



Date: 02/04/2024
Our ref: 01/FOI/24/012265/E

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/24/012265/E

I write in connection with your request for information dated 05/03/2024, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

1a) How many reports of cyber flashing did your police force record as crimes in 2024?

b) What was the outcome of each of these reports (Home Office Outcome)?

Please could you breakdown the data into months, so total number for January, February, March (until present)?

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 any of this information as an exemption applies.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires Greater Manchester Police, when refusing to provide 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 applicable to the information is **Section 30(1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(b) – Investigations and proceedings conducted by public authorities**.

Harm

As all of the investigations are still currently ongoing, some of which are being considered by the Crown Prosecution Service, any material that is disclosed at this at this time may undermine the police investigations.

Public Interest Test Factors Favouring Disclosure

To disclose the requested information into the public domain would show GMP's accountability and satisfy the public that investigations into cyber flashing are being conducted correctly. It would also show GMP's use of public funds investigating incidents of this nature.

Factors Favouring Non-Disclosure

Conversely, to publicly release information from an investigation that remains open may seriously undermine GMP's ability to complete the investigation to a full and correct conclusion. It would also have an impact on the future law enforcement capabilities of GMP, as it would disclose policing investigative techniques, thus hindering any future prevention or detection of crime.

Balancing Test

When balancing the public interest test GMP must 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. This needs to be weighed against the strongest reason for non-disclosure, which in this case is the impact on GMP's ability to complete the investigation to a full and correct conclusion. Therefore, having considered all the factors for and against disclosure it is the decision at this time to maintain the above exemption and withhold the information from disclosure.