

Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)

Decision notice

Date: 20 May 2020

Public Authority: Chief Constable of Leicestershire Police
Address: Police HQ
Enderby, Leicester
LE19 2BX
(email: foi@leicestershire.pnn.police.uk)

Decision (including any steps ordered)

1. The complainant made multiple requests for information about the policing of fox hunting activities by Leicestershire Police. Leicestershire Police decided that the requests were vexatious and refused to comply with them, relying on the section 14(1) (vexatious requests) FOIA exemption.
2. The Commissioner's decision is that the requests were vexatious and that Leicestershire Police had acted correctly in refusing them.
3. The Commissioner did not require Leicestershire Police to take any steps to comply with the legislation.

Request and response

4. The complainant wrote to Leicestershire Police (LP) with a set of requests, nine in all, made between 17 September 2019 and 11 November 2019 on matters either directly or indirectly related to fox hunting. The text of these is set out in the Annex at the end of this Notice.
5. LP responded on 2 December 2019 and told the complainant that her requests were vexatious; LP refused to comply with them citing the

section 14(1) FOIA exemption and confirmed its decision following an internal review.

Scope of the case

6. The complainant contacted the Commissioner on 30 December 2019 to complain about the way her request for information had been handled. She said that she was conducting research across various authorities and had not expected to suffer what amounted to a smear campaign as a result.
7. The Commissioner considered representations from both parties and has considered evidence provided by them. She has had regard for information on the LP website and has viewed information referred to by the complainant in her earlier correspondence with LP and which the complainant has caused to be displayed on the WhatDoTheyKnow website.¹
8. The Commissioner proceeded to determine the application by LP of the section 14(1) FOIA exemption and whether or not the requests had been vexatious.

Reasons for decision

Section 14 – vexatious requests

9. Section 14(1) FOIA states that

"Section 1(1) does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the request is vexatious."

10. The term 'vexatious' is not defined in FOIA. The Upper Tribunal (Information Rights) considered in some detail the issue of vexatious requests in the case of the *Information Commissioner v Devon CC & Dransfield (GIA/3037/2011)*. In *Dransfield* the Tribunal commented that vexatious could be defined as the "*manifestly unjustified, inappropriate or improper use of a formal procedure*". The Tribunal's definition clearly

¹ https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/notifiable_associations_the_code

establishes that the concepts of proportionality and justification are relevant to any consideration of whether or not a request is vexatious.

11. In *Dransfield*, the Upper Tribunal also found it instructive to assess the question of whether a request is truly vexatious by considering four broad issues: (1) the burden imposed by the request (on the public authority and its staff); (2) the motive of the requester; (3) the value or serious purpose of the request and (4) harassment or distress of and to staff.
12. The Upper Tribunal in *Dransfield* did, however, caution that these considerations were not meant to be exhaustive. Rather, it stressed the:

"importance of adopting a holistic and broad approach to the determination of whether a request is vexatious or not, emphasising the attributes of manifest unreasonableness, irresponsibility and especially where there is a previous course of dealings, the lack of proportionality that typically characterise vexatious requests" (paragraph 45).

13. The Commissioner has identified a number of "indicators" which may be useful in identifying vexatious requests. These indicators are set out in her published guidance on vexatious requests². In brief, they consist of, in no particular order: abusive or aggressive language; burden on the authority; personal grudges; unreasonable persistence; unfounded accusations; intransigence; frequent or overlapping requests; deliberate intention to cause annoyance; scattergun approach; disproportionate effort; no obvious intent to obtain information; futile requests; and, frivolous requests. The fact that a request contains one or more of these indicators will not necessarily mean that it must be vexatious.
14. When considering the application of section 14(1), a public authority can consider the context of the request and the history of its relationship with the requester, as the Commissioner's guidance explains:

"The context and history in which a request is made will often be a major factor in determining whether the request is vexatious, and the public authority will need to consider the wider circumstances

² <https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1198/dealingwithvexatiousrequests.pdf>

surrounding the request before making a decision as to whether section 14(1) applies”.

