



Date: 19/08/2026
Our ref: 01/FOI/26/017109/H

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/26/017109/H

I write in connection with your request for information dated 22/06/2026, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

I would like to request the following information from your organisation relating to vehicle registration plates, enforcement notices and cases involving incorrect or fraudulent vehicle identification.

I would be grateful if you could provide the following information for the last three years, broken down into calendar years:

1. Number of charges

Please provide the total number of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs), Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs), road user charging notices, bus lane penalties, parking penalties or other vehicle-related enforcement notices.

2. Enforcement notices

Please provide the total number of enforcement notices that could not be pursued because:

- *The registration mark could not be reliably read.*
- *cloned vehicle / cloned registration plate*
- *registration plate altered, obscured or otherwise fraudulent*
- *The vehicle identified in the notice was determined not to be the offending vehicle*
- *Please remove or inform us if emergency vehicles are part of this data*

3. Cancelled charges

Please provide the total number of charges that were subsequently cancelled:

- *The registration mark could not be reliably read.*
- *cloned vehicle / cloned registration plate*
- *registration plate altered, obscured or otherwise fraudulent*
- *The vehicle identified in the notice was determined not to be the offending vehicle*
- *Please remove or inform us if emergency vehicles are part of this data*

4. Complaints/reports

Please provide the number of reports received from motorists claiming their vehicle registration plate had been cloned Please provide the number of cases where your organisation accepted that a cloned registration plate had been used.

5. Intelligence on fraudulent plates

Please provide any strategic assessments, problem profiles or intelligence reports produced concerning the growing use of cloned, ghost or fraudulent registration plates.

6. Value of revenue lost

Please provide the number and estimated total value (£) of penalties, charges, fines, tolls or other enforcement revenues that were collected over the last three years, broken down into financial years.

Please provide the number and estimated total value (£) of penalties, charges, fines, tolls or other enforcement revenues that could not be collected, were cancelled, written off, refunded or otherwise became unrecoverable as a result of:

Cloned registration plates.

Altered, obscured, ghost or otherwise fraudulent registration plates.

Cases where the offending vehicle could not be reliably identified.

Insufficient ANPR or camera evidence.

Please provide this for the last three years, broken down into financial years.

Please provide the number and total value (£) of enforcement notices that were cancelled after the recipient successfully demonstrated that their vehicle registration plate had been cloned..

If data is not held

If any of the above categories are not specifically recorded, please confirm this and instead provide any alternative metric or closest equivalent you hold (for example, failed reads, unreadable plates, or enforcement flags).

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 the information you have requested is held by GMP.

1. GMP's Central Ticket Office (CTO) only administer GMP issued fixed penalty notices. The other types of notices specified would be issued and administered by Local Authorities. The below provides the number of notices relating to vehicle registration plate offences submitted to the CTO to process by way of fixed penalty procedure.

YEAR	AMOUNT
2024	2867
2025	2758
2026	1313

2. If a registration number could not be determined, then we would not issue an enforcement notice. A notice "*that could not be pursued*" in effect the same as Q3 ie, a cancellation.

3. As above, we would not issue a notice if we could not determine the registration number however, there are occasions when our enquiries reveal the vehicle for which the notice was issued is not the offending one ie cloned number plates. The number of notices cancelled in such cases are below:

2024	2025	2026
848	375	159

4. The CTO do not hold specific records on the total of 'cloned plate' correspondence received however, most of the above cancellations would fall into this category.
5. GMP hold no problem profiles or strategic assessments for this matter. Intelligence reports are held, but I am unable to provide this information as exemptions apply.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires Greater Manchester Police, when refusing to provide such information (because this 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 information you have requested is exempt from disclosure by virtue of **Section 31(1)(a)(b) – Law Enforcement** and **Section 41(1) – Information Provided in Confidence**.

Section 31 is a qualified and prejudice-based exemption and as such, subject to a harm and public interest test. Section 41 is an absolute, class-based exemption. There is no requirement to consider the public interest for absolute exemptions.

S31(1) - Evidence of Harm

A Freedom of Information Act request is not a private transaction. Both the request itself and any information disclosed, are considered suitable for open publication. This is because under the Act, any information disclosed is released into the wider public domain, effectively to the world, not just to an individual.

Whilst not questioning the motives of the applicant, providing any further information relating to intelligence provided to, and gathered by, Greater Manchester Police would reveal intelligence gathering capabilities, which would be of intelligence value to criminals.

Disclosure of intelligence will mean that those members of the public who are committing crimes and pose a risk to the public, would be able to formulate ways to circumvent or overwhelm GMP and evade our intelligence gathering capabilities. If disclosed the tactics used by GMP will become less effective and will mean that the police are not able to detect and prevent crime, apprehend, or prosecute offenders or to administer justice for the wider community.

There is always a duty of care to the general public and the Police Service has a clear responsibility to ensure the prevention or detection of crime, and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders is always delivered. There are several tactics available to the Police Service to ensure the effective delivery of operational law enforcement. In this case, specialist policing activity is required to undertake fair investigations into vehicle crime where it may be necessary to progress a range of reasonable lines of enquiry.

As such, the disclosure of any further information which would hinder the forces law enforcement functions cannot be in the public interest.

Public Interest Test

Factors favouring disclosure for S31 - Where public funds are being spent, there is a public interest in accountability and justifying the use of public money. Disclosure of the requested information would enable the public to assess whether the force has appropriately taken steps to help reduce and detect crime by such means as gathering intelligence. Release would enhance public debate as to whether the force is appropriately and effectively engaging with the threat posed by criminals.

Factors against disclosure for S31 - Disclosure that reveals our operational capabilities would compromise law enforcement tactics. Criminals could use the information to target areas of perceived weakness in the belief that their activities are less likely to be detected. It may be used by criminals who are intent on pursuing their criminal activity, to identify and exploit the limitations of these resources.

To release intelligence would have a detrimental effect on our policing capabilities. Therefore, to mitigate any risks, disclosure of this information needs to be protected, to ensure that those with intent to do so cannot manipulate it or undermine its purpose in any way.

Any disclosure of information which would compromise law enforcement tactics and thus lead to more crime being committed by reducing the opportunity for the prevention and detection of crime, would therefore increase the risk to public safety, which is not in the public interest.

Balancing Test

Law enforcement is of paramount importance and the Police service will not disclose information if to do so would undermine its purpose and place the safety of individuals at risk. Whilst there is a public interest in the transparency of using public money in policing appropriately and effectively engaging with the threat posed by criminals, there is a very strong public interest in safeguarding the integrity of police investigations and operations in this area.

As much as there is public interest in knowing that policing activity is appropriate and balanced in matters of law enforcement, this will only be overridden in exceptional circumstances. Any disclosure which hinders our capability and assists criminals cannot be in the public interest.

It is for these reasons that I have determined that the balance test favours non-disclosure of the requested information.

6. The fixed penalty amount for number plates offences is £100. For 24/25, the total amount of fixed penalties paid is listed. For 25/26 and 26/27, not all notices have been finalised so the figure is made of those finalised by fixed penalty + those not yet finalised (ie estimated). Notices which have progressed to court process (fines) are not included as that would be His Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service data, not held by GMP. Please contact HMCTS for this information. No information is held for any other type of notice as these are not issued or administered by GMP.

The figures have then been multiplied by £100 to provide the value.

Fin Year	Amount	Value
2024 - 25	2338	£233800
2025 - 26	2144	£214400
2026 - 27	607	£60700

7. In line with the above responses for Q3:

Fin Year	Amount	Value
2024 - 25	663	£66,300
2025 - 26	373	£37,300
2026 - 27	49	£4,900