

Our Ref: MS
Reply to: Mark Stokes
Dial: 01953 424455

16 March 2023

Dear Member of Public,

Freedom of Information Request FOI/OPCCN/218 – Outcome of Internal Review

Thank you for your Internal Review request dated 06 March 2023 regarding a Freedom of Information Request in which you asked for:

“Please can you send me copies of all of the survey submissions that were received from the residents of Norfolk, in regard to the increase in council tax for the police precept for 2023.

Also, can you please breakdown & itemise the following:-

- 1) the total amount of submissions received**
- 2) the total that were invalid & please state as to why they were invalid & mark those said submission copies by way of reference**
- 3) those which were valid & please state & mark them by way of reference**
- 4) of those which were valid, please state how many agreed & how many disagreed**
- 5) Please state how & by whom were these validated by?**
- 6) Are they readily available for inspection?”**

The purpose of an Internal Review is to assess how your Freedom of Information request was handled in the first instance and to determine whether the original decision given to you was correct. This is an independent review and I was not involved in the original decision.

The response to you on 03 March 2023 under reference number: FOI/OPCCN/218 is outlined below:

“We are unable to provide copies of the survey submissions that were received during the police precept consultation for 2023/24. This information is exempt from disclosure under section 40(2) of the FOI Act. This exempts personal data if disclosure would breach any of the data protection principles. This is because we have obligations under the Data Protection Act not to disclose, to a third party, personal information about another person(s). Whilst we do not request personal information as part of the consultation process, a significant number of submissions disclose potentially identifiable information. Additionally, the terms of the consultation states that where personal information is provided, we will ensure this is kept anonymous. Furthermore, under Section 14(1) of the FOI Act we are not obliged to disclose this information due to the level of burden upon the Office of the

Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk (OPCCN), as your request includes a substantial volume of information.

However, we are able to respond to your request as per below:

- 1. 1092 submissions were received.**
- 2. 204. These were invalid due to respondents not clicking 'submit' at the end of the survey online.**
- 3. There were 888 valid surveys.**
- 4. 453 of the valid submissions agreed with the proposed increase. 380 disagreed and 15 submissions neither agreed nor disagreed.**
- 5. The OPCCN uses 'Smart Survey' software to collect survey submissions. This software uses an automated system to validate the submissions based on whether the 'submit' button had been clicked or not as per point 2.**
- 6. No, as per exemptions stated above."**

I have assessed your case and after careful consideration, I have concluded that the initial response that was sent to you was compliant with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act. However, in your review request in reference to point 4 above, you state **"Your itemised figures DO NOT CORRELATE WITH THE PERCENTAGES THAT WERE GIVEN AT THE COUNCIL MEETING. There is a difference of 40 missing entries, please explain that?"** I have checked our records and due to a typographical error, we stated there were '15 submissions neither agreed nor disagreed' when the correct figure was 55. We apologise for this oversight and further state that this was not an incorrect number provided due to an error through Smart Survey, but rather an error upon the composition of our initial response to you.

The Smart Survey software is a reliable tool used by multiple agencies and public sector organisations. However, your additional queries regarding this tool would need to be submitted as a new Freedom of Information request as these cannot be dealt with within the review format. Alternatively for more information on Smart survey and how it works please visit their website here: [Online Survey Software and Questionnaire Tool - SmartSurvey](#)

Yours sincerely,

Mark Stokes
Chief Executive
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
For Norfolk

How to Appeal

If you remain dissatisfied after an internal review decision, you have the right to apply to the Information Commissioner's Office. The Commissioner is an independent regulator who has the

power to direct us to respond to your request differently, if he considers that we have handled it incorrectly.

You can contact the Information Commissioner's Office at the following address:

Information Commissioner's Office

Wycliffe House

Water Lane

Wilmslow

Cheshire

SK9 5AF

Internet contact via: <https://www.ico.org.uk>