15. In the Commissioner’s view, section 14(1) FOIA is designed to protect public authorities by allowing them to refuse any requests which have the potential to cause a disproportionate or unjustified level of disruption, irritation or distress. This will usually involve weighing the evidence about the impact on the authority and balancing this against the purpose and value of the request. This should be judged as objectively as possible; in other words, whether or not a reasonable person would think that its purpose and value are enough to justify the impact on the public authority.
16. In particular, the Commissioner accepts that there may be cases where a request could be considered to be vexatious because the amount of time required to review and prepare the information for disclosure would place a grossly oppressive burden on the public authority. This is the position adopted by LP in this case.
17. The Commissioner believes that there is a high threshold for refusing a request on such grounds. This means that a public authority is most likely to have a viable case where:
 - the requester has asked for a substantial volume of information and
 - the authority has real concerns about potentially exempt information, which it will be able to substantiate if asked to do so by the Commissioner, and
 - any potentially exempt information cannot easily be isolated because it is scattered throughout the requested material.

The complainant’s view

18. The complainant told the Commissioner that LP was ignoring the FOIA requirement³ that :

“Anyone can ask for information from a public authority. One does not have to have a particular status or relationship with the public authority, nor does it matter how the requester intends to use the information - disclosure under the FOIA is said to be applicant and

³ <https://www.mrs.org.uk/pdf/foi2006.pdf>

purpose blind. The identity of the requester and use to which information may be put are not grounds for withholding information."

19. She added that LP was perverting the FOIA process due to false assumptions made about her personally. She said she was conducting research across various public authorities and did not expect to suffer what she considered to be to a smear campaign as a result.

LP's view

20. LP said in a statement of its policy⁴ for policing fox hunting that:

"Our operational response to Hunting is based on advice from the national Police Chief lead, which recognises that hunting with hounds is an emotive subject, bringing with it support, opposition and commentary from a wide spectrum of society, amplified by social media in this modern policing world.

We acknowledge the provisions of the Hunting Act 2004 which legitimise certain types of hunting.

We acknowledge, in equal measure, that those who are opposed to hunting have the right to protest.

Like all police forces in whose areas there are hunts, we tread a fine line between protecting these contrasting rights. We do not, and will not, take sides. We aim to maximise public safety, to facilitate lawful protest, to minimise disruption to our communities, and to provide an appropriate operational and investigative response to reports of unlawful activity.

We are fully committed to investigate and, where evidence exists, to bring to justice any person found breaking the law.

As in previous years, we will have an active presence of well-trained officers at organised trail laying events during this coming season. They have a detailed knowledge of the Hunting Act, and of many other pieces of legislation, and will be able to determine whether offences have been committed. The role of these officers on the day of the hunt is to engage with participants from both sides at the meet and to ensure that the activity being carried out is being done so within the parameters of the law. They are also there to give reassurance and prevent incidents of disorder.

We will pursue with equal vigour those who engage in unlawful hunting and those who engage in illegal activity to prevent hunting.

⁴ <https://www.leics.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/ac/lei/our-position-on-hunting-with-hounds/>

...

For several years the force has worked hard to engage with those who hunt, and with those who seek to protest. We will continue to engage with all parties and will offer consultation events for parties to meet with us before the start of the season. This will provide an opportunity for us to listen to any concerns and to describe how our hunting operation will work this year."

21. LP maintained, in representations to the Commissioner, that for it to comply with the request in full would be burdensome and would require disproportionate effort.
22. LP said that the complainant had created a **burden** for it as she had submitted nine requests within a 60 day timeframe between 17 September 2019 and 11 November 2019. Some of these requests were lengthy, descriptive, and covered the Hunting Act 2004 and offences related to it, in detail. The remaining requests had been indirectly hunt related and some were targeted at named LP Rural Crime Officers who regularly policed hunts. The vast expanse of information requested would require a large amount of research by its various hunt specialists thereby, imposing a burden on LP's officers.
23. As regards the **motive** of the complainant, LP said that it was clear from the nature of her requests that she was affiliated to the hunt saboteur movement. The tone of her emails and questions were significantly forthright and judgmental of LP and outlined preconceived views of its policing of hunts; this had remained unchanged, despite LP's compliance with previous requests.
24. The complainant had also emailed a number of LP's officers, including the Chief Constable, expressing derogatory views towards it. LP believed this background information detracted from the value of her current set of requests. As evidence, LP provided sample copies of emails received from her which it argued, evidenced a motive and a campaign of dissatisfaction against LP, its policing of hunts, and against named officers.
25. With regard to the **value or serious purpose** of the requests, LP said they could be described as both a fishing expedition and a campaign of dissatisfaction with LP which did not correlate with the true purpose of FOIA, i.e. to achieve transparency. LP added that the requests seemed to it to be designed to try to reveal LP tactics and other information relating to its enforcement of the Hunting Act 2004 and to find fault with the conduct of LP officers.
26. LP added that it was held to account by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicestershire and the Independent Office for Police

Conduct. This pre-existing accountability reduced the value of the requests. LP said it openly published information relating to Hunt statistics and therefore provided open and transparent policing of this matter which reduced the value of these requests. It had answered previous FOIA requests giving the complainant statistical and other information.

