



Date: 22/06/2026
Our ref: 01/FOI/26/016999/T

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/26/016999/T

I write in connection with your request for information dated 04/06/2026, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

I am researching the case involving Hugh Nelson, who was convicted of multiple child sexual abuse offences involving the creation and distribution of computer-generated and AI-generated child sexual abuse images.

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and any other applicable public records legislation, I am requesting any releasable body-worn video footage, custody records, arrest records, incident reports, investigation logs, and related public records concerning the following case:

Suspect:

Hugh Nelson

Date of Arrest/Incident:

June 2023 (exact arrest date requested)

Location:

Egerton, Bolton, Greater Manchester, England Agency Involved:

** Greater Manchester Police*

Incident Type:

** Child Sexual Abuse Investigation*

** Distribution of Indecent Images of Children*

** AI-Generated Child Sexual Abuse Material Investigation*

** Online Child Exploitation Investigation*

Officer(s) Involved:

** Unknown (please provide names, collar numbers, or identifying details of arresting officers if releasable) Case Number:*

** Unknown (please provide associated case reference number) Incident Details:*

According to information released by the Crown Prosecution Service, Hugh Nelson was arrested by Greater Manchester Police in June 2023 following an investigation into the creation, distribution, and sale of computer-generated and AI-generated child sexual abuse

images. Investigators alleged that Nelson used software and artificial intelligence tools to manipulate photographs of real children and create indecent images which were distributed through encrypted online chatrooms.

The investigation further alleged that Nelson exchanged messages encouraging the sexual abuse of children and created images on request for other individuals. Police seized and examined multiple digital devices as part of the investigation.

On 28 October 2024, Nelson was sentenced at Bolton Crown Court to 18 years' imprisonment with an additional six years on extended licence.

Charges Included:

- * Distributing Indecent Photographs of Children*
- * Publishing an Obscene Article*
- * Intentionally Encouraging or Assisting the Rape of a Child Under 13*
- * Attempting to Cause a Child Under 16 to Engage in Sexual Activity*
- * Making Indecent Photographs of Children*
- * Possessing Prohibited Images of Children Records Requested:*
 - * Body-worn camera footage relating to arrest and searches*
 - * Vehicle/dash camera footage relating to arrest and searches*
 - * Arrest reports*
 - * Custody records*
 - * Incident logs*
 - * Search warrant returns*
 - * Property seizure records*
 - * Investigation reports*
 - * Any releasable photographs, audio recordings, or video recordings associated with the arrest and investigation*

Case Link:

[Man who used AI technology to create child sexual abuse images jailed | The Crown Prosecution Service](#) Thank you for your time and assistance.

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 that some of the information requested is held by GMP. However, I am not obliged to provide the information that is held as an 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 which applies to this request is **Section 30(1)(2)(a) – Investigations and Proceedings Conducted by Public Authorities, Section 38(1)(a)(b) – Health and Safety and Section 40(2) – Personal Information.**

Section 30 is a class-based, qualified exemptions. There is a requirement to carry out a public interest test. Section 38 is a prejudice based, qualified exemption. There is a requirement to articulate the harm that would be caused in disclosing the information as well as carrying out a public interest test.

Section 40(2) represents information that identifies a living individual, to disclose this information would breach the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018. Personal data is

defined by Section 1 of the Data Protection Act 2018 and means data that relates to an individual who can be identified directly or indirectly from that data. Section 40 is an absolute exemption and there is no requirement to conduct a public interest test for such data.

Harm – S38

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 pain and suffering caused to the victims and their families is unquestionably as profound now as it was when the crimes took place. To disclose the exempt information into the public domain would undoubtedly have an impact on the health and safety of the victims and their families. Disclosing such information could cause further distress and hurt to the victims, who would no doubt still be greatly traumatised by the events. Such information being disclosed could resurface these traumatic experiences and cause the victims and their families to again revisit this most terrible period of their lives.

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

Factors Favouring Disclosure – S30

To disclose the information requested into the public domain would show GMP's accountability and satisfy the public that investigations into this incident were conducted fairly. It would also show GMP's use of public funds in investigating incidents of this nature.

Factors Favouring Non-Disclosure – S30

We accept that there is a legitimate and important public interest in publishing information about the investigation however, conversely to the factors in favour of disclosure, to publicly release information that details investigative strategies and methods would undermine future investigations of a similar nature, the success of which will rely on the use of similar methods. Whilst these investigations might be seen as high profile by some, to disclose any details may still hinder the process needed to be followed.

Factors Favouring Disclosure – S38

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.

Factors Against Disclosure - S38

Although some information may already be in the public domain, due to the nature of the crime 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 victims and their loved ones and friends.

Balancing Test

When balancing the public interest test GMP must consider whether the information should be released into the public domain, therefore arguments need to be weighed against each other. The most persuasive reason for disclosing the information would be the fact that disclosure would encourage transparency. This needs to be weighed against the strongest reason for non-disclosure, which in this case is the impact on GMP's ability to complete investigations to a full and correct conclusion, and concerns for the health and safety, both mental and physical, of the victims and their family and friends of the victim. Therefore, having considered all the factors for and against disclosure it is the decision at this time to maintain the above exemption and withhold the information from disclosure.

No body-worn video is held in relation to this case.