

Access to Public Information Response

March 23rd 2016

REQUEST UNDER THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR ACCESS TO PUBLIC INFORMATION

Request sent on March 23rd 2016:

Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing to find out if you could provide me with some information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. I am seeking the following information within your area:

1. In the 12 months ending 31st December 2015 how many cases were received by the police; investigated; and referred to the CPS for prosecution, in which neglect and/or abuse of an older person was a feature.
2. In the 12 months ending 31st December 2015 on how many occasions was a police decision taken not to refer to the CPS but to instead issue a police caution, in cases involving the abuse or neglect of an older person?
3. What guidance has been issued to police officers in relation to investigating and seeking prosecution of crimes against older people?
4. What guidance has been issued specifically in relation to the CPS policy document on prosecuting crimes against older people?
5. In the 12 months ending 31st December 2015 on how many occasions was common law or PACE used to afford access to premises where vulnerable individuals were considered to be at risk.

I would like the above information to be provided to me as **electronic copies**.

If this request is too wide or unclear, I would be grateful if you could contact me as I understand that under the Act, you are required to advise and assist requesters. If any of this information is already in the public domain, please can you direct me to it, with page references and URLs if necessary?

If the release of any of this information is prohibited on the grounds of breach of confidence, I ask that you supply me with copies of the confidentiality agreement and

remind you that information should not be treated as confidential if such an agreement has not been signed.”

States of Guernsey response sent 15th April 2016:

I have spoken to various officers who either work on stat-collection for law enforcement, or specifically deal with these sorts of investigations, but unfortunately I am not in a position to provide you with the detailed stats you've requested.

Being a relatively small police service, we do not keep standalone stats that would answer your questions. For example, in order to determine how many investigations had involved the neglect or abuse of an older person, we would have to search for all aggrieved persons over the age of 65 and then manually go through each incident file to see if they involved neglect or abuse.

However, while I unable to provide a definitive stat taken from the system, having spoken to both CID and our Public Protection Unit, which would deal with such investigations, we do not believe there were any investigations in 2015 whereby an over-65 was alleged to have been either abused or neglected.

We did have a case in 2015 where a care worker was jailed for two-and-a-half years for stealing £50,000 from an elderly dementia sufferer they were looking after. While not directly abuse or neglect related, it is an example of an investigation relating to a vulnerable elderly person. Again, we don't have official standalone stats but investigations of this nature, while by no means common in a small island community, do occur from time-to-time and would by their very nature be high profile.

Officers have received guidance to help them assess vulnerability. Factors such as age, disability, race, gender, sexuality and religion can all influence the level of vulnerability of a victim. Vulnerability is assessed from the point of view of the victim and this assessment will determine the scale of response by Guernsey Police. Those deemed the most vulnerable will receive a service in which we utilise the support of partner agencies.

An over 65 potential abuse or neglect victim would be considered very vulnerable and therefore officers would ensure the necessary support and safeguards were put in place for them. Instances such as this are treated as a high priority by the service.