

Date: 14/05/2026
Our ref: 01/FOI/26/016796/K

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/26/016796/K

I write in connection with your request for information dated 29/04/2026, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

REQUEST 1:

All written communications between Greater Manchester Police and Britain First, or any representatives acting on their behalf, between 1 January 2026 and 18 April 2026.

REQUEST 2:

Details of any meetings or structured liaison between GMP officers and Britain First organisers in advance of 18 April 2026, including dates, attendees, and the purpose of any such meetings

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 some of the information requested is held by GMP.

However, I am not obliged to provide all the information requested as 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 exemptions which apply to this request are:

Section 31(1)(a)(b) – Law Enforcement

Section 40(2) Personal Information

Sections 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.

Any names from ***representatives acting on their behalf*** are exempted from disclosure under **Section 40(2) Personal Information** – this information constitutes personal data of an identifiable living individual/s, and to disclose this information would breach the principles of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and 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 with no requirement to complete a public interest test.

Harm S31

Disclosure of the full written details of communications, including emails and meeting notes between protest organisers and the police, would reveal specific operational tactics, resource allocations, and strategic planning used to manage public demonstrations. To release this information would provide a detailed insight into the tactical capabilities and vulnerabilities of Greater Manchester Police (GMP) when policing large-scale events, thereby compromising the efficient and effective conduct of the force during both current and future public order operations.

The safety of the public, the protestors, and police officers is of paramount importance to Greater Manchester Police. Disclosing these internal deliberations and tactical agreements would compromise the safety of the public that GMP serves to protect by allowing those intent on causing disruption or criminal damage to predict police movements and response thresholds.

Furthermore, this disclosure would undermine future law enforcement capabilities in the prevention and detection of crime. Individuals seeking to circumvent police cordons or exploit operational gaps would gain an unfair advantage, directly impacting the ability of Greater Manchester Police to maintain public order and protect the rights of others.

Section 31 – Factors Favouring Disclosure

Disclosing the communications and meeting notes between protest organisers and the police would demonstrate the accountability and transparency of Greater Manchester Police in how they balance the right to protest with the need to maintain public order

Providing this information would encourage public awareness and informed debate regarding policing strategies and the use of police powers during public events. It would serve to reassure the community that police operations are proportionate, neutral, and lawful

Furthermore, disclosure would provide a clear insight into Greater Manchester Police's use of resources, showing how public funds are being allocated to manage large-scale demonstrations. Increased transparency may also foster greater trust between the police and the public, potentially leading to better cooperation and more information being provided to the force for the future prevention and detection of crime.

Section 31 – Factors Favouring Non-Disclosure

To disclose the specific details of operations, including tactical emails and meeting notes with protest organisers, would compromise the efficient and effective conduct of Greater Manchester Police. Releasing this information would provide a detailed map of future law enforcement tactics, rendering

current and future security measures less effective. The safety of the public is of paramount importance to Greater Manchester Police, and the release of such sensitive operational data would compromise the safety of the community, protestors, and officers that the force has sworn to protect.

Disclosure would result in a significant impact on police resources, hindering the prevention and detection of crime and potentially increasing risks during public events. Providing access to internal communications would offer an advantage to those intent on engaging in criminal activity, as it could assist in identifying operational patterns or law enforcement strategies. This would undermine the ability of the police to maintain public order and could lead to an increased fear of crime within the community, as the public may perceive that security measures have been compromised or that vulnerabilities are being exploited

Furthermore, disclosure would significantly undermine the necessary relationship of trust and confidence between Greater Manchester Police and protest organisers. Effective public order management relies on open, candid, and often sensitive communication to ensure events pass safely.

If organisers believe that their private deliberations, logistical concerns, or negotiated agreements would be made public in the future, they may become less forthcoming or refuse to engage with the police entirely. A breakdown in this voluntary communication would deprive the force of vital intelligence, making it harder to plan for public safety and increasing the risk of spontaneous, unmanaged, or confrontational demonstrations that would place a greater strain on police resources.

Balance Test

When balancing the public interest, Greater Manchester Police must consider whether the information should be released into the public domain. Arguments for and against disclosure must be carefully weighed. The most persuasive reason for disclosing the information is Greater Manchester Police's accountability and the public's right to see how the force balances the right to protest with its duty to maintain order.

This must be weighed against the strongest reasons for non-disclosure: the duty of the police service to enforce the law, prevent and detect crime, and protect the communities we serve. In this case, disclosure would reveal sensitive tactical capabilities and would undermine the cooperation on future communications with protest organisers. If a relationship of trust is broken, organisers may cease to engage with the police, leading to unmanaged protests that place both the public and officers at significant risk.

The police will not divulge information that would place the safety of any individual at risk or undermine future law enforcement effectiveness. While there is a public interest in the transparency of policing and providing assurance that the force is engaging effectively with protest management, there is a compelling public interest in safeguarding the tactical resource capability of the force. Highlighting specific police focuses or revealing negotiated vulnerabilities would provide a tactical advantage to those intent on causing disruption.

In this case, I believe the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure. Therefore, the case for release is not made out.

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