

Date: 29th January 2026
Our ref: FOI/25/015602/M

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: FOI/25/015602/M

I write in connection with your request for information dated 03/10/2026, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

I am writing under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to request information held by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) concerning the armed police incident at a Manchester synagogue on 2–3 October 2025, in which two people – including a member of the synagogue – were fatally shot by GMP officers.

This request seeks factual and policy information to inform scholarly research on police accountability, the use of lethal force, and the militarisation of policing in the UK.

A. Firearms and Ammunition

- 1. The make, model, and calibre of each firearm authorised for use by the officers deployed in this incident.**
- 2. The type and specification of ammunition carried by those officers.**
- 3. A list of firearms and ammunition types currently authorised for routine deployment by GMP armed response officers.**
- 4. Copies of any procurement records since 2015 relating to firearms and ammunition purchases.**

B. Rules of Engagement and Doctrine

- 5. Copies of GMP's current policies/SOPs on the use of firearms in public settings, including guidance on 'shoot to incapacitate' or 'shoot to kill'.**
 - 6. Guidance governing officer response to bladed-weapon suspects (knife attacks) – including whether lethal force against the torso/head is authorised as opposed to aiming to incapacitate (limbs).**
 - 7. The precise wording of GMP's use-of-force continuum when confronting an armed suspect (including specifically one armed with a knife).**
 - 8. Confirmation whether less-lethal options (e.g. Taser, baton round) were carried, were available, or considered by officers at the synagogue incident.**
- For each item, if disclosure is refused, please specify the exemption applied and provide the public interest test reasoning.**

Result of Searches

Following receipt of your request searches were conducted within Greater Manchester Police (GMP) to locate the requested information. I can confirm the information requested is held by GMP. However, I am not obliged to provide the information requested as exemptions apply.

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 question 1, 2 and 8 of this request is:

Section 30(1)(2)(a) - Investigation and Proceedings Conducted by Public Authorities

Section 30 is a class based qualified exemption, there is a requirement to carry out a public interest test, which can be found below.

Section 30 - Factors Favouring Disclosure

To disclose the information requested into the public domain would show GMP's accountability and satisfy the public that investigations into the incidents are being conducted.

Section 30 – Factors Favouring Non-Disclosure

Conversely to the factors in favour of disclosure, to publicly release the data that is related to investigations that remain open may seriously undermine GMP's ability to complete those investigations to a full and correct conclusion. The primary public interest is to protect the integrity of the criminal investigation. Releasing information while a case is active could prejudice the collection of evidence, identify witnesses or reveal investigation techniques.

Balance Test

When balancing the public interest Greater Manchester Police must consider whether the information should be released into the public domain. Arguments need to be weighed against each other.

The most persuasive reason for disclosing the information would be openness. However, this needs to be weighed against the strongest reasons for non-disclosure which is the impact on GMP's ability to complete investigations to a full and correct conclusion.

Having considered all factors for and against disclosure, the reason against disclosure outweighs the reason for disclosure and so the decision at this time is to maintain the above exemption and withhold the information from disclosure.

The exemption which applies to question 3, 4 and 5 of this request is:

Section 31(1)(a)(b) – Law Enforcement

Section 31 is prejudice based and qualified exemptions; there is a requirement to articulate the harm that would be caused in disclosing such information as well as carrying out a public interest test, which can be seen below.

Harm

Disclosure of information such as the type of 'guns and ammunition' which are routinely carried by officer, in particular following the major incident outside the Heaton Park Hebrew Congregation Synagogue, and the policies which firearms officers adhere to would reveal tactical capabilities and vulnerabilities and would compromise the efficient and effective conduct of Greater Manchester Police during these deployments.

The safety of the public is of paramount importance to Greater Manchester Police and to release details operational details would compromise the safety of the public that Greater Manchester Police serve to protect.

Furthermore, this would impact future law enforcement capabilities of Greater Manchester Police in the prevention and detection of crime as criminals' intent on committing crime would have an insight on how and when police resources are used.

Factors in Favour of Disclosure

To disclose the information request would adhere to the basic principle of being open and transparent. It would also lead to a better public awareness of the workings of the police force.

Factors in Favouring Non-Disclosure

Disclosure of the specific firearms and equipment used by armed officers and in depth policies would be likely to prejudice the prevention and detection of crime and the apprehension and prosecution of offenders. Knowledge of specific weapons and ammunition available to officers could enable individuals or groups with criminal intent to take measure to defeat or avoid police tactics. This could place officers and members of the public at risk of harm.

Disclosure would provide those individuals within the criminal fraternity who wish to attack the police or members of the public with a significant operational advantage. The information could also be used to target locations perceived as less resourced or to develop tactics to divert resources away from locations that they wish to target. This would clearly jeopardise the ability of Greater Manchester Police to respond appropriately to criminal activity and thereby protect the public.

The safety of the public is of paramount importance to Greater Manchester Police and to release the requested information would compromise the safety of the community that Greater Manchester Police serve to protect and place individuals, including officers, at risk of harm.

Balance Test

When balancing the public interest Greater Manchester Police must consider whether the information should be released into the public domain. Arguments need to be weighed against each other.

The most persuasive reason for disclosing the information would be openness. However, this needs to be weighed against the strongest reason for non-disclosure which is the fact that individuals may be placed at risk of harm and the effect it may have on the prevention and detection of crime and protecting the people and communities we serve.

Having considered all the factors for and against disclosure, the reason against disclosure outweighs the reason for disclosure and so the decision at this time is to maintain the above exemption and withhold the information from disclosure.

Response to non-exempt questions

Question 6 – There is no guidance or policy.

Question 7 – There is no fixed wording used when engaging with an armed suspect.

Please see below some links to information available in the public domain

- GMP Firearms are governed by the AP-APP. [Armed policing | College of Policing](#)
- Use of Force is decided by the individual officer using NDM. [National decision model | College of Policing](#)