

16<sup>th</sup> March 2015

I write following your FOI request dated 11<sup>th</sup> February 2015 in which you request;

*Please can you provide me with details on the following:  
Has Cleveland Police and Crime Commissioner Barry Copping appointed an external company to field media inquiries?  
If so, is this on an ad hoc or permanent basis?  
If ad hoc, how many times has the external company been used, and the cost on each occasion.  
If permanent, what is the cost of the contract?*

This request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Regarding your request I can now inform you that I have completed my enquiries and that my reply on behalf of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland is as follows.

I can confirm that the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland does hold this information.

I will respond in order.

The Police and Crime Commissioner has not appointed an external company to field media enquiries. The Commissioner utilises, on a day to day basis, the Corporate Communications Team of Cleveland Police for general media and corporate communication enquiries.

When the PCC model was introduced, and the Commissioner elected, he inherited the resources of the former Police Authority which included the facility for independent media advice.

This ensures the Commissioner can take advice where specific professional support is required and / or where there may be a need for the Commissioner and Chief Constable to communicate messages to the public of Cleveland which are not the same – for example, in relation to the Commissioner's scrutiny of Cleveland Police.

The position was advertised in August 2013 at a rate of £45 per hour, which is in-line with NUJ rates for freelance journalists, as a 'call off' contract, providing strategic advice as and when required by the Commissioner or in circumstances where it would not be professionally appropriate to commission the service from the Force via the joint communications team.

The Strategic Media Advisor works when required and therefore on a part time permanent contract. The post holder is contractually free to work for other organisations and is not required to work exclusively for the Cleveland OPCC.

The Strategic Media Advisor is employed under a contract of service and receives the same employment conditions and in a similar manner to other Police Support Staff. As such, the post holder has undergone vetting and receives remuneration through the usual Police payroll system, via timesheets submitted as and when they are required to undertake work. Any remuneration is subject to the deduction of National Insurance contributions, Income Tax and Pension contributions as is the case for any other employee. Between, January 2014 to the end of February 2015 the Strategic Media Advisor has been paid gross remuneration of £13,351.50.

I can confirm that the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland has a FOI complaints procedure.

If you are unhappy with the way your request for information has been handled, you can request a review by writing to:

Mr Simon Dennis, Solicitor  
Chief of Staff  
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland  
Police Headquarters  
Ladgate Lane  
Middlesbrough  
TS8 9EH

or you can follow the complaints procedure found on our website at: [www.cleveland.pcc.police.uk](http://www.cleveland.pcc.police.uk)

If you remain dissatisfied with the handling of your request or complaint, you have a right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at:

The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Telephone: 08456 30 60 60 or 01625 54 57 45 Website: [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)

There is no charge for making an appeal.

John Bage  
Office Manager