



Date: 02/06/2026
Our ref: 01/FOI/26/016868/J

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/26/016868/J

I write in connection with your request for information dated 11/05/2026, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

Under the Freedom of Information act, I am requesting the following information:

1. *Details of all cryptocurrency seizures made in each of the last 48 months.*
2. *Details of the date, size and type (which cryptocurrency) of each seizure.*

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 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 is exempt from disclosure by virtue of **Section 24(1) – National Security** and **Section 31(1)(a)(b) – Law Enforcement**.

Both Section 24 and Section 31 are qualified and prejudice-based exemptions and as such, subject to a harm and public interest test.

Harm (Sections 31(1)(a) & (b) and 24(1))

Disclosure of detailed information relating to cryptocurrency seizures, including seizure-by-seizure data, specific dates, values or the type of cryptocurrency seized, would be likely to cause real and significant harm. Cryptocurrency seizures are typically the outcome of intelligence-led investigations into serious and organised crime, including fraud, cyber-enabled crime and drug supply, and in some cases activity linked to terrorism. Releasing granular information would reveal operational patterns, investigative focus and enforcement capability.

Organised crime groups are known to actively monitor publicly available information to assess law enforcement risk. Disclosure of individual seizure dates or values would allow offenders to link enforcement activity to known arrests, platform closures or other public events. This would enable them to adapt their behaviour by altering the timing of transactions, moving assets more quickly or changing methods to reduce the likelihood of detection, thereby prejudicing the prevention and detection of crime.

Disclosure of the specific types of cryptocurrencies seized would further increase this harm. Different cryptocurrencies offer varying levels of anonymity and traceability. Revealing which types are successfully seized would indicate where police capability is strongest or weakest, enabling criminals to migrate to alternatives perceived as less detectable. This would undermine the effectiveness of asset seizure powers and future investigations.

From a national security perspective, cryptocurrencies are known to be used to move funds across borders outside traditional financial systems. Detailed seizure information would provide insight into the extent to which UK policing is able to disrupt these methods. This could assist hostile or terrorist actors to assess UK capability and adapt their financial practices to avoid detection, reducing the effectiveness of measures designed to protect public safety.

The harm arising from disclosure would be real rather than hypothetical and would prejudice law enforcement activity and pose a risk to national security.

Public Interest Test – Section 31(1)**Factors favouring disclosure**

There is a public interest in transparency and accountability in policing, including providing reassurance that police forces act against the criminal use of cryptocurrency. Disclosure of information can contribute to public understanding of how law enforcement powers are exercised.

Factors favouring maintaining the exemption

There is a strong public interest in ensuring that police forces can prevent and detect crime effectively. Disclosure of detailed or granular seizure information would undermine operational effectiveness by revealing investigative patterns, capability and focus. This would assist criminal actors to evade detection and adapt their behaviour, directly reducing the effectiveness of law enforcement activity.

Public Interest Test – Section 24(1)**Factors favouring disclosure**

There is a public interest in openness regarding how public authorities address threats linked to serious crime and emerging technologies.

Factors favouring maintaining the exemption

There is a very strong public interest in protecting national security and public safety. Disclosure that assists hostile or terrorist actors to understand, assess or counter UK policing capability would be contrary to the public interest. The potential consequences of such harm would be serious and far-reaching.

Balance

While transparency is an important principle, it is adequately met through the provision of high-level, aggregated information where appropriate. The additional insight gained from disclosure of seizure-level detail, specific dates or cryptocurrency types is limited and is substantially outweighed by the risk of prejudice to law enforcement and national security.

The balance of the public interest therefore favours maintaining the exemptions under sections 31(1) and 24(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.