



Information Governance Team

Postal Address:
Coventry City Council
PO Box 15
Council House
Coventry
CV1 5RR

www.coventry.gov.uk

E-mail: infogov@coventry.gov.uk

Phone: 024 7697 5408

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Dear Sir/Madam

Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)

Request ID: FOI591231525

Thank you for your request for information relating to Council data breaches since 2020.

You have requested the following information:

Under the Freedom of Information Act, I would like to request the following information.

- **The number of data breaches your council has been victim to in the 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 calendar years.**
- **How many people were affected by each data breach.**
- **What type of data breach each one was.**

A data breach is when sensitive, protected or confidential data is copied, transmitted, viewed, stolen, altered or used by an individual who is unauthorised to do so. It includes:

- **Malware attack**
- **Phishing attack**
- **Brute force attack**
- **SQL injection attack**
- **Business Email Compromise (BEC)**
- **Stolen information**

The Council have interpreted your request to mean breaches which are a result of cyber incidents. The Council under Section 31(3) neither confirms nor denies whether the information you have requested exists or is held by us.

The information you have requested is exempt from disclosure under Section 31(1)(a) and Section 31 (3) of the FOIA Act 2000. Section 31 of the FOIA relates to Law Enforcement and Section 31(3) removes the public authority's duty to confirm or deny whether information is held if to do so would, or would be likely to prejudice law enforcement.

It is the Council's view that the confirmation or denial of the possession of information relating to the Council's cyber resilience, would be likely to compromise the Council's information security strategies by giving cyber criminals insight into vulnerabilities which may, or may not, exist.

Section 31(3) is a qualified exemption, as such we have gone on to perform a public interest test in order to assess the public interest arguments for and against declaring whether or not the requested information is held.

For Disclosure:

- Confirmation of possession would demonstrate a commitment to transparency with regard to the Council's undertaking and could provide assurance that the council have robust IT infrastructure in place.

Against Disclosure:

- Maintaining the integrity and security of the Council's systems.
- Preventing cyber-attacks and similar against the Council systems.

Revealing the information may assist cyber criminal's insight into not only the strengths of the Council's cyber security, but also any potential weaknesses that may exist. This could ultimately result in a future cyber-attack. Cyber security measures are in place to protect the integrity of personal and sensitive personal information.

The occurrence of a future cyber-attack would prejudice the Council's legal duty to safeguard personal information from loss, theft, inappropriate access or destruction, which is why Section 31 has been employed in this case.

On balance the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs that in confirming or denying whether information is held and therefore the Council neither confirms nor denies, whether this information is held.

For information, we publish a variety of information such as: [FOI/EIR Disclosure Log](#), [Publication Scheme](#), [Facts about Coventry](#) and [Open Data](#) that you may find of useful if you are looking for information in the future.

If you are unhappy with the handling of your request, you can ask us to review our response. Requests for reviews should be submitted within 40 days of the date of receipt of our response to your original request – email: infogov@coventry.gov.uk

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our review, you can write to the Information Commissioner, who can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane,

Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or email icocasework@ico.org.uk.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in your response.

Yours faithfully

Information Governance