

Date: 28th November 2024
Our ref: FOI/24/013405/C

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: FOI/24/013405/C

I write in connection with your request for information dated 07/10/2024, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

1. I would like information on a year by year basis for the last 10 years on the attributed cost for policing Manchester Christmas markets

2. I would like to also know the number of incidents recorded each year in connection to the markets each year. Furthermore the number of arrests recorded and a breakdown of what charges people have been arrested on. I would like this data for every year over the last 10 years

CLARIFICATION

Please can you do a search for the postcode M1 1AF. Do this for the months from September-December for the last 10 years.

Please can you include crime and incident data but do them as separate tables in the data set

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 the information requested as exemption applies.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires GMP, 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.

Question 1 has been exempt from disclosure by virtue of the following exemption:

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

Section 31 is a prejudice-based and qualified exemption. There is a requirement to articulate the harm in disclosing such information as well as carrying out a public interest test.

Evidence of Harm

Disclosing the cost of policing a specific event could be of intelligence value to a person or persons with criminal and malicious intent. The disclosure could provide and enable targeted malicious actions, be that some form of attack on the operational team or avoiding that team for example where strengths and weakness may be perceived (whether incorrectly or not.)

The requested information could be used to calculate resources allocated to police the specific event and this could be used to compromise law enforcement capabilities by decreasing the ability of Greater Manchester Police to fight crime. This would increase the commission of crime and subsequently have a detrimental impact on public safety as well as decrease public confidence in the police force.

Section 31 – Factors Favouring Disclosure

To disclose this information would adhere to the basic principle of being open and transparent, it would also lead to a better public awareness of the workings of the police force.

Section 31 - Factors Favouring Non-Disclosure

Providing the costings to police the Manchester Christmas Markets would reveal the operational and tactical capabilities of Greater Manchester Police. This would compromise law enforcement tactics and hinder the prevention and detection of crime and the successful prosecution of offenders. Disclosure would provide those individuals or groups within the criminal fraternity who wish to attack the police or members of the public with a significant operational advantage and the information could also be used to target locations perceived as less well-resourced or to develop tactics to divert resources away from locations that they wish to target. This would clearly jeopardise the ability of Greater Manchester Police to respond appropriately to criminal activity and thereby protect the public.

The safety of the public is of paramount importance to Greater Manchester Police and to release the requested information would compromise the safety of the community that Greater Manchester Police serve to protect and place individuals at risk.

Balancing test

When balancing the public interest Greater Manchester Police must consider whether the information should be released into the public domain. Arguments need to be weighed against each other.

The most persuasive reason for disclosing the information would be openness. However, this needs to be weighed against the strongest reason for non-disclosure which is the fact that individuals may be placed at risk and the affect it may have on the prevention and detection of crime and protecting the people/communities we serve.

Having considered all the factors for and against disclosure, the reason against disclosure outweighs the reason for disclosure and so the decision at this time to maintain the above exemption and withhold the information from disclosure.

In accordance with the Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this letter acts as a Refusal Notice for **Question 1** of this request.

Please see the remainder of the requested information below.

Question 1 – Exempt

Question 2

Caveats

- In July 2019, GMP implemented one of the largest IT infrastructure changes in UK policing. The systems are in continual development and the data provided for this request is what the systems currently hold.
- Management of Police Information regulations state that non-essential records should be removed from police systems six financial years after the year in which they were originally created. This means that data that is more than six financial years old may be incomplete and should not be compared to more recent data.

Incidents:

- This data contains incidents with a postcode of M1 1AF or M11AF, with a created date between September and December in years 2014 to 2023, excluding incidents with a closing code of L10 Duplicate, L19 Error or L22 Test or training.
- We are aware of system issues affecting locations for incidents (see below for details). These issues mean that data for a specific location may include incidents that did not happen in that location and/or exclude incidents that did.
 - Some incidents do not have an address because e.g. the address has been recorded in a non-standard format or as map coordinates.

Crime:

- This data contains crimes with a postcode of M1 1AF or M11AF, with a created date between September and December in years 2014 to 2023, excluding cancelled crimes. Further information about cancelled crimes can be obtained from the Home Office Counting Rules.
- We are aware of various system issues affecting committed at locations for new and migrated crimes (see below for details). These issues mean that data for a specific location may include crimes that did not happen in that location and/or exclude crimes that did.
 - Some crimes do not have an address because e.g. the address has been recorded in a non-standard format or as map coordinates.
- These crimes may have originated from incidents in the incident data and refer to the same circumstances.

Custody:

- This data contains the crimes as defined above, where there is at least 1 custody record linked on the system. The dates used are the crime created dates and the crime types have been split by crime tree level 4.
- There can be more than 1 crime linked to a custody record, therefore the total number in the table is not the total number of custody records. In this data there is one custody record that has been counted twice under 2022.

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Count of Incidents	0	0	0	0	0	2	5	11	4	30
Count of Crimes	0	0	2	0	2	10	26	14	30	53

Due to low numbers returned per year, the arrest offence and totals have been split from each other as by providing all this information together would significantly increase the likelihood of identifying the individual(s) concerned, and as such the exemption under S40(2) – Personal Information, would be engaged and result in information being refused. By splitting this data it can be provided in its entirety.

Year	Count of Custody Records
2014	0
2015	0
2016	2
2017	0
2018	0
2019	0
2020	4
2021	3
2022	4
2023	8

These custody records relate to the following crimes:

- Possession of Drugs
- Possession of Weapon Offences
- Public Order Offences
- Trafficking Drugs
- Violence with Injury
- Violence without Injury