27. LP saw as **forthright and judgmental** many of the direct email approaches by the complainant to individual LP officers, including the Chief Constable. LP said, with supporting evidence, that the complainant's emails had shown considerable distrust of, and dislike for, certain named officers. This had led LP to be concerned for the wellbeing of some individuals. LP said there had been many such communications. They were a distraction which detracted from its law enforcement role.
28. LP provided examples from correspondence including some with the Chief Constable, which had included many other similarly offensive emails. Examples included:

"I've seen so much blatant disregard from police officers for the laws they're paid to uphold that I now have neither faith nor trust in any of you. I doubt you'll take action as a result of this email but at least I'll have had the satisfaction of speaking truth to power."

"That does your force no credit and I now justifiably regard the entire force as corrupt and complicit in covering up internal corruption. Not one person in Leicestershire police cares about 'right or wrong', only about never being exposed as a 'rotten orchard'. I had an honourable career and coming to grips with people of your mindset has been unconscionable. I have certainly learned from it and would now counsel any person seeking help from police to avoid so doing so at all costs as it is a wasted endeavour."

"I am now fully aware that not one person in your force from [the Chief Constable] down has any interest in: professional pride; upholding the law; protecting rights; protecting the weak; respecting the truth; honour; decency; openness. None of you are even embarrassed by that. I have wasted years trying to locate even one person in your force with any of those qualities and I finally admit my abject failure."

"I now justifiably regard the entire force as corrupt and complicit in covering up internal corruption."

The Commissioner's position

29. In her representations, the complainant said she was concerned that LP made false assumptions that she belonged to a hunt saboteur group and

felt there was a smear campaign against her. This had led to her requests being refused - something LP denied.

30. The Commissioner noted that the need to protect public authorities' resources from unreasonably resource-consuming requests is recognised in the section 12 FOIA (cost of compliance) exemption and was acknowledged by the Upper Tribunal in *Dransfield* when it defined the purpose of section 14 FOIA as:

"Section 14...is concerned with the nature of the request and has the effect of disapplying the citizen's right under Section 1(1)...The purpose of Section 14...must be to protect the resources (in the broadest sense of that word) of the public authority from being squandered on disproportionate use of FOIA..." (paragraph 10).

31. The Commissioner reviewed the evidence for the extent of any **burden** which the requests imposed on LP.
32. The Commissioner has seen that there were nine requests made within a 60 day period. She accepted LP's evidence that complying with the requests would involve it in a substantial amount of work, in the light of the frequency of the requests and the wide scope of several of them - which had followed on from earlier requests and correspondence.
33. As regards LP's concerns about **offensive language**, the Commissioner has noted the concerns shown by the complainant for the apparent suffering of, and cruelty to, foxes that had allegedly been killed by hounds within fox hunts. Something which is proscribed by the Hunting Act 2004.
34. She has also noted the personally insulting tone of many of the complainant's emails to the Chief Constable and other emails in a similar vein to, and about, other LP officers whose duties included policing of fox hunting meets.
35. The Commissioner was satisfied that the complainant's FOIA requests showed evidence of **personal grudges** in her emailed accusations about certain named officers. The complainant was apparently not willing to accept the results of LP's investigations of her accusations against the individuals. Overall the Commissioner is satisfied that the complainant's behaviour towards LP (both individually and collectively), had been offensive and went beyond what the police should reasonably be expected to tolerate. The Commissioner has noted some relevant LP concerns, presented with supporting evidence, for the wellbeing of some individuals.

