

Date: 15/01/2024
Our ref: 01/FOI/24/011934/O

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/24/011934/O

I write in connection with your request for information dated 12/01/2024, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 I am requesting statistics on the number of complaints and disciplinary investigations/outcomes on any Sexual Harassment/Sexual Misconduct (Abuse of position of trust of a sexual nature) complaint against a Police Officer in your force between 2020 to 2023.

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, GMP is not obliged to provide the requested information, as an 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 information requested is exempt from disclosure by virtue of **Section 22(1)(a) – Information intended for future publication**. The National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) is coordinating a Historic Data Wash of Police Workforce Nominal Records against the Police National Database (PND). The current intention is to publish this by the end of January 2024

The intention is to publish the following data disaggregated to police officers, staff and volunteers:

- (a) Total number of searches completed (number of individuals broken down to force level)
- (b) Number of individuals with no concern (broken down to force level)
- (c) Number of individuals of potential concern escalated to the appropriate authority (broken down to force level) and of those:

- i) Number of individuals triggering further criminal investigation enquiries
- ii) Number of individuals triggering a disciplinary investigation
- iii) Number of individuals subject of vetting clearance review
- iv) Number of individuals subject of management intervention or other action
- v) Number of individuals subject of no action

As the exemption used is a qualified exemption a public interest test (PIT) needs to be applied.

Factors Favouring Disclosure

Disclosure of the requested information at the present time would allow the public to have access to the information immediately, would enhance public knowledge of the subject and would promote the accountability and aid transparency of GMP.

Factors Favouring Non-Disclosure

Reviewing and formatting the data at the present time, in response to a Freedom of Information request, would be a duplication of work and would involve a disproportionate use of GMP resources and would not be an economical use of public funds.

Additionally, prior to publication of the Data Wash, work will need to be conducted to ensure that the final publication meets the full needs of the public and the authorities involved. This coordinated approach to publication mitigates any harm that may be caused by random incomplete information entering the public domain.

Balancing Test

When balancing the Public Interest Test, we have to consider whether the Public Interest is best served by the release of the information into the public domain immediately or by the withholding of the information. Arguments need to be weighed against each other. The most persuasive reason for disclosure is the facilitation of transparency of GMP, which needs to be weighed against the strongest negative reason, which, in this case, is the potential for harm caused by premature release of information prior to the full scrutiny process having occurred.

Therefore, the stance at this time is that the requested data is exempt from disclosure in response to a Freedom of Information request due to its future official publication by NPCC.

In accordance with the S17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this letter acts as a Refusal Notice.