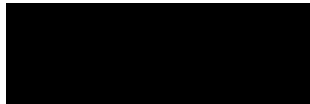




Public
Prosecution
Service

Policy and Information Unit
Belfast Chambers
93 Chichester Street
Belfast BT1 3JR

22 September 2020



FOI 624-20/21



I refer to your email dated 28 August 2020 in which you asked for information relating to the total cost of a recent trial.

Your request has been dealt with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Freedom of Information Act 2000

The Freedom of Information Act creates rights of access for any person making a request for information to a public authority. The rights of access are twofold. First, to be informed by the public authority if it holds information of the description specified in the request, and if that is the case, secondly, to be provided with that information. These rights are subject to important limitations, which are designed to achieve a proper balance between the right to know and considerations of law and policy in the broader public interest.

You had asked for the following:

“I am wondering if you can tell me via FOI what the cumulative rough cost has been of prosecuting Christine Connor; I am aware she gamed the system in her first trial (pleading innocence and guilt at the same time), and I imagine that cost the PPS purse quite a bit.

Can you tell us roughly how much has been spent on the PPS efforts to convict her during both court cases?”

In response, I can advise that in the absence of detailed records of time spent on

individual cases it is not possible to produce precise costs for a particular case, or even average costs for a particular type of case. This is because the amount of time required to take individual decisions as to prosecution (and for related administrative tasks) will vary depending upon a range of factors including the complexity of the case, the extent of the case papers and any other work in hand. As the PPS does not charge clients for work done there is no business need for such detailed records to be maintained.

Some costs are identifiable however, including, for example, the fees paid to prosecuting counsel and expenses paid to witnesses.

In this case the total identifiable PPS costs to date are as follows:

Counsel costs:	£90,667.94	excluding VAT
Witness expenses:	£138.50	
Expert Witnesses	£ 2,539.53	excluding VAT
Total costs =	£ 93,345.97	

If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review in accordance with our review procedure. You should do this as soon as possible or in any case within two months of the date of this response and you can do so by writing to the Head of Policy and Information, Public Prosecution Service, Belfast Chambers, 93 Chichester Street, BELFAST, BT1 3JR or alternatively by sending an e-mail to info@ppsni.gov.uk. You should state clearly the grounds on which you are requesting the review.

Alternatively, you may wish to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

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

Yours sincerely,

PPS FOI Section