



Date: 17/09/2026
Our ref: 01/FOI/26/017663/C

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST REFERENCE NO: 01/FOI/26/017663/C

I write in connection with your request for information dated 16/09/2026, received by Greater Manchester Police (GMP) for the following information:

I am making a new request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 following your internal review decision of 8 September 2026 under reference 01/INT/26/000375/M. That decision invited me to submit "a refined request seeking a smaller volume of information", giving as its first example "a single policy applicable on a specified date", with any further material to be requested separately afterwards. This request follows that approach.

This new request does not withdraw or amend the original requests decided under reference 01/FOI/26/017382/W. I retain my right to challenge that decision before the Information Commissioner.

Please provide an electronic copy of GMP's Voluntary Attendance procedure in the version in force on 13 November 2024. This is the procedure identified in item 1 of my request of 5 August 2026 and under Recommendation 1 of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority's published progress report of 11 November 2024 on the implementation of the Baird Inquiry recommendations, which records that "In March 2024 GMP launched its new Voluntary Attendance procedure".

Please include the title, document-control, version-history and approval pages forming part of that version. If its version number or implementation or effective date is not stated there, please also provide those recorded particulars from the relevant existing policy or document-control register entry. This does not extend to separate approval correspondence, meeting records or a newly prepared chronology.

If the procedure was held under another title, formed part of a larger policy or procedure, or was maintained as an approved intranet page, please provide the corresponding historical

record or relevant section as it stood on 13 November 2024, with its applicable document-control information, and identify its title. I seek the historical information GMP now holds, not a newly reconstructed version. If the requested historical information is not held, please say so. The request is limited to this procedure at this date and the document-control information described above. It does not include the current version, training materials, the Suspect Policy & Procedure, arrest-pack templates, or separate documents merely linked or cross-referenced by the procedure.

I seek an institutional procedure, not records about any identifiable investigation or individual. Routine staff names, identifiers, signatures and contact details may be omitted as outside scope, while retaining roles, ranks and responsible units. Passwords, access credentials and technical security configurations are also outside scope. This exclusion does not extend to ordinary procedural requirements for making, recording, reviewing or approving decisions, including the identification of the record or system on which a decision must be recorded.

For any in-scope information considered exempt, please disclose the non-exempt remainder, identifying the exemption relied upon and the reasons required by section 17, with an indication of the passages or categories of information to which it applies.

If GMP considers that this reduced scope would still impose a disproportionate burden, please provide advice and assistance under section 16, in accordance with the ICO's guidance on burdensome requests, identifying the specific difficulty and any further narrowing that could address it. I would welcome contact before any refusal so that a practicable refinement can be explored.

Your internal review decision accepts that there is "a legitimate public interest in understanding policies governing" arrest and voluntary attendance, and that the requests have "a serious purpose and are not frivolous". Disclosure of this procedure would enable public scrutiny of the institutional standard GMP adopted for that decision. This request substantially reduces the scope of the original requests while retaining that public-accountability purpose.

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 you with all the information held 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.

Where redactions occur in chapter 5.1 of the attached Voluntary Attendance Policy and Procedure document, it is because that information is exempt from disclosure by virtue of **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.

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 details on intelligence gathering would reveal our operational procedures, which would be of intelligence value to criminals.

Disclosure of operational methods at the police's disposal, including those used during the voluntary attendance and voluntary interview process will mean that those people who are committing crimes and pose a risk to the public, would be able to formulate ways to circumvent or overwhelm those procedures. 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 as a whole 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 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 at appropriate times. 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 believing 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 information relating to operational capacity and capability utilised for intelligence gathering 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.

Where other redactions occur in the attached document, that is because that information is exempt under **Section 40(2) – Personal Information**.

Section 40(2) represents information that identifies a living individual, to disclose this information would breach the principles of 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 and there is no requirement to conduct a public interest test for such data.

