

Date: 04/01/2024
Our ref: 01/FOI/24/013719/R

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/24/013719/R

I write in connection with your request for information dated 26/11/2024, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

Please can you send us the following contract information with regards to the organisation's telephone system maintenance contract (VOIP or PBX, other) for hardware and Software maintenance and support.

- 1. Contract Type: Maintenance, Managed, shared (If so, please state orgs)***
- 2. Existing Supplier: If there is more than one supplier, please split each contract up individually.***
- 3. Annual Average Spend:***
- 4. Hardware Brand: The primary hardware brand of the organisation's telephone system.***
- 5. Number of telephone users:***
- 6. Number of Call Handlers on shift in the Control Room at any one time (Concurrent Users)***
- 7. Contract Duration: please include any extension periods.***
- 8. Contract Expiry Date: Please provide us with the day/month/year.***
- 9. Contract Review Date: Please provide us with the day/month/year.***
- 10. Application(s) running on PBX/VOIP systems: Applications that run on the actual PBX or VOIP system. E.g., Contact Centre, Communication Manager.***
- 11. Telephone System Type: PBX, VOIP, Lync etc***
- 12. Current issues/challenges – Potential areas of improvement that would add value?***
- 13. Contract Description: Please provide us with a brief description of the overall service provided under this contract.***
- 14. Go to Market: How where these services procured, please provide us with either the tender notice or the framework reference number. Please specify if procured through other routes.***
- 15. Contact Detail: Of the person from within the organisation responsible for each contract full Contact details including full name, job title, direct contact number and direct email address.***

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 supply you with all of the information held as exemptions apply.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires Greater Manchester Police, when refusing to provide such information (because this 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 following exemptions apply to this request.

Question 6 is exempt from disclosure by virtue of the following exemption: **Section 31(1)(a)(b) – Law Enforcement.**

Question 15 is exempt from disclosure by virtue of the following exemption: **Section 40(2) Personal Information.** This information constitutes personal data of an identifiable living individual, and to disclose this information would breach the principles of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. Personal data is defined by Section 1 of the Data Protection Act 2018 and means data that relates to an individual who can be identified directly or indirectly from that data.

Section 40 is an absolute exemption with no requirement to complete a public interest test.

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

S31(1) - Evidence of Harm

A Freedom of Information Act request is not a private transaction. Both the request itself and any information disclosed, are considered suitable for open publication. This is because under the Act, any information disclosed is released into the wider public domain, effectively to the world, not just to an individual.

Whilst not questioning the motives of the applicant, providing any further information relating to specific departments and functions within Greater Manchester Police would reveal our operational capability, which would be of intelligence value to criminals.

Disclosure of resources at the police's disposal, including resources within the Force Contact, Crime and Operations Branch (FCCO, formerly known as the Operational Communications Branch) will mean that those members of the public who are committing crimes and pose a risk to the public, would be able to formulate ways to circumvent or overwhelm the FCCO. If disclosed the tactics used by GMP will become less effective and will mean that the police are not able to detect and prevent crime, apprehend, or prosecute offenders or to administer justice for the wider community.

There is always a duty of care to the general public and the Police Service has a clear responsibility to ensure the prevention or detection of crime, and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders is always delivered. There are several tactics available to the Police Service to ensure the effective delivery of operational law enforcement. As such, the disclosure of any further information which would hinder the forces law enforcement functions cannot be in the public interest.

Factors favouring disclosure for S31 - Where public funds are being spent, there is a public interest in accountability and justifying the use of public money. Disclosure of the requested information would enable the public to assess whether the force has appropriately taken steps to help reduce and detect crime by such means as answering emergency calls in a timely manner. Release would enhance public

debate as to whether the force is appropriately and effectively engaging with the threat posed by criminals.

Factors against disclosure for S31 - Disclosure that reveals our operational capabilities would compromise law enforcement tactics. Criminals could use the information to target areas of weakness knowing that their activities are less likely to be detected. It may be used by criminals who are intent on pursuing their criminal activity, to identify and exploit the limitations of these resources.

To release information relating to operational capacity and capability utilised for answering emergency calls would have a detrimental effect on our policing capabilities. Therefore, to mitigate any risks, disclosure of this information needs to be protected, to ensure that those with intent to do so cannot manipulate it or undermine its purpose in any way.

Any disclosure of information which would compromise law enforcement tactics and thus lead to more crime being committed by reducing the opportunity for the prevention and detection of crime, would therefore increase the risk to public safety, which is not in the public interest.

Balancing Test

Law enforcement is of paramount importance and the Police service will not disclose information if to do so would undermine its purpose and place the safety of individual(s) at risk. Whilst there is a public interest in the transparency of using public money in policing appropriately and effectively engaging with the threat posed by criminals, there is a very strong public interest in safeguarding the integrity of police investigations and operations in this area.

As much as there is public interest in knowing that policing activity is appropriate and balanced in matters of law enforcement, this will only be overridden in exceptional circumstances. Any disclosure which hinders our capability and assists criminals cannot be in the public interest.

It is for these reasons that I have determined that the balance test favours non-disclosure of the requested information.

Please see the remaining questions that can be answered.

1. Internal Telephony is maintained and managed by BT.
2. BT.
3. For voice £411,000.
4. AVAYA
5. 10,000
6. See exemption above.
7. 5 years + 1 + 1 (7 total possible).
8. 15 July 2025 option to Jul 2026.
9. March 2025.
10. Contact centre, Softex, Nice call recording.
11. VOIP.
12. Currently under review.
13. Internal telephony, contact centre, call recording and stats reporting capability. Incoming 999 calls. Managed service.
14. RM1045 CCS framework.
15. See exemption above.