

Date: 18/03/2025
Our ref: 01/FOI/25/014247/J

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/25/014247/J

I write in connection with your request for information dated 19/02/2025, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

The NPCC has revealed that between 'February and September 2024, policing has seized over 4,586 suspected S1 dogs throughout England and Wales.'

<https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fnews.npcc.police.uk%2Freleases%2Fpolice-seize-more-than-4500-xl-bully-dogs-since-ban&data=05%7C02%7Cfreedomofinformation%40gmp.police.uk%7C1f2278c8a72a43a8f8a508dd50f0dc4a%7Cdc8a542c40d46ab8f73e6023f45c7c5%7C0%7C0%7C638755717619408046%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMilslkFOljoiTWFpbCIsIlIdUljoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=o1ALz05Hr3KhHLvxUNERiuBos3FUYXo5fONys%2F1IZQA%3D&reserved=0>

- 1. Please provide the number of S1 dogs you seized between February and September 2024.***
- 2. Please provide the number of dogs you kennelled in each month between February 2024 to September 2024.***

The NPCC has also revealed that it can cost up to £1,000 per month to kennel a dog.

- 3. Please provide the total amount you spent kennelling dogs in each month between February 2024 and September 2024.***
- 4. Please provide the total amounts you spent on (i) food and (ii) care in respect of kennelled dogs in each month between February 2024 and September 2024.***
- 5 Please provide the names of all businesses/organisations you used to kennel dogs between February 2024 and September 2024..***

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 you with all of the information held as exemptions apply.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires Greater Manchester Police, when refusing to provide such information (because this 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 information you have requested in question 5 is 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.

S31(1) - Evidence of Harm

Disclosing information into the public domain - specifically details of the businesses and/or locations used to kennel seized dogs - would undermine the core principles of policing, namely to prevent and detect crime. Disclosure of this information could cause substantial harm not only to those businesses and locations, the people that are employed at those establishments, our own operations in this field and also potentially to members of the public. If GMP were to place this information into the public domain, this could prejudice our ability to prevent and detect crime, and provide potential offenders with the information they would need to conduct targeted activity – this could in turn affect GMP's ability to protect the community.

Factors favouring disclosure

Disclosing this information into the public domain would lead to an increased public awareness on these matters. Disclosure would also show that GMP are being as open and transparent with the public as possible.

Factors against disclosure

Disclosing details of the businesses and/or locations where GMP currently house seized dogs would hinder the prevention and detection of crime. Disclosure of this information would provide either the owners of dogs that have been seized with the requisite knowledge to undertake reprisal activity should they wish to – such as targeting these locations for criminal damage, attempting to seize-back the animal in question and would endanger those businesses and the staff employed by them. Not only would this pose a risk with regards to a potential increase in crime, it would also indicate our current Force capabilities in this area and should the disclosure of this information result in anything negative, then it would undoubtedly cause either reputational harm to those businesses concerned or would be to the detriment of current commercial arrangements

Any disclosure of information which would compromise law enforcement tactics and thus lead to more crime being committed by reducing the opportunity for the prevention and detection of crime, would therefore increase the risk to public safety, which is not in the public interest.

Balance Test

Whilst there is a public interest in transparency and openness between the Force and the public, in addition to the public seeing how the Force deal with seized dogs, there is a stronger interest in

ensuring that both these businesses and the public in general are protected from the threat of criminal activity, and that the enforcement of the law and the prevention and detection of crime is upheld.

To disclose information which is likely to assist potential offenders or endanger individuals involved including the general public, would seriously undermine the effective delivery of operational law enforcement and is therefore exempt from disclosure.

As much as there is public interest in knowing that policing activity is appropriate and balanced in matters of law enforcement, this will only be overridden in exceptional circumstances. Any disclosure which hinders our capability and assists criminals cannot be in the public interest.

Please see the remaining responses not exempted below.

Caveats

- The following for Q1 reflects the number of **suspected** S.1 dogs (banned breeds) seized by GMP officers, Feb – Sept 2024. To understand which are confirmed would require a review of all the data in Q1 and would trigger a S12 refusal notice to this request.
- Question 2 does not include the dogs which were already in place at the kennels. Only Feb-Sept. To obtain the breakdown per month would trigger a S12 refusal notice to this request.
- Q3 and Q4 have been provided as an overall for the total expenditure on Dangerous Dogs from Feb 24 to Sep 24 Due to the way our finance system records this information, to obtain the breakdown into kennel/food/care costs would trigger a S12 refusal notice to this request.

Question 1.

- Feb – 96
- March – 54
- April – 36
- May – 45
- June – 31
- July – 31
- Aug – 29
- Sept – 27

Question 2.

797 – Due to how this data is recorded we are unable to extract the information based on each month.

Question 3 & 4

- Feb – £67,157.71
- March – £62,517.10
- April – £128,348.35
- May – £77,266.71
- June – £109,408.40
- July – £97,971.16
- Aug – £126,677.00
- Sept – £107,782.13