



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Please note the text of this request has been reproduced exactly as received.

FOI Reference number: FOI 40/2023

Date: 19 September 2023

Request:

I'd like a copy of the minutes from today's meeting of the NIPB 31/08/2023.

Answer:

We can confirm that the Northern Ireland Policing Board holds information relevant to that which you have requested. However, we are withholding that information at this time since the exemption under section 22 of the FOIA (Information intended for future publication) applies to it.

A draft of the minutes has yet to be prepared by Board officials as such the finalised version of the minutes of this meeting is not yet available. Once the draft minutes become available they need to be ratified by the Board before they become 'final'. The minutes will then be published on the Board's website.

The section 22 exemption is a qualified exemption and is subject to consideration of a public interest test. This means that a public authority must determine whether, on balance, it considers it to be in the wider public interest to maintain the exemption, or to release the requested information. We have carried out a public interest test, (attached) and we are satisfied that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

If you have queries about this request or the decision, please contact the Board quoting the reference number above. If you are unhappy with the service you have received and wish to make a complaint or request a review you should contact the Board's Chief Executive -

Via Email: foi@nipolicingboard.org.uk

Or in writing at the following address:

Northern Ireland Policing Board
James House
Block D
2 – 4 Cromac Avenue
The Gasworks
Belfast
BT7 2JA

You should contact the Board within 40 working days of this response.

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner. Generally, the Information Commissioner's Office cannot investigate or make a decision on a case unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the Board. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at the following web link –

www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints

or in writing at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
SK9 5AF

Telephone: - 0303 1231114

Email: - ni@ico.org.uk

Please be advised that Policing Board replies under Freedom of Information may be released into the public domain via our website @ www.nipolicingboard.org.uk.

Personal details in respect of your request have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.

Exemption at Section 22 of the FOIA – Information Intended for Future Publication

PUBLIC INTEREST TEST CONSIDERATIONS

Requested information –

A copy of the minutes from today's meeting of the NIPB 31/08/2023.

Arguments that weigh in favour of disclosure

Release of the information would promote transparency, accountability and participation.

Providing the requested information is in line with the spirit of openness and transparency enshrined within FOI legislation.

Arguments that weigh in favour of maintenance of the exemption

A draft of the minutes has yet to be prepared by Board officials and as such the finalised version of the minutes of this meeting is not yet available.

Once prepare the draft minutes have to be shared with the 3rd party who attended the meeting for comment on their input at the meeting. The 3rd party may recommend the information contained in the draft be amended.

Following consultation with the 3rd party, draft minutes of the meeting will be presented to the Policing Board for the consideration of Members. Subject to their approval the minutes will become 'final' and will then be published on the Board's website.

It is the intention of the Board to publish the minutes as soon as reasonably possible.

The Board should not place information in the public domain that may be inaccurate and subject to future amendment.

Decision

In all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.