

Date: 04/11/2024
Our ref: 01/FOI/24/013575/T

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/24/013575/T

I write in connection with your request for information dated 01/11/2024, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

Please could you disclose:

1) The number of reported dog attacks (Home Office code 008/21 – owner or person in charge allowing dog to be dangerously out of control in any place in England or Wales injuring any person or assistance dog) from Jan 1st 2023 to Nov 1st 2024, giving a month by month breakdown.

2) Of those - if time constrains allow, - please provide a month by month breakdown of of the number involving a suspected American Bully XL (otherwise known as ‘XL Bully’) and, separately again, the number that involved a confirmed American Bully XL.

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 the information you have requested as exemptions apply.

When refusing to provide such information because an exemption applies, Section 17(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires GMP, 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 below apply.

Question 1 is exempt under **section 21 – Information accessible to applicant by other means**. The response to this request for January 2023 – September 2024 is available online. Please follow the link below.

<https://www.gmp.police.uk/police-forces/greater-manchester-police/areas/greater-manchester-force-content/sd/stats-and-data/out-of-control-dogs/>

Part of **question 1** is also exempt under **Section 22(1)(a) –Information intended for future publication**. The intended publication of the October 2024 stats for this request is January 2025 as they are published quarterly. This will be via the link below.

<https://www.gmp.police.uk/police-forces/greater-manchester-police/areas/greater-manchester-force-content/sd/stats-and-data/out-of-control-dogs/>

As the exemption used (**Section 22(1)(a) –Information intended for future publication**) 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, should the data from the upcoming report be released prematurely, there is the possibility that it may contain inaccuracies if it has not been subject to full scrutiny procedures.

Balancing Test

When balancing the Public Interest Test, we must 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 disproportionate use of GMP resources and an uneconomical use of public funds. 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 GMP.

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

Question 2.

This part of the request cannot be completed within the time constraints of 18hrs or less. A manual review will be required for every reported attack from Jan 2023.