

Date: 10/04/2025
Our ref: 01/FOI/25/014576/X

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/25/014576/X.

I write in connection with your request for information dated 10/04/2025, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

I am writing with the hopes that you will release to me the transcripts of initial police interviews with Myra Hindley, Ian Brady and David Smith. With this information I plan to form a more accurate timeline of events [REDACTED].

I understand that last time these documents were requested, they had not yet been catalogued. Should that still be the case I would like to add the question; 'Does GMP have any plans to catalogue the transcripts which relate to Britain's most infamous crime?'

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.

The exemption that applies are:

Section 38(1)(a)(b) Health and Safety.

Harm

The Freedom of Information Act provides the public with a general right of access to recorded information held by public authorities. However, information disclosed under this Act is effectively released into the public domain, or to the 'wider world', and not only to the person making the request.

The Moors murders remain an extremely emotive topic for the public in general, and of course more so for the families of the victims. The pain and suffering caused to the victims' surviving families and friends is unquestionably as profound now as it was when the crimes took place.

To disclose the exempt information, in this case transcripts of initial police interviews into the public domain would undoubtedly have an impact on the health and safety of the surviving family members of the victims. Disclosing such information could cause further distress and hurt to grieving families, many of whom would no doubt still be greatly traumatised by these horrific events. Such information being disclosed could resurface these traumatic experiences and cause the victim's families to again revisit this most terrible period of their lives.

Protecting the safety of the public is of paramount importance to GMP and information that would compromise such health and safety would not be disclosed within a response to a Freedom of Information request.

Section 38 - Factors favouring disclosure

There may be occasions when it is appropriate to disclose information that would have an impact on the health and safety of an individual or the public in general. In this particular case, I cannot identify any benefit to the wider public (in terms of health and safety) to disclose such sensitive details.

There are, however, more general arguments that must be considered such as openness and transparency, which would lead to a more informed public.

Section 38 - Factors favouring non-disclosure

Although some information may already be in the public domain and that information relates to deceased persons, due to the nature of the crimes committed, and that disclosure under Freedom of Information Act is disclosure to the world at large with no specific controls, disclosure carries the potential risk of causing significant mental and physical harm and distress to the loved ones and friends of his/her victims.

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 openness. This needs to be weighed against the strongest reason for non-disclosure, which is concerns for the health and safety, both mental and physical, of family and friends of the victims.

Having considered all the factors for and against disclosure it is my belief that in this case, 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 Act, this letter represents a Refusal Notice for your request for this part of the request.

Remaining responses –

Q - *'Does GMP have any plans to catalogue the transcripts which relate to Britain's most infamous crime?'*

A - No

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