

**REQUEST**

**Regarding your police force's response to protest organising during the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, I am asking the following:**

**1. How many protest organisers have contacted your force stating their plans to organise a protest between 23rd March 2020 and 15<sup>th</sup> December 2020?**

Between March and December – **21** organisers have contacted WMP direct in regard to protests (this number is lower than what we normally expect to see, because March to effectively the end June/July was heavily affected by Covid)

**a. Of these, how many protests were approved?**

There is very clear and established legislation around protests, as such the police do not 'approve' or 'reject' any protests or demonstrations.

**b. how many were rejected on the grounds of coronavirus legislation?**

No protests have been rejected by West Midlands Police

**c. How many were cancelled or postponed by the organisers of their own accord?**

From our records between March-December **12** protests were cancelled by the organiser of their own accord

**2. When dealing with protest requests, does your force provide routine guidance, questionnaires or templates to those seeking to organise? If yes, please attach these. Given changes in Regulations, please provide for each period:**

West Midlands Police do not provide guidance, questionnaires or templates to organisers.

- a. Between 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 and 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2020 (Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020)**
- b. Between 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2020 and 14<sup>th</sup> October 2020 (Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) (No. 2) Regulations 2020)**
- c. Between 14<sup>th</sup> October 2020 and 5<sup>th</sup> November 2020 (Health Protection (Coronavirus, Local Alert Level) (England) Regulations 2020)**
- d. Between 5<sup>th</sup> November 2020 and 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020 (Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) (No. 4) Regulations 2020)**
- e. From 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020 to 15<sup>th</sup> December 2020 (Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) (All Tiers) Regulations 2020)**

**3. What is your force's procedure for assessing risk assessments provided by protest organisers?**

Any risk assessments for protests are reviewed through the SAG process.

The SAG (Safety Advisory Group) – effectively is group made up of 'responsible authorities' such as Local Authority/ Police/Fire/Ambulance and other interested partners such a local authority Licensing/ Environmental Health.

Each Local Authority area should have a SAG group, for which they are the 'Chair' and the principle is that an event organiser should inform the Local Authority of their intention to hold an event (that can be a public event commercial or otherwise/ protest or demo), the event proposal is then shared with all the members and the organiser should then be invited to attend a SAG meeting to explain the event, go through the details if it is deemed a possible risk or concern in regard to public safety. Ultimately the purpose of a SAG is to ensure that an event is safe for the public to attend or take part in.