



Date: 18/06/2026
Our ref: 01/FOI/26/016980/I

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/26/016980/I

I write in connection with your request for information dated 29/06/2026, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

This is a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Please provide the following recorded information for the financial years 2021/2022 through 2025/2026 (to the date this request is processed):

1. Total charges and Chief Constable authorisations:

- (a) The total number of charges authorised under the Malicious Communications Act 1988 (section 1) by any authorising officer within GMP.*
- (b) Of those, the number personally authorised by the Chief Constable.*
- (c) The number of those Chief Constable-authorised charges that resulted in a conviction.*

2. Charges linked to complainants:

- (a) The total number of charges authorised under the Malicious Communications Act 1988 where the suspect had previously made a complaint against GMP (to GMP's Professional Standards Department or the IOPC).*
- (b) Of those, the number personally authorised by the Chief Constable.*

3. Charges linked to housing or police engagement:

- (a) The total number of charges authorised under the Malicious Communications Act 1988 where the alleged communication related to the suspect's engagement with GMP or a local authority housing department.*
- (b) Of those, the number personally authorised by the Chief Constable.*

4. Policy and guidance documents:

Please provide copies of any GMP policy, guidance, or standing order that sets out:

- (a) Which offences require personal authorisation by the Chief Constable.*
- (b) The criteria or circumstances in which the Chief Constable personally authorises a charge rather than delegating to a Crown Prosecutor or a lower-ranked officer.*

Result of Searches

Following receipt of your request searches were conducted within Greater Manchester Police (GMP) to locate information relevant to your request. I can confirm that the information you have requested is held by GMP.

However, GMP does not hold the information that you have requested in an easily retrievable format. To provide the data requested would involve a manual search of all malicious communications crimes with a charged outcome to see if the charge was authorised by the Chief Constable.

A search of our crime records shows that there are 1,100 crimes that would have to be manually reviewed. At a very conservative estimate of 5 minutes to locate, retrieve and review each file it would take approximately 92 hours to ascertain the data required. Therefore, to comply with the whole of your request the process would take over 18 hours' work which exceeds the appropriate limit of £450.00, the amount to which we are legally required to respond.

As per section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the cost of providing you with the information is therefore above the amount to which we are legally required to respond i.e. the cost of locating and retrieving the information exceeds the 'appropriate level' as stated in the Freedom of Information (Fees and Appropriate Limit) Regulations 2004. If one part of the request engages a Section 12 response, the whole request will engage a Section 12 response. The reason being is locating, retrieving and extracting any further information would only add to the already exceeded time obligations and so no other searches have been completed at this stage.

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

GMP is obligated, pursuant to section 16(1) of the Act to provide you with advice and assistance on refining your request to bring compliance within the fees limit. In order for the force to keep this within the fees limit, the information that you are requesting will need to be reduced to a greatly reduced time period. The resulting response cannot be guaranteed at this point as it will be dependent upon the number of records that fall within the scope of any new request, as they would still have to be manually assessed.