

Date: 10/05/2024

Our ref: 01/FOI/24/012411/W

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/24/012411/W

I write in connection with your request for information dated 05/04/2024, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

1) The average time (in hours:minutes:seconds) it takes for an officer to attend the scene of any type of crime broken down by district, with one average per district: Manchester, Salford, Bolton, Bury, Oldham, Rochdale, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan.

2) The average time (in hours:minutes:seconds) it takes for an officer to attend the scene of any crime in the following geographical areas, with one average per area: e.g. Saddleworth, Oldham, Royton, Shaw and Crompton, Chadderton, Failsworth, Middleton and Rochdale

Clarification –

- ***Please could you provide the data for 2021, 2022 and 2023. If the data is recorded in financial years, please could you provide the years 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24.***
- ***Please could you provide response times to incidents.***
- ***Please provide the data as recorded.***

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 information 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.

Please see Exemptions below in relation to question 2.

Section 31(1)(a)(b) Law Enforcement

Section 38(1)b Health and Safety

Sections 31(1)(a)(b) and Section 38 (1)b are prejudice based and qualified exemptions; there is a requirement to articulate the harm that would be caused in disclosing such information as well as carrying out a public interest test, which can be seen below.

Public Interest Test

To disclose the response times broken down by beat areas would disclose the operational functions and could be of intelligence value to a person or persons with criminal or malicious intent. Full disclosure could provide and enable targeted malicious actions, and result in potentially vulnerable areas being targeted more. Additionally, law enforcement tactics and operational capability would be compromised with the disclosure of the response times. This would impact on the law enforcement capabilities of GMP in the prevention and detection of crime and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders.

Factors Favouring Disclosure

The disclosure of police response times across Greater Manchester would assist the populous in the knowledge that GMP take crime serious across all districts. It would also show GMP's accountability in the use of public funds when it comes to front line policing.

Factors Favouring Non-Disclosure

Conversely to the factors in favour of disclosure, to publicly release information about operational response times would impact on the law enforcement capabilities of GMP and would undermine the effectiveness in policing. It would allow a perception for any person or persons wishing to carry out an offence that some areas may have slower response times, which may increase the number of offences. Additionally, this would undoubtedly increase the risk of the health and safety of to the local communities.

Section 38 –Harm

To disclose the response times and specially response times for beat areas would encourage criminal activity to be carried out in areas with slower average response times. This would undoubtedly increase the risk of the health and safety of the public GMP serve.

Factors Favouring Disclosure

The disclosure of response times would encourage transparency between the Force and the public.

Factors Favouring Non-Disclosure

To divulge to the wider public the operational responses, may encourage individuals to carry out more offences in targeted areas. The slower the response time, the higher the risk of crime being committed against member of the public and local businesses.

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 exemptions and withhold the information requested.

Please see the remaining response.

1. Please see the attached documents.
2. See exemption above.