Information Management & Data Directorate (IMDD)
Information Access Unit

Date: 20th October 2026
Our ref: FOI/26/017700/Q

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: FOI/26/017700/Q

I write in connection with your request for information dated 23/09/2026, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

This is a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. It follows your refusal notice of 22 September 2026, our ref FOI/26/017510/M.
I note that my original request stated: "If item 4 would exceed the cost limit across all deployment areas, please provide it for the earliest deployment area alone, since that area offers the longest post-deployment record." Your cost estimate addresses the work required to identify boundaries and extract data for each individual deployment area, which is the version of item 4 I had already said was not required. I am therefore resubmitting the request with item 4 expressed in its narrower form.
1. The list of areas in which Operation Vulcan has been deployed, with the start date of each deployment and the dates on which each area transitioned between the clear, hold and build phases, where those transitions have occurred.
2. The criteria or framework used to decide when an area moves from clear to hold, and from hold to build.
3. The officer and staff full-time equivalents assigned to Operation Vulcan, by year, and its annual cost if separately identifiable.
4. For the earliest deployment area only: recorded crime and incident counts by month, from twelve months before deployment to the most recent month held, in whatever geographic unit the force uses to monitor the operation.
5. Any analysis conducted of displacement of crime from deployment areas to surrounding areas, and a copy or summary of it.
6. Any internal or external evaluation of Operation Vulcan, including any assessment of whether reductions have been sustained in areas that have reached the hold or build phases.
Items 2, 5 and 6 are requests for documents and do not require any geographic extraction or analytical work. Items 1 and 3 concern deployment dates and staffing, which I would not expect to be held at case level.
If any part of this request would exceed the cost limit, please treat the numbered items in the order listed and advise under section 16 which items can be answered within the limit.

Where a precise metric is not held, please provide the nearest held equivalent and state its definition. Machine-readable format (CSV or Excel) is preferred for items 3 and 4.

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 all the information requested as an exemption applies.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires Greater Manchester Police, 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

Question 3 has been exempted from disclosure by virtue of the following exemption:

Section 31(1)(a)(b) – Law enforcement

Section 31 is a qualified and prejudice-based exemption and as such, subject to a harm and public interest test.

Harm

Disclosure of the number of Police Officers and staff in specific areas of policing reveals tactical capability and vulnerabilities from force to force and would compromise the efficient and effective conduct of Greater Manchester Police. To disclose operational strength would hinder Greater Manchester Police in law enforcement capabilities.

The safety of the public is of a paramount importance to Greater Manchester Police and to release the number of police officers that are specifically dedicated to Operation Vulcan would compromise the safety of the public that Greater Manchester Police serve to protect.

Furthermore, this would impact on the law enforcement capabilities of Greater Manchester Police in the prevention and detection of crime and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders. This would also give an advantage to that are intent on committing crimes and avoid detection.

Factors in favour of disclosure

To disclose the number of FTE officers and staff there are within Operation Vulcan would show accountability of Greater Manchester Police in performing a key policing function. Disclosure would encourage public awareness and debate and may reduce crime or lead to more information being provided to Greater Manchester Police from the public for the prevention and detection of crime. Disclosure could be seen how Greater Manchester Police are using its resources to prevent crime.

Furthermore, there is always a need to disclose information which relates to the spending of public money. It is in the public's interest to see how resources are balanced across Greater Manchester Police.

Factors against disclosure

To disclose details of police officers and staff that are specifically dedicated to Operation Vulcan would compromise the efficient and effective conduct of the force, especially the force's future law enforcement tactics being compromised. 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 at risk.

Disclosure would lead to a greater impact on police resources, in that this could hinder the prevention and detection of crime and more crime being committed. It would give advantage to those individuals intent on criminal activity as it may assist potential criminals in evading the police as more vulnerable areas of lower policing levels would become evident. A fear of crime will be realised as criminals identify vulnerable areas and target and exploit these areas resulting in the public being in fear of more criminal activity occurring.

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 Greater Manchester Police's accountability. This needs to be weighed against the strongest reason for non-disclosure which is the police service is charged with enforcing the law; preventing and detecting crime and protecting the people/communities we serve.

In this case this is the fact that individuals may be placed at risk and the affect it may have on the prevention and detection of crime. In this case, I believe the case for disclosure is not made out.

The police will not divulge any information that would place the safety of an individual at risk or undermine law enforcement. Whilst there is a public interest in the transparency of policing, and in this case providing assurance that the police service is appropriately and effectively engaging with the threat posed by criminal activity, there is a very strong public interest in safeguarding the tactical resource capability which could highlight which forces are focussing more on this type of investigation than other force areas.

In accordance with the Act, this letter represents a Refusal Notice for the particular piece of information.

Question 1

Operation Vulcan was launched in 2022.

Deployment Area	Deployment Start Date	Deployment End Date	Hold Phase Commenced
Strangeways, Cheetham Hill, Manchester	November 2022	September 2023	September 2023
Piccadilly Gardens, Manchester	September 2023	March 2025	March 2025
Derker, Oldham	March 2025	February 2026	February 2026
Brinnington, Stockport	February 2026	Ongoing	Not yet transitioned

Question 2

There is no fixed or prescribed set of criteria that determines when a locality transitions between Clear, Hold and Build phases.

Question 3

Exempt under Section 31.

Question 4

The below data relates to Strangeways/Cheetham Hill deployment.

Recorded Crimes

Month	Years						Monthly Total
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	
January		12	32	15	7	15	81
February		13	22	7	17	12	71
March		21	38	13	20	15	107
April		32	20	8	14	20	94
May		18	26	13	17	8	82
June		15	20	16	14	23	88
July		44	9	8	20	29	110
August		30	17	15	19	22	103
September		19	14	14	6		53
October		20	28	8	16		72
November	15	28	14	19	17		93
December	16	35	19	19	18		107
Grand Total	**31**	**287**	**259**	**155**	**185**	**144**	**1061**

Recorded Incidents

Month	Year						Monthly Total
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	
January		39	74	42	56	49	**260**
February		51	74	50	44	54	**273**
March		64	78	41	75	49	**307**
April		69	63	40	58	71	**301**
May		60	74	50	52	63	**299**
June		49	67	53	63	70	**302**
July		68	52	40	56	70	**286**
August		83	86	71	70	80	**390**
September		62	56	59	59	3	**239**
October		80	60	42	58		**240**
November	66	85	60	59	85		**355**
December	47	94	53	62	71		**327**
Grand Total	**113**	**804**	**797**	**609**	**747**	**509**	**3579**

Question 5

No information held. GMP does not hold any specific analysis or reports relating to crime displacement arising from Operation Vulcan deployments.

Question 6

No information held. GMP does not hold any internal or external evaluation reports relating specifically to Operation Vulcan.