

16th December 2020

Freedom of Information Request - Reference No: 20202490

REQUEST

I am looking into the arrests of young people for supplying drugs in England and Wales.

1) How many arrests have your police force made for the offences of
a) supplying controlled drugs or
b) possession with intent to supply controlled drugs
in the last four calendar years
(2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 so far)?

Please can you break this down by under 18s and over 18s and also by month.

RESPONSE

On 5th December 2017 South Yorkshire Police implemented a new recording system called Connect which replaces our Custody Handling System (CHS) . Arrest data prior to 5th December 2017 is held on our legacy system (CHS) and latest arrest data is held on our new CONNECT system, and therefore the data presentation will differ.

In order to assist me with your request, I contacted our Performance and Governance Custody Analyst for the CONNECT data, and a Service Delivery Administrator for the Custody Handling data.

The data provided from the Custody Handling system had *all* arrests in connection with drugs. I have therefore populated the data relevant to your request for 'supplying controlled drugs' or 'possession with intent to supply controlled drugs'.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires South Yorkshire Police, when refusing to provide such information (because the information is exempt), to provide you the applicant with a notice which:

- a. states that fact,
- b. specifies the exemption in question and
- c. states (if that would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemption applies.

The following exemption applies to the disclosure of the information:

Section 40 (2) – Personal Information

This is an absolute exemption and therefore a Public Interest Test is not relevant. However, for clarity, I will explain my rationale for engaging this exemption.

Section 40(2) provides that information is exempt if it is the personal data of someone other than the applicant and disclosure would breach any of the data protection principles. The

term 'personal data' means data that relates to a living individual who can be identified. This may take an obvious form of 'personal information' such as a name but can also include information which, if aggregated, can pinpoint an individual.

With this in mind, whilst not explicitly naming individuals, due to low numbers the cumulative effect would present the very real possibility of individuals involved being identified. To mitigate the harm of triggering S40 (2), I have provided the data in uncorrelated tables, and the ages yearly, rather than monthly.