



[REDACTED]

Date: 13/04/2023
Our ref: 1409/23

[REDACTED]

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: GSA 1409/23

I write in connection with your request for information dated 13/03/2023, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

I intend writing to the Bolton Council shortly to start to lobby them for the installation of average speed cameras between Templecombe Drive and the Wilton Public House. In order to provide some evidence I would like to request the following information from GMP covering the 12 month period from January 1st 2022 to December 31st 2022.

1. The total number of times GMP used mobile speed cameras at this location in the above period
2. The total duration of each visit (to the nearest hour - an approximate average would be sufficient)
3. The total number of hours spent at the location over the year
4. The total number of drivers/riders exceeding the speed limit by more than the allowed variance (I understand in GM this is 10% plus 3 - which on this road in this location is 36 mph) and therefore subject to a speeding fine
5. The highest speed recorded for each and every time GMP attended the location

Result of Searches

Following receipt of your request searches were conducted within Greater Manchester Police (GMP) to locate the requested information and I can confirm the information requested is held by GMP. However, I am not obliged to provide all of the data as an exemption applies to some of it. In particular, questions 2 and 3 of your request are exempt under:

Section 31(1)(a)(b) – Law enforcement

Section 31 is a qualified and prejudice-based exemption and as such, subject to a harm and public interest test.

Harm

To disclose the mobile speed camera visit durations would provide misleading and potentially dangerous information into the public domain. This would create a perception of acceptable times to travel at excess speed levels that motorists may believe mobile speed cameras are not in operation and may encourage individuals to travel above particular speed limits. The faster the traffic travels through such areas, the higher the risk of accidents to motorists and pedestrians. This would also give an advantage to those who are intent on committing speeding offences and avoid detection. This would impact on the law enforcement capabilities of GMP in the prevention and detection of crime and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders.

Public Interest Test

Factors Favouring Disclosure

The disclosure of the mobile speed camera visit durations would assist the populous in taking steps to better protect themselves. It would also show GMP's accountability in the use of public funds when policing this area.

Factors Favouring Non-Disclosure

Conversely to the factors in favour of disclosure, to publicly release the mobile speed camera visit times and durations would impact on the law enforcement capabilities of GMP. It would allow those road users intent on travelling at excess speed to work out when the mobile cameras will not be in operation, allowing them to drive above the speed limit without generating a fine. This would impact of GMP's ability to prevent and detect crime and apprehend or prosecute offenders. Additionally, this would undoubtedly increase the risk of the health and safety of pedestrians and other motorists within the area.

Balancing Test

When balancing the public interest test GMP has to consider whether the information should be released into the public domain, therefore arguments need to be weighed against each other.

The most persuasive reason for disclosing the information would be the fact that disclosure would encourage transparency, which needs to be weighed against the strongest reasons for non-disclosure, which in this case is the likelihood of individuals being put at risk. The safety of the communities GMP police is of paramount importance and the Force would not detrimentally impact on that safety by disclosing harmful information in response to a FOI request. Therefore, having considered all the factors for and against disclosure it is the decision at this time to maintain the above exemption and withhold information from disclosure.

I have provided the information you have requested in questions, 1, 4 and 5 below.

1. Mobile speed cameras were deployed sixteen times in the requested period.
4. In total, 461 offenders were detected in the area requested between the specified dates.
5. On each occasion, the highest detected speed was:

Highest speed
51mph

49mph
45mph
37mph
57mph
37mph
63mph
59mph
47mph
38mph
48mph
47mph
49mph
44mph
42mph
45mph