

Date: 11th June 2026
Our ref: FOI/26/017031/C

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: FOI/26/017031/C

I write in connection with your request for information dated 08/06/2026, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

1) Please state the number of formal requests for information made by your authority to the following centralised cryptocurrency exchanges:

- a) Binance***
- b) Coinbase***
- c) OKX***
- d) Bitfinex***
- e) Kraken***

In each of the following financial years

- i) 2023/24***
- ii) 2024/25***
- iii) 2025/26***
- iv) 2026/27***

2) Please state the number of these requests which were:

- a) Fully complied with***
- b) Not complied with or not fully complied with***

In each of the above financial years.

3)

a) Please state the number of occasions that your authority has taken legal action against each exchange to attempt to force production of the records, in each of the above financial years.

b) Of these, please state the number of these legal actions that resulted in disclosure.

Result of Searches

Greater Manchester Police can neither confirm nor deny that it holds the information you requested as the duty in Section 1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 does not apply, by virtue of the following exemption:

Section 31(3) – Law Enforcement

Section 31 is a prejudice-based and qualified exemption. There is a requirement to articulate the harm confirmation or denial that any other information is held as well as consider the public interest, which are explained below.

Harm

Confirming or denying whether information is held for this request would itself disclose sensitive operational information. The request is framed around named cryptocurrency exchanges and seeks to establish whether police have made formal requests for information to those exchanges, whether those requests were complied with, and whether legal action was required to secure disclosure. A confirmation or denial would therefore reveal whether those exchanges have featured in police enquiries and whether they have been the subject of specific law enforcement engagement. That would be likely to prejudice law enforcement.

It would provide insight into policing interest in particular exchanges, the apparent extent of engagement with them, and the routes used to obtain information. It would also allow inferences to be drawn about whether certain exchanges appear to cooperate, resist, or require escalation through legal process. That is not neutral administrative information; it goes directly to the way in which law enforcement activity is pursued in this area.

The risk is that those involved in criminality could use that information to alter their behaviour in order to frustrate enquiries. If they can infer which exchanges are more likely to feature in police requests, which appear more or less responsive, or where legal compulsion may be needed, they are better placed to choose platforms, timing and methods in a way which reduces the likelihood of detection or delays the obtaining of evidence. This would be likely to prejudice the prevention and detection of crime and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders.

The harm arises at the point of confirming or denying whether the information is held. It is not necessary to disclose any underlying record for that prejudice to occur. In this case, the existence or non-existence of the information would itself provide a meaningful operational picture. That is why a neither confirm nor deny response is appropriate.

Public Interest Test

Factors favouring disclosure

There is a recognised public interest in openness and transparency in relation to the use of public powers and the way in which law enforcement bodies carry out their functions. There is also a legitimate public interest in accountability for how police seek and obtain information from third-party service providers, particularly in areas involving digital and financial platforms. Confirming or denying whether information is held may assist public understanding of the broad way in which police investigate offending involving modern technologies and online services, and may contribute to

confidence that appropriate processes exist for obtaining relevant information in support of criminal investigations.

Factors favouring withholding

Against that, there is a stronger public interest in preventing harm to law enforcement. Confirming or denying whether information is held in this case would reveal whether the named cryptocurrency exchanges have featured in police enquiries, which is in itself operationally sensitive. It would also reveal, either directly or by inference, the apparent effectiveness of police engagement with those exchanges, including whether information is likely to be obtained through routine requests or whether legal action may be required. That information could be used by individuals seeking to evade law enforcement to make decisions about which services to use, how to structure or time transactions, and how quickly to move assets in order to reduce the risk of detection or frustrate enquiries.

The specificity of the request, which names particular exchanges and seeks annual breakdowns, increases the risk of creating a meaningful operational picture rather than contributing to a general debate about policy or process. Once the existence or non-existence of the information is confirmed, the insight provided cannot be withdrawn and may prejudice both current and future law enforcement activity.

Balance

There is a recognised public interest in transparency and accountability. However, the weight of that interest is reduced here because the request is not aimed at broad policy, governance or high-level process. Instead, it seeks to establish whether particular named exchanges have come within law enforcement focus, how requests to them have progressed, and whether legal powers have been needed to secure information. Confirming or denying whether such information is held would therefore disclose operationally useful intelligence about policing activity.

In these circumstances, the public interest in avoiding prejudice to the prevention and detection of crime and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders carries greater weight than the public interest in confirming or denying whether the information is held. The balance therefore favours maintaining the neither confirm nor deny position.