

Our ref: 01/FOI/24/013148/E

Please quote our reference  
number when responding

Monday, 09 September 2024

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/24/013148/E**

I write in connection with your request for information dated 19/08/2024, I note you seek access to the following information:

1. *How many police dogs are currently operational 2024*
2. *How many police dogs are currently not operational due to injury, ailment, sickness 2024*
3. *How many police dogs in training 2024*
4. *How many police dogs procured from 2010 to 2020.*
5. *How many police dogs were purchased from breeders in the uk. How many from the EU*
6. *How many police dogs were bred from Police breeding project*
7. *How many police dogs were gifted or purchased from uk dog rescues and which rescues*
8. *How many police dogs failed to meet standards. Did they get returned to vendor, breeder or rescue*
9. *How many police dogs have been successfully rehomed 2010 - 2024*
10. *How many police dogs failed rehome and were they returned to unit or euthanised*
11. *How many police dogs have been euthanised due to 1. Sickness, injury, ailment. 2.Behvaieur, safety, treachery*
12. *What is the current budget for rehoming 2024*
13. *How many registered clinical behaviourists work with rehoming police dogs 2024*
14. *How many police dog have been euthanised due to accident, injury or ailment on duty 2010-2024*
15. *How many police dogs died in kennels, vehicles, in enclosures 2010-2014*
16. *How many police dogs died on duty 2010-2024*
17. *How many police dogs were rehomed to their handlers or families 2010-2024*
18. *How many police dogs were rehomed to the general public 2010-2024*

## **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 some of the information you have requested is held by Greater Manchester Police.

### **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.

1. Exempt under s31
2. 0
3. Our police dogs are continually under assessment and are allotted so many training days per month. Dependent on what initial courses we are running per year depends on how many new dogs are in training.
4. Exempt under s31
5. Records not held.
6. To date we have 16 dogs working from our Police breeding Project.
7. Records not held.
8. We do not hold records on numbers of dogs that have failed to meet the requirements. All dogs who fail to make required standards are returned to the owner/breeder/rescue.
9. to 18. Records not held.

Parts 1 and 4 have been exempt from disclosure by virtue of the following exemption:

- **Section 31(1)(a)(b) – Law enforcement**

Section 31 is a qualified and prejudice-based exemption and as such, subject to a harm and public interest test.

### **Harm**

Disclosure of the number of current/ procured police dogs within the Force reveals tactical capability and vulnerabilities from force to force and would compromise the efficient and effective conduct of Greater Manchester Police. To disclose operational strength would hinder Greater Manchester Police in law enforcement capabilities.

The safety of the public is of a paramount importance to Greater Manchester Police and to release the number of police dogs would compromise the safety of the public that Greater Manchester Police serve to protect.

Furthermore, this would impact on the law enforcement capabilities of Greater Manchester Police in the prevention and detection of crime and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders. This would also give an advantage to those intent on committing crimes and avoid detection.

#### *Factors in favour of disclosure*

To disclose how many police dogs there are current/procured within this area of policing would show accountability of Greater Manchester Police in performing a key policing function. Disclosure would encourage public awareness and debate and may reduce crime or lead to more information being provided to Greater Manchester Police from the public for the prevention and detection of crime. Disclosure could be seen how Greater Manchester Police are using its resources to prevent crime.

Furthermore, there is always a need to disclose information which relates to the spending of public money. It is in the public's interest to see how resources are balanced across Greater Manchester Police.

#### *Factors against disclosure*

To disclose details regarding police dogs would compromise the efficient and effective conduct of the force, especially the force's future law enforcement tactics being compromised. 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.

Disclosure would lead to a greater impact on police resources, in that this could hinder the prevention and detection of crime and more crime being committed. It would give advantage to those individuals intent on criminal activity as it may assist potential criminals in evading the police as more vulnerable areas of lower policing levels would become evident. A fear of crime will be realised as criminals identify vulnerable areas and target and exploit these areas resulting in the public being in fear of more criminal activity occurring.

### **Balancing Test**

When balancing the public interest Greater Manchester Police has to 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 Greater Manchester Police's accountability. This needs to be weighed against the strongest reason for non-disclosure which is the police service is charged with enforcing the law; preventing and detecting crime and protecting the people/communities we serve.

In this case this is the fact that individuals may be placed at risk and the affect it may have on the prevention and detection of crime. In this case, I believe the case for disclosure is not made out.

The police will not divulge any information that would place the safety of an individual at risk or undermine law enforcement. Whilst there is a public interest in the transparency of policing, and in this case providing assurance that the police service is appropriately and effectively engaging with the threat posed by criminal activity, there is a very strong public interest in safeguarding the tactical resource capability which could highlight which forces are focussing more on this type of investigation than other force areas.

In accordance with the Act, this letter represents a Refusal Notice for Parts 1 and 4 of this request.