36. The **frequent and overlapping** information requests from the complainant evidence an **obsessive and unreasonably persistent** approach in her contacts with LP on the subject of policing fox hunts.
37. The Commissioner found that the complainant's email contacts with LP officers, including the Chief Constable contained **unfounded accusations of bias and corruption**. The Commissioner was satisfied from her investigation that the complainant's emails, especially those to the Chief Constable, could reasonably be said to be evidence of an **intention to cause annoyance**.
38. LP said that it published statistical and other information about hunting activities and was transparent about its policing of fox hunting activity. However, the Commissioner found during her investigation that such information was not readily accessible, for example, from LP's website. She therefore found that the complainant's concerns of a lack of transparency by LP about aspects of its policing of hunting activities were, to some extent, factually based.
39. From her investigation, the Commissioner acknowledged the seriousness of the complainant's purpose and her concerns to prevent avoidable cruelty being inflicted on foxes. However, the Commissioner did not accept that LP's refusal of the request under section 14 of the FOIA amounted to a 'smear campaign' against her. The Commissioner found, that LP were correct to say that the excessive use of FOIA requests by the complainant to draw attention to her concerns, when viewed in conjunction with the robust and obsessive nature of her contacts with, and public statements about, LP and individual officers amounted to an abuse of the FOIA process and could reasonably be characterised as having been vexatious.
40. Taking all of the evidence before her into consideration, the Commissioner found that the purpose and value of the requests was not justified and a manifestly inappropriate or improper use of the formal FOIA procedure. As such these requests did not justify the burden of disruption, irritation and distress they placed on LP and its staff. The Commissioner therefore decided that the requests had been vexatious within the meaning of section 14(1) FOIA.

Other matters

41. During her investigation, the Information Commissioner observed references in LP's internal email traffic and in its emails to the complainant saying that LP regarded her as vexatious. For the avoidance of doubt, the Commissioner

makes clear that the nature of the complainant is something about which she has not formed any view and will not do so.

42. However the Commissioner has reminded LP that, for the purposes of section 14(1) FOIA, the term 'vexatious' applies to an *information request*, and not to the *individual* who submits it.

Right of appeal

43. Either party has the right to appeal against this decision notice to the First-tier Tribunal (Information Rights). Information about the appeals process may be obtained from:

First-tier Tribunal (Information Rights)
GRC & GRP Tribunals,
PO Box 9300,
LEICESTER,
LE1 8DJ

Tel: 0300 1234504

Fax: 0870 739 5836

Email: grc@justice.gov.uk

Website: www.justice.gov.uk/tribunals/general-regulatory-chamber

44. If you wish to appeal against a decision notice, you can obtain information on how to appeal along with the relevant forms from the Information Tribunal website.
45. Any Notice of Appeal should be served on the Tribunal within 28 (calendar) days of the date on which this decision notice is sent.

Signed

Dr Roy Wernham
Senior Case Officer
Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Annex

Information requests made by the complainant to LP

The complainant made the following requests to LP:

1. 3476/19 – Received 17th September 2019
2. 3547/19 – Received 24th September 2019
3. 3551/20 – Received 25th September 2019
4. 3588/19 – Received 25th September 2019
5. 3836/19 – Received 14th October 2019
6. 3968/19 – Received 24th October 2019
7. 3970/19 – Received 24th October 2019
8. 4053/19 – Received 30th October 2019
9. 4198/19 – Received 11th November 2019

These were:

Request 3476/19:

1. Please advise what steps have been taken within your force to ensure that a Code of Ethics exists which makes provision for conflicts of interest in matters where allegations of illegal hunting or cub hunting have been made.

2. Please advise if officers seeking to work on rural crime teams should be requested to voluntarily declare any membership of or association with hunts, regardless of hunting within the parameters of the Hunting Act 2004 being legal; such declarations being seen as goodwill and in the spirit of keeping your force from disrepute in the public mind.

Request 3547/19:

Please provide the following information in respect of [names redacted].

1. Please provide, by year since 2010, the number of reports of offences under the Hunting Act allocated to [names redacted] for investigation.

2. Please provide, by year since 2010, the number of reports of offences under the Hunting Act allocated to [names redacted] that resulted in investigations.

3. Please provide, by year since 2010, the number of reports of offences under the Hunting Act allocated to [names redacted] that resulted in charging decisions.

4. Please provide, by year since 2010, the number of reports of offences under the Hunting Act allocated to [names redacted] that did not result in charging decisions, with the reasons for no further action being taken.

5. Please confirm if [names redacted] are assigned to Rural Crime teams or whether they volunteered to carry out such duties as part of their standard work.

