

FOI 2021-376

I write in connection with your request for information dated 25 April 2021 concerning claim made by PCC candidate.

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 requester. Any information released as a response to a request is regarded as being published and therefore in the public domain without caveat.

Following receipt of your request, searches were conducted within the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC). I can confirm that the information you have requested is held by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

You wrote:

I am writing with regards to a claim made by the Conservative Police and Crime Commissioner Candidate, Jonathon Seed on his social media accounts in which he claimed to have a fully costed plan for 100 extra officers, approved by both the Chief Constable and the Chief Finance Officer (Annex A).

It is my understanding that the budget which comprises mainly from Central Government and the Council precept form the basis of funding for Wiltshire Police. Thus I would assume that Mr Seed's budget is based upon the current level of funding.

It is also my understanding that the Chief Constable and Chief Finance Officer would of course be involved in decisions with the incumbent PCC.

I would like to request the following information under the Freedom of Information Act:

1. Is the claim made by the Conservative PCC true, in that the Chief Constable and Chief Finance Officer have 'approved' a budget which was presented by Jonathon Seed.
2. It is normal practice for the Chief Constable and Chief Finance Officer to approve would-be budgets of candidates as well as doing so for the incumbent PCC?
3. Has the Chief Constable and Chief Finance Officer provided any of the other candidates with advice or approval in regard to spending plans should they be elected. If not, why not?
4. Does Mr. Seed's budget request a further increase in the police precept?
5. Can you please provide a copy of the approved budget as per Mr Seed's claim.

Response:

1. No information held

Under our Section 16 duty to provide advice and assistance, Wiltshire Police can provide the following statement: It is not the role of the Force to approve candidate manifestos or pledges, but to assist in discussing the feasibility and practicalities of such plans where invited to should that candidate take up the elected office of PCC and set the policing priorities for the Force.

2. No information held

Under our Section 16 duty to provide advice and assistance, Wiltshire Police can provide the following statement: All candidates running in the Wiltshire and Swindon Police and Crime Commissioner election are offered the same level of access to briefings with the Chief Constable and Deputy Chief Constable. The decision to take up the offer of briefings with the Force is a decision for each individual candidate. At these meetings the PCC candidate may choose to share their ideas and thinking with the Chief Constable and the Deputy Chief Constable. It is not the role of the Force to approve candidate manifestos or pledges, but to assist in discussing the feasibility and practicalities of such plans where invited to should that candidate take up the elected office of PCC and set the policing priorities for the Force.

3. No information held

Under our Section 16 duty to provide advice and assistance, Wiltshire Police can provide the following statement: All candidates running in the Wiltshire and Swindon Police and Crime Commissioner election are offered the same level of access to briefings with the Chief Constable and Deputy Chief Constable. The decision to take up the offer of briefings with the Force is a decision for each individual candidate. At the meetings the same briefing material is used to inform each candidate of matters relating to the Force.

4. No information held

5. No information held