who mentioned hunt sab activity on the survey. If you can say how many mentioned hunting on the survey, you can also say how many mentioned hunt saboteur activity.

Please provide the figure - or if no one mentioned it, please tell me that.

Response:

I have reviewed your original Freedom of Information request, the response provided to you and your request for an Internal Review. I have also been in contact with our Campaigns and Communications Manager who has carried out some extensive searching and I can confirm that I uphold the original response provided to you.

Wiltshire Police do not hold any information regarding the number of people whose responses showed concern about anti-hunt groups and their behaviour within the survey.

However, please note under our section 16 duty to provide advice and assistance I can advise that within the survey there is a section listed as "other" which has the total of .58%.