

Date: 28/08/2026
Our ref: 01/FOI/26/017467/A

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/26/017467/A

I write in connection with your request for information dated 17/08/2026, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

My request concerns the unsolved murder investigation of [REDACTED], which took place on [REDACTED]. A formal verdict of unlawful killing was recorded at his inquest [REDACTED].

Given that over 27 years have passed since the incident, I am requesting access to the historical public-facing summaries and administrative data concerning this case. Specifically, I request the following:

- 1. Any brief, non-sensitive/ sensitive historical summaries, crime logs, or media appeal timelines held by the Cold Case Review Unit regarding this specific homicide.*
- 2. The dates or years of any formal cold case reviews conducted into this murder since the year 2000.*
- 3. The current status of the £10,000 reward offered during the initial investigation (i.e., whether the reward remains active or has lapsed).*

I understand that active investigative files are subject to exemptions under Section 30 and Section 40 of the Act. Therefore, to ensure compliance, I am explicitly requesting any sensitive or non-sensitive intelligence, names of living witnesses, personal data of suspects, or active lines of enquiry. I am requesting administrative data and historical overview documents that can be released without harming the integrity of the open case.

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 the information requested is held by GMP.

However, I am not obliged to supply this information held as an exemption applies. The request is exempt from disclosure by virtue of the following exemption:

Section 30(1) – Investigations and Proceedings Conducted by Public Authorities

Harm

As an unsolved murder, the investigation remains active and subject to ongoing review. There is a significant risk that disclosure of operational information relating to the investigation, including review activity, investigative summaries, timelines, or information relating to reward arrangements, would undermine the effectiveness of current and future investigative efforts.

Although the homicide occurred in 1999, the passage of time does not lessen the sensitivity of information held for the purposes of the investigation. Murder investigations do not become inactive solely due to age and remain capable of generating new lines of enquiry through advances in forensic techniques, intelligence development, witness engagement, and periodic case reviews.

Disclosure would reveal aspects of the police's knowledge, investigative activity, level of ongoing engagement, and areas of continuing interest. Individuals connected to the offence, whether directly or indirectly, could use this information to assess the current status of the investigation, identify evidential gaps, understand the extent of police knowledge, or adapt their behaviour accordingly. Such disclosure would therefore risk compromising present or future investigative opportunities.

Furthermore, seemingly innocuous information, such as the dates of review activity or the status of a reward, may appear harmless when viewed in isolation. However, when combined with information already in the public domain, it could contribute to a wider "mosaic" picture of the investigation. This may provide insights into investigative strategies, priorities, resourcing, and lines of enquiry that are not otherwise publicly known.

There is a strong public interest in ensuring that law enforcement agencies can investigate serious crime effectively and bring offenders to justice. Releasing operational details relating to a homicide would prejudice the ability of investigators to conduct inquiries free from unnecessary external influence and could adversely affect the prospects of securing future evidential opportunities and, ultimately, obtaining a prosecution.

Factors Favouring Disclosure

Disclosure of the requested information would promote openness and transparency regarding the handling of a long-running homicide investigation. There is a recognised public interest in understanding how police resources have been deployed in connection with an unsolved murder and the extent to which investigative opportunities have continued to be pursued over time. Providing information relating to the investigation could assist the public in understanding the approach taken by the police to reviewing historic serious crime.

There is also a legitimate public interest in demonstrating accountability for investigative decisions made throughout the lifespan of the case. Where a murder remains unresolved for a significant period, disclosure may provide reassurance that the matter has not been overlooked and that appropriate consideration has been given to identifying and pursuing opportunities to progress the investigation.

Furthermore, disclosure could contribute to public confidence in GMP's management of cold case investigations. Greater transparency regarding review processes and investigative activity may help to demonstrate the commitment of law enforcement agencies to seeking justice for victims and their families, regardless of the age of the offence.

Factors Favouring Non-Disclosure

The requested information forms part of material that has been created, considered, developed and utilised for the purposes of a murder investigation which remains active and unsolved. Whilst the offence occurred in 1999, the case continues to be subject to ongoing investigative assessment and review. Information generated and retained for these purposes remains operationally sensitive and its disclosure would risk undermining the effectiveness of both current and future investigative activity.

Disclosure of historical summaries, crime logs, review dates, media appeal timelines, or information concerning reward arrangements could reveal information about the nature, extent and direction of police activity. Such disclosures would provide insights into the investigative strategies adopted, the level of ongoing engagement with the case, and the specific areas that have been subject to police scrutiny. This would reveal aspects of operational policing activity which are not otherwise publicly known.

There is a significant risk that individuals connected to the offence, whether directly or indirectly, could use disclosed information to assess the current state of police knowledge and investigative focus. Such information may assist those individuals in identifying evidential gaps, understanding the scope of enquiries undertaken, or drawing conclusions about the strength of evidence available to investigators. The release of information could therefore prejudice future opportunities to develop intelligence, obtain evidence, or progress lines of enquiry.

In addition, information that appears innocuous when viewed in isolation may become sensitive when combined with material already in the public domain. The release of seemingly limited details can contribute to a wider mosaic picture of an investigation, enabling inferences to be drawn about investigative priorities, methodologies, resources and areas of continuing interest. This cumulative effect creates a real risk of prejudice to the investigation and to future efforts aimed at identifying and prosecuting those responsible for the offence.

There is a particularly strong public interest in protecting the integrity of unsolved homicide investigations and ensuring that investigators are able to pursue all available lines of enquiry without compromising operational effectiveness. The public interest is best served by safeguarding information that may assist in the detection of crime and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders. The disclosure of operational information relating to an active murder investigation would risk undermining these aims and could adversely affect the prospects of securing justice in the future.

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.

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.