

Date: 27/10/2023
Our ref: 01/FOI/23/011456/K

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/23/011456/K

I write in connection with your request for information dated 09/10/2023, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

Please can you advise me

- 1 - how many speed cameras there are in the Oldham, Middleton and Saddleworth areas,***
- 2 - where they are***
- 3 - and how many fines have been issued in the last 12 months?***
- 4 - Could you where possible highlight how many tickets have been raised by each camera?***

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 that some of the information requested is held by GMP.

However, I am not obliged to provide the information for some of this request as exemption applies.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires Greater Manchester Police, when refusing to provide such information (because the information is exempt) to provide you, the applicant, with a notice which: (a) states that fact, (b) specifies the exemption in question and (c) states (if that would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemption applies

The exemptions that apply are.

Question 1 & 2 – **Section 21.**

Question 4 - **Section 31.**

Question 1 & 2- Section 21 – Information accessible to applicant by other means. The response to this request is available online. Please follow the links below.

<https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/full-list-permanent-speed-camera-25771440>

Question 3 – I can advise there were 1415 detections recorded, however “fines” are imposed by the courts. Please apply directly to HMCTS for such data.

Question 4 - 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

Disclosure of the number of tickets issued per each speed camera across the Oldham area would compromise the efficient and effective conduct of Greater Manchester Police in maintaining road safety. To disclose high profile “ticketing” areas would hinder Greater Manchester Police in law enforcement capabilities.

The safety of the public is of a paramount importance to Greater Manchester Police and to release the number of tickets issued per camera and location would compromise the safety of the public that Greater Manchester Police serve to protect.

Furthermore, this would impact on the law enforcement capabilities of Greater Manchester Police in the prevention and detection of crime and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders. This would also give an advantage to those that are intent on committing crimes and avoid detection.

Disclosure may also lead to the specific safety cameras being targeted and criminal damage taking place which undermines Greater Manchester road safety as the safety cameras would then be out of use.

Factors in favour of disclosure

To disclose the numbers of tickets issued from each camera within this area of policing would show accountability of Greater Manchester Police in performing a key policing function. Disclosure would encourage public awareness and debate and may reduce the speed of motorists in this particular area and help Greater Manchester Police with the prevention and detection of reducing speeds across the borough. Disclosure could be seen how Greater Manchester Police are using its resources to prevent crime.

Furthermore, there is always a need to disclose information which relates to the spending of public money. It is in the public's interest to see how resources are balanced across Greater Manchester Police.

Factors against disclosure

To disclose details of these locations would compromise the efficient and effective conduct of the force, especially the force's future law enforcement tactics being compromised. The safety of the public is of paramount importance to Greater Manchester Police and to release the requested information would compromise the safety of the community that Greater Manchester Police serve to protect and place individuals at risk.

Disclosure would lead to a greater impact on police resources, in that this could hinder the prevention and detection of crime from speeding in these areas. It would give advantage to those individuals intent on criminal activity as it may assist potential offenders in evading the police as more vulnerable areas of low speeding enforcement become evident. Public intent on speeding may identify vulnerable areas from low ticketing parts of Oldham and target and exploit these areas resulting in the public being in fear of higher speeds occurring on Greater Manchester Roads.

Balancing Test

When balancing the public interest Greater Manchester Police has to consider whether the information should be released into the public domain. Arguments need to be weighed against each other. The most persuasive reason for disclosing the information would be Greater Manchester Police's accountability. This needs to be weighed against the strongest reason for non-disclosure which is the police service is charged with enforcing the law; preventing and detecting crime and protecting the people/communities we serve.

In this case this is the fact that individuals may be placed at risk and the affect it may have on the prevention and detection of speeding offences being committed, as high ticketing cameras may be targeted and lead to the specific safety cameras being damaged to avoid detection in the future. In this case, I believe the case for disclosure is not made out.

The police will not divulge any information that would place the safety of an individual(s) at risk or undermine law enforcement. Whilst there is a public interest in the transparency of policing, and in this case providing assurance that the police service is appropriately and effectively engaging in tackling the reduction of speeding, there is also a very strong public interest in maintaining the reduction of speeds by motorists across all of Greater Manchester.

In accordance with the Act, this letter represents a Refusal Notice for the particular piece of information.