| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 23-0949  Responded to: 30 May 2023 |
| --- | --- |

Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding.

If you require any further assistance please contact us quoting the reference above.

**I would like to make an FOI request as to the costs of the xxxxx xxxxxx SNP Chairman investigation. In particular, I would like to know the cost to the taxpayer of the full investigation and the number of police officers involved.**

**Clarification received.**

**It was an FOI request with regards to the arrest of Mr xxxxxxx thanks, but of course yes, any information you can supply in addition regarding the 'investigation' into Scotland's largest political party - the SNP would indeed be very welcomed.**

In relation to your request for *“any information you can supply in addition regarding the investigation”,* I regret to inform you that I am unable to provide you with the requested information, as it would prove too costly to do so within the context of the fee regulations.

As you may be aware the current cost threshold is £600/40 hours and I estimate that it would cost well in excess of this amount to process your request. As such, and in terms of Section 16(4) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 where Section 12(1) of the Act (Excessive Cost of Compliance) has been applied, this represents a refusal notice for the information sought.

By way of explanation, there are large numbers of files containing thousands of emails and documents which would need to be checked. If it takes 5 minutes to examine 1 email/document, we have assessed that this would take a considerable amount of time and therefore would be in excess of the £600 and 40 hours prescribed by the Scottish Ministers under the Act.

With regards to costs for the investigation, I can advise that Police Scotland does not hold all of the above requested information.

In terms of Section 17 of the Act, this letter represents a formal notice that information is not held.

By way of explanation, the total costs relating to any investigation, both relating to the investigation itself and the number of hours involved, are difficult to quantify as the nature of policing means that officers are deployed to wherever their services are most required.

Furthermore, the number of officers required throughout an investigation will fluctuate and officers involved in a particular investigation, or multiple investigations, can be redeployed to other duties at any time, dependant on their skillsets.

Police Scotland, may keep limited records for investigations, which record overtime costs and non-pay costs. These costs do not provide an accurate reflection of the total number of hours spent on an investigation nor do they provide, for the reasons stated above, an accurate cost for an investigation. The costs do not include, for example, officer hours where that officer would have been on duty anyway and as such are not recorded as a specific expense to a particular investigation.

However, to be of assistance, I can confirm the recorded costs held by Police Scotland to 30 April 2023 in relation to the investigation into the funding and finances of the Scottish National Party are as follows;

Police Overtime – £43,981.03

I can provide an estimated salary costing which is based on the top point of each ranks pay scale. The estimated costs salary costs are £551,662.53 to 31 March 2023. This does not include National Insurance and pension contributions.

**Finally, I would like to know who sanctioned the said investigation.**

Regarding the arrest of a 58 year old man on Wednesday, 5 April 2023 in connection with the ongoing investigation into the funding and finances of the Scottish National Party. I can confirm that this investigation was conducted by officers from the Specialist Crime Division of Police Scotland, in consultation and liaison with the Crown Office and Procurators Fiscal Service and utilising powers provided under the terms of a court authorised search warrant.

You can request a review of this response within the next 40 working days by [email](mailto:foi@scotland.police.uk) or by letter (Information Management - FOI, Police Scotland, Clyde Gateway, 2 French Street, Dalmarnock, G40 4EH). Requests must include the reason for your dissatisfaction.

If you remain dissatisfied following our review response, you can appeal to the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner (OSIC) within 6 months - [online](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal), by [email](mailto:enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info) or by letter (OSIC, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, KY16 9DS).

Following an OSIC appeal, you can appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law only.

This response will be added to our [Disclosure Log](http://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/freedom-of-information/disclosure-log) in seven days' time.

Every effort has been taken to ensure our response is as accessible as possible. If you require this response to be provided in an alternative format, please let us know.