

Date: 16th April 2026
Our ref: FOI/26/016634/T

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: FOI/26/016634/T

I write in connection with your request for information dated 27/03/2026, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

I am a reporter with the Press Association and I would like to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Please provide the following information held by Greater Manchester Police:

Copies of any written observation logs, summaries, or statements provided to Greater Manchester Police by Democracy Volunteers in relation to the investigation into alleged 'family voting' at the Gorton and Denton by-election (26 February 2026).

To assist with processing this request:

- I am seeking recorded material already held, rather than any new analysis or interpretation.***
- I am content to receive redacted versions of documents where necessary, including the removal of any personal data.***
- If multiple documents fall within scope, I am happy to receive a representative sample or a single example document.***

If it is helpful in avoiding exemptions or reducing the scope of the request, I would be content to limit the request further.

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 request has been exempt from disclosure by virtue of the following exemptions:

Section 30(1) – Investigations and Proceedings Conducted by Public Authorities
Section 40(2) - Personal Information

Section 30(1) is a class based qualified exemption; there is a requirement to carry out a public interest test, which can be seen below.

Section 40(2) is an absolute exemption; there is no right to the information under the FOI Act. A public interest test is not relevant to absolute exemptions, therefore no public interest test is required.

Section 30 - Factors Favouring Disclosure

To disclose the exempt information into the public domain, would show GMP's accountability, and satisfy the public that the investigations were being conducted correctly. It would also show GMP's use of public funds.

Section 30 - Factors Favouring Non-Disclosure

Conversely to the factors in favour of disclosure, the disclosure sets a precedent as to how GMP responds over such questions which may inhibit the ability to prevent and detect crime in the future, as individuals may well be less inclined to co-operate with the police if they were aware that the information they provide, or is held by GMP would likely be disclosed to the world in circumstances sitting outside the criminal justice process.

Balancing test

When balancing the public interest Greater Manchester Police has to 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. This needs to be weighed against the strongest reason for non-disclosure which is jeopardising future prevention and detection of crime.

Having considered all the factors for and against disclosure it is my belief that in this case, the reason against disclosure outweighs the reason for disclosure and so the decision at this time to maintain the above exemptions and withhold the information from disclosure.

In accordance with the Act, this letter represents a Refusal Notice.

Further information

Please see the link below for information available in the public domain.

[Criminal investigation concludes into 'family voting' allegation at Gorton and Denton by-election | Greater Manchester Police](#)