



Date: 17/04/2026
Our ref: 01/FOI/25/015763/C

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/25/015763/C

I write in connection with your request for information dated 17/04/2026, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

I would like to make a request about information I believe Greater Manchester Police received from Northern Constabulary 30 years ago.

In the course of its investigation into the June 2, 1994, murder of [REDACTED] in Orkney, Northern Constabulary made contact with several police forces about murders in their areas. This included Greater Manchester (according to information provided by Police Scotland).

I would like to request:

- 1. Any correspondence, reports and memos that were received from Northern Constabulary regarding [REDACTED] murder.*
- 2. The dates in which contact was made by Northern Constabulary.*
- 3. Any responses that were provided to Northern Constabulary's enquiries.*
- 4. The dates in which these responses were provided to Northern Constabulary.*
- 5. Any "messages", "actions" or other entries from HOLMES regarding [REDACTED] murder.*
- 6. A complete list of any potential types of connections which were considered by the two forces (i.e. the possible use of the same kind of bullets, the possible use of the same firearm, similarly motivated crimes, etc). I'm keen to get a sense of how in-depth the considerations of the two forces were in this respect.*

I am also interested specifically in any information about [REDACTED] murder that may be held in the files from the investigation into the March 12, 1995 murder of [REDACTED] in [REDACTED]. From the files from this investigation in particular, I would like to also request responses to questions 1-6 above.

If any documents are withheld in their entirety, please provide me with their name/title, their date, and the how many pages long they are.

My main interest is in what Northern Constabulary was telling other police forces about the Orkney murder - not about any actual connections between crimes (which I think there are unlikely to be).

It might help in locating the files if I provide some further information about the Orkney murder case. Firstly, the victim's name is sometimes spelt as [REDACTED]. His surname might also be spelt as [REDACTED]. Furthermore, he is sometimes referred to by his nickname [REDACTED]. The SIO of the investigation was [REDACTED] and his deputy was [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] also worked on the inquiry. If you can think of any other information about the Orkney case that might help find any of the requested information, please get back to me and I will endeavour to provide it.

Please feel free to get back to me if you require any queries about this request.

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 no information is held by GMP in relation to the murder of [REDACTED].

I can confirm the information requested into the murder of [REDACTED] is held by GMP. However, I am not obliged to provide the information requested 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** and **Section 38(1)(a)(b) – Health and Safety**.

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.

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 victim's surviving families and friends 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

surviving family members of the victims. Disclosing such information could cause further distress and hurt to grieving families, many of whom would no doubt still be greatly traumatised by the events. Such information being disclosed could resurface these traumatic experiences and cause the victim's 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 murder are being conducted. 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 is related to investigations that remain ongoing may seriously undermine GMP's ability to complete the investigations to a full and correct conclusion.

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 and that information relates to deceased persons, 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 loved ones and friends of the victim.

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 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.