6. I am aware that [names redacted] have personal opinions and associations which reflect support of foxhunting and shooting as rural activities. Are such opinions and associations required to be declared by your force under the Code of Ethics and Declaration of Interest Policy? If so, have [names redacted] made such declarations?

7. Please confirm the number of officers within your force attached to Rural Crime team/s and provide names and collar numbers.

8. Please confirm the training given to officers seeking to join or whom [sic] are already attached to Rural Crime team/s and who provides such training.

9. Please advise if the Hunt Saboteur Association is currently deemed to be a Domestic Terrorism organisation by your force, has ever been regarded as such or is in process of being categorised as such.

Request 3551/19:

1. What is your policy on officers employed by your force being permitted to work for a wage, benefits in kind or as volunteers in any form of secondary or extra job?

2. Are such officers required to declare to you should they decide to participate in any form of employment paid/benefits in kind or as volunteers, in order to validate that the secondary or additional work does not present an active or potential conflict with their main role as police officers?

3. If there is a policy, what would be the position of officers who carry out any form of secondary or voluntary work, paid/unpaid/benefits in kind, but do not declare to you that they so participate?

4. If there is a policy, what would be the position of officers who carry out any form of secondary or voluntary work, paid/unpaid/benefits in kind, in the certain knowledge or high risk that their additional/secondary or voluntary occupation is likely to create a conflict of interest with their main role as police officers?

5. If there is a policy, would there be any exclusions or caveats which permit such officers to carry out such work on the basis that they are gathering intelligence or information of use to your force in operations such as Operation Blackthorn or similar operations (Operation Yarder) in other force areas?

Request 3588/19:

This video records the kill of a fox by a hunt at [name redacted] in your force area on 26 January 2016.

<https://youtu.be/GdEcBRk5U0Y>

I provide this as the body of the animal was sent for autopsy and the results were published when received.

The autopsy (which included photos of the process) stated as follows:

'Fox had signs of multiple bites and tearing injuries to the head, abdomen and chest typical of a hound kill.

'The cause of death was a bite across the chest which collapsed both lungs and damaged a pulmonary vein.

'There were tearing injuries in the muscles of the neck. The abdomen had been torn open and the intestines and one kidney partially removed from the abdomen. The scrotum was torn and the testicles exposed. The spine was broken at L2 vertebrae. There was blood in the trachea to suggest the fox was still alive when the chest was damaged.

'The fox would have been in extreme pain and suffering for about three minutes.

'The spinal injury was caused by the hounds throwing it in the air prior to death and would have caused extreme pain and suffering. The abdominal injuries were mostly post mortem'.

I mention this information as a separate fox kill by a different hunt occurred on 16 February 2019 and again the body of the animal was sent for autopsy.

The autopsy report was not released by your force; instead a short statement was made as follows:

'A post mortem carried out on the carcass determined the fox had not died as a result of an attack by another animal.'

An approach for full details, with email attachments (comprising offensive screenshots from pro-hunting social media groups regarding the fox corpse and blaming Hunt Saboteurs for substituting a previously-

killed fox instead of the genuine corpse) was made via email to Chief Constable [name redacted], as below:

Re: <https://www.leicestermercury.co.uk/news/leicester-news/police-reveal-results-post-mortem-2998127>

Your force has been unresponsive to my requests for a full statement of the contents of the autopsy report. There is little logic in commissioning an autopsy without providing the actual cause of death of the subject animal, and it is a matter of public interest to see this information.

Stating what it apparently did not die from is not an example of openness and transparency - rather, it suggests that the cause of death is being withheld.

You may be unaware of the online gloatings in the pro hunt community as a result, and the puerile material circulated which states that hunts never kill foxes but that there is a 'Foxicle' named 'Oscar' which is thawed and re-frozen by saboteurs in order to salt the battlefield at a kill. I attach examples.

Please do me the courtesy of viewing all the attached images so that you see the level of commentary from pro hunt groups. There's a great deal more equally pernicious material re 'planted' fox corpses in the same vein.

I am sure you will agree that these false claims and perverted jokes inflame the situation by firing up hunt ferals and stupid people to take them seriously and turn violent as a result. At least I assume you will agree.

It is therefore appropriate that full facts are published to eradicate rumour and inflammatory mischief-making.

Please provide the unredacted autopsy report to local media so that all the facts are known to all concerned and lodged in the public domain'.

