

Our ref: 01/FOI/24/013628/P

Please quote our reference
number when responding

Friday, 22 November 2024

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/24/013628/P

I write in connection with your request for information dated 12/11/2024, I note you seek access to the following information:

1. Special Constable Numbers by Patrol Status - October 2024 Please provide the number of Special Constables serving in your force as of the end of October 2024. Where possible, please break this down into the number of APS/DPS Special Constables, and any QSC (irrespective of how many QSC stages have been completed). If your force has not adopted IL4SC, please denote how many officers are IPS or non-IPS.

1a. Additionally, please note how many officers are currently restricted. If this is not possible due to FOI budgetary requirements, this can be omitted.

2. Comparison to 2019

Please provide the number of Special Constables (irrespective of patrol status or suspension) serving in your force either in October 2019, or at the closest point you can capture data from (please clarify the month where possible).

3. Use of DutySheet System

Please confirm if your force uses DutySheet, and if so, how much your force is paying DutySheet (this can be an estimated annual cost) for the Special Constabulary. Note this does not include Police Cadets, PSVs or any other DutySheet database.

4. Budget for Special Constables

Please could you provide figures as to your annual budget for Special Constables forcewide for the 2024-25 financial year?

5. Estimated Cost Savings due to Special Constables If your force has them available, please provide the estimated cost savings your Special Constabulary provides to your force. Note, if

the FOI request budget would not allow for this in hours taken to process this request, this question can be omitted.

6. Qualifications and specialty courses

Please provide information as to whether your force currently provides the following training courses to your Special Constables, and if so, what IL4SC (or patrol status) level is required to engage in the course:

- Standard Response
- Advanced Response
- Initial Phase Pursuit (IPP)
- Taser
- Method of Entry (forced entry, whether through lockpulling, enforcer or any other forced entry)
- Public Order Level 3
- Public Order Level 2

Result of Searches

Following receipt of your request searches were conducted within Greater Manchester Police to locate information relevant to your request. I can confirm that the information you have requested is held by Greater Manchester Police.

1. 184. 121 – IPS, 63 – Non IPS
- 1a. 25 Specials in total (whether on leave of absence, non-operational, or suspended)
2. October 2019 – 354
3. Yes - GMP uses DutySheet. The cost is exempt under S43
4. Total 24/25 Opening Budget is £292,212
5. During 2023, our Specials conducted circa 63,000 hours of duties. This is the equivalent of 30 paid regular police constables (working 40hrs per week for 52 weeks). Therefore a salary saving of £1,652,310 (Constable annual salary of £55,077)
6. - Standard Response – **yes, required to be IPS**
- Public Order Level 3 – **yes, no requirement to be IPS**
- Public Order Level 2 – **yes, required to be IPS**

Then no to the rest listed

Part 3 – The exemption which applies is:

- **Section 43(2) – Commercial Interest**

Section 43(2) is a prejudice based and qualified exemption, as such is subject to a harm and public interest test. Please see below.

Harm

To provide the cost of DutySheet system would likely prejudice the businesses' reputations. Providing such information could affect the commercial interest of the business therefore disturbing the profits seen within the business. A less likely but still possible outcome from providing such information could lead the business owners to seek legal action against GMP.

Factors Favouring Disclosure

To provide the cost would allow for a better-informed public awareness on spending from our force.

Factors Favouring Non-Disclosure

By not disclosing the cost of DutySheet system would prevent any harm to the commercial interest of the named businesses. Providing the information could be detrimental to the business itself, as this could affect the number of customers; furthermore, this could put the trader under financial strain.

Balancing Test

When balancing the public interest Greater Manchester Police has to consider whether the information should be released into the public domain. The most persuasive reason for disclosing the information would allow for a better-informed public awareness, which needs to be weighed against the strongest reason for non-disclosure, which in this case is the damage it could cause to the businesses reputation and finances.

In this instance the case for disclosure is not made.