

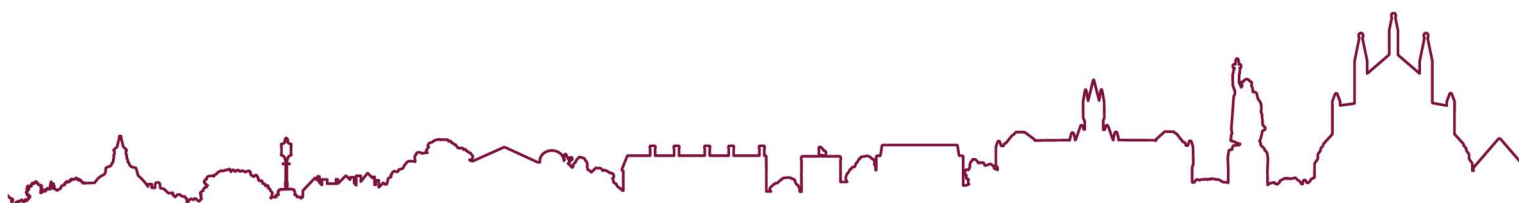
FOI REF:	14367
RESPONSE SENT:	20/06/24

Request:

This is a FOI request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

This FOI request pertains to your use of third-party investigative software, which considers software used to collect, analyse, and report on issues / breaches of policy in your council. Examples of this software include case management, financial investigation, digital forensics, and covert operations software. If some data is not available or falls under an exemption, please respond with the available information, and provide an explanation for each missing or exempted item.

1. Please list the departments that conduct investigations into issues / breaches of policy (e.g. for fraud, planning enforcement, licensing, etc.) in your council? – we do not have departments that investigate fraud
2. Please list the approximate number of FTEs (full time employees) that work on investigations in each department?
3. If not covered in question 1.a., please also note the number of total FTEs focused on fraud (and note the number of fraud specialists specifically) in your council?
4. Considering third-party investigative software (e.g. for case management, financial investigation, covert operations, etc.), is this software typically procured by a centralised council IT team or by each investigation department?
5. What was your councils overall spend on third-party investigative software last year? £...k
6. In percentage terms, approximately how has your overall spend on third-party investigative software, on an annual basis, changed over the past 3 years?
7. Why (e.g. increase in number of users within existing departments, increase in departments, adopting new software, price increases, etc.)?
8. Please populate the below table, specifying if your council uses the listed third-party investigative software categories, noting your annual spend for each and your current software provider(s) if so. Note that the total annual spend across the below categories should approximately sum to the overall annual spend on third-party investigative software, as per Q3.



Response:

1. All departments may from time to time carry out investigations in relation to their statutory functions. Southern Internal Audit Partnership provides an internal audit function for the council and investigate allegations of fraud when required.
2. This information is not held - investigation work would be spread over a number of roles.
3. As above
4. By each department
5. See exemption below
6. See exemption below
7. n/a
8. See table below



Category of investigative software	Description	Does your council use this type of software?	Approximate annual spend, £k, last available year	Name of your current software provider(s)	Response
Case management software	Software used as a central hub to manage cases (from incident to reporting), including to ingest and manage relevant evidence, track case progress, and prepare reports for court proceedings.	Yes or No?	£...k	Name	See exemption below
Financial investigation software	Software designed for extracting, cleaning, analysing and / or visualising financial data and information to investigate fraud or other financial crimes.				See exemption below
Covert operations software	Software for planning, managing, and executing covert operations, including surveillance management, undercover operations, intelligence gathering and secure communication tools.				See exemption below
Other investigative software	Please provide a high-level summary of what other includes: ...				See exemption below

We have responded to your request insofar as an exemption does not apply.

However, disclosure “to the world at large” as to whether or not the Council holds investigative software, and if so, the details of that software, is considered to prejudice the Council’s ability to prevent and detect crime.

This engages section 31(1) of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) which exempts information from disclosure where disclosure would prejudice or be likely to prejudice the prevention or detection of crime. Furthermore, section 31 (3) of FOIA states that



the duty to confirm or deny does not arise if, or to the extent that disclosure would or would be likely to, prejudice any of the matters mentioned in subsection (1).

It is therefore our view that in relation to your request, where indicated, we consider the information to be exempt and further, we refuse to confirm or deny whether the information is held, for the reasons explained above.

If you are unhappy with the way your request for information has been handled or dissatisfied with the outcome you can request a review by writing to the Service Lead: Legal at legal@winchester.gov.uk

If you remain dissatisfied with the handling of your request or complaint, you have a right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF Telephone: 0303 123 1113 Website: www.ico.org.uk