The above email resulted in the following response:

'Thanks for your email. We do not release Post Mortem reports to the media due to the type of material and potentially upsetting nature that is often contained in these kinds of reports.

[name redacted].

Chief Constable

Leicestershire Police'

Given that the post mortem from 2016 with graphic details was released to the public domain, the release of the post mortem from 2019 describing the cause of death of a fox NOT killed by dogs is unlikely to be as graphic or distressing.

The inappropriate reaction of pro-hunt groups which comprises false claims of hunt saboteurs tampering with the corpse of the 2019 kill is highly likely to result in retaliatory attacks from hunt supporters and that is undesirable.

Please therefore publish via appropriate media the UNredacted autopsy of the 2019 kill.

Request 3836/19:

Further to successful FOI requests made to APHA re the importation of trail fluid, please respond to the following:

- 1. Since 2010, how many reports of cubbing / illegal foxhunting have been made to your force?*
- 2. Since 2010, how many of those reports have been resolved as trail hunting?*
- 3. Since 2010, how many of those investigations resolved as trail hunting have included proof seen and verified by police of the purchase/acquisition of trail fluid for use in said trail hunting?*

Request 3968/19:

Please provide the full list of awards at this ceremony, with the recipient(s) for each and a summary of the actions/conduct/achievements which resulted in each award.

Request 3970/19:

Please respond to the following:

- 1. Please provide a copy of your force's standard job description of the role and responsibilities of a Rural Crime Team officer and/or Wildlife officer.*
- 2. Please state what (if any) qualifications are required or expected to be acquired for effective performance in the job.*
- 3. Are current Rural Crime Team members of any rank attached to any current police operations?*
- 4. Are current Rural Crime Team members of any rank expected or required to liaise with or become members of rural groups such as Young Farmers, National Farmers Union, Countryside Alliance or similar, for the purpose of information gathering?*

Request 4053/19:

- 1. Between 1 January 2015 to current date (30 October 2019), how many reports of social media crimes such as stalking/harassment/malicious communications/sending offensive & threatening messages over a public electronic communications network such as Twitter or Facebook have been reported to your force?*
- 2. Between 1 January 2015 to current date (30 October 2019), how many reports of social media crimes such as stalking/harassment/malicious communications/sending offensive & threatening messages over a public electronic communications network such as Twitter or Facebook have been resolved and closed?*
- 3. Of such reports, how many were closed on the basis of no case to answer/no crime committed?*
- 4. Of such reports, how many resulted in action being taken against the alleged perpetrators reported?*
- 5. Of such reports, were the victims requested to make statements with a view to prosecution?*
- 6. Of such reports, how many resulted in successful prosecution of the perpetrators?*
- 7. Of such successful prosecutions, were the victim's experiences analysed to inform officers and civilian personnel for future reference of the negative effects of social media crime on the victims?*

Request 4198/19:

With reference to:

*<https://apccs.police.uk/role-of-the-pcc/>
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collection...>*

and

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publicatio...>

Please respond to the following:

- 1. Please provide the list of priorities, by type of crime, which your force is instructed to abide by when allocating investigative resource; specifically to include the priorities of social media crime, wildlife crime, domestic terrorism, and breaches of the Hunting Act.*
- 2. I note that breaches of the Hunting Act are not recordable crimes as per the police/Home Office Orange Book. Why is that omission in place, and do you have plans to make hunting crime recordable for your force to deliver open, transparent and fair policing?*

3. Are there any Operations running in your force or as a cross-border collaboration with other forces which target hunt saboteurs?

4. Are there, or have there ever been, any Operations running or about to run in your force or as a cross-border collaboration with other forces which focus in any way on information gathering/sharing for the purpose of classifying/recommending for classification and/or proscription of the Hunt Saboteur Association as Domestic Terrorists?

5. Are there, or have there ever been, any discussions between you and/or your office/staff with any other police force/government agency/political party/the Home Office and/or members of the current Conservative government which focus(ed) in any way on information gathering/sharing for the purpose of classifying/recommending for classification and/or proscription of the Hunt Saboteur Association as Domestic Terrorists?

6. Are there, or have there ever been, any discussions between you and/or your office/staff with the Countryside Alliance and/or Vote OK (<https://www.vote-ok.co.uk>) which focus(ed) in any way on information gathering/sharing for the purpose of classifying/recommending for classification and/or proscription of the Hunt Saboteur Association as Domestic Terrorists?