Please see the attached document. Some further information is publicly available on the College of Policing website: [Investigative interviewing | College of Policing](#).



GREATER MANCHESTER
POLICE

Voluntary Attendance Interview

Procedure

April 2024

DATE THIS VERSION IMPLEMENTED: 21.04.2024

DATE NEXT REVIEW IS DUE: 31.03.2025

CHIEF OFFICER SPONSOR: [REDACTED]

PROCEDURE OWNER: [REDACTED]

PROCEDURE AUTHOR: [REDACTED]

APPROVED BY: [REDACTED]

GOVERNMENT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION: Official-Sensitive

IS THE PROCEDURE NEW OR REVISED: Revised

VERSION NO	DATE	SUMMARY OF CHANGES	AUTHOR(S)	PUBLISHED ON CCOs
1.0	9 Nov 2015	New procedure	[REDACTED]	
1.1	July 2020	Change of operating system from ICIS to PoliceWorks. Amended roles and responsibilities, terms and definitions. Clarification of PoliceWorks (PW) procedure: 5.3-5.4 amended, change of wording, 5.6 addition of PW process, 5.8 – 5.10 change of wording, addition of roles of custody detention officer and office in the case, addition of VA process in PW.	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	
1.2	March 2021	In 2018 revisions were made to the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, Codes E & F which relate to audio and visual recordings of suspect interviews. Addition of suspect interview functionality on mobile device. Appendix A - notifiable occupation replaced by Police Common Law Disclosure Scheme (PCLDS). Addition of referral signposting the Victim Service Toolkit, includes veteran and women support and MVOP. Minor editing/formatting changes made.	[REDACTED]	
2.0	Nov 2021	Re-formatted and updated to provide further clarity and guidance, including flow charts and risk assessment documents.	[REDACTED] [REDACTED]	CCO 2021/47 22 November
2.1	Nov 2021	Minor update to 5.1, foreign nationals.	[REDACTED] [REDACTED]	CCO 2021/48 29 December
2.2	April 2024	5.1 addition of iLeap, 5.2 amended roles and responsibilities, 5.3 special warnings and EDIT testing, 5.5 clarification of OOCR process/roles, appendix A revised to include the above and simplified process, appendix B – revised to include OIC conducting L&D referral.	[REDACTED]	CCO 2024/17 29 April

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1. Introduction and Background

The ability to bring people to justice and hold offenders to account, before the courts if necessary, is a fundamental principle of the criminal justice system.

A significant part of an investigation is the interview. This procedure will help investigating officers to decide whether interview via voluntary attendance (VA) is appropriate, on a case by case basis.

This procedure will ensure that:

- VA is applied fairly and consistently
- victims and suspects are safeguarded, and
- administrative processes are undertaken appropriately including collection of biometric samples and updating the Police National Computer (PNC).

Interviewing suspects who are under arrest brings additional safeguards for victims and offenders due to the oversight and scrutiny provided by the custody sergeant. In effect, VA bypasses the custody sergeant, and it is therefore important to ensure that there is parity across processes and that safeguarding is considered at all stages.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all police officers and staff. It covers all areas of business relating to interviewing suspects who are not under arrest.

3. Roles & Responsibilities

Officer in the case (OIC)

The officer responsible for investigating and creating the case, adding proposed charges/crime references and ensuring both suspect and case are showing as pre-arrest prior to arrival of the suspect. This will enable the correct and existing case to be pulled through to the VA record.

Supervisor (sergeant or above)

The decision maker with regard to the method of disposal for an investigation conducted by the OIC.

Custody sergeant

Responsible for supervising staff and permitting biometric samples to be taken from suspects at a suitable time.

Custody detention officer (CDO)

Responsible for taking biometric samples; updating PNC and LIBRA; updating offences and building charges; setting a court date which will in turn transfer into case along with the court date; producing a charge sheet and printing off the postal charge; disposing of the record; completing the FNO ARCO, I-24/7 and contacting the National Command and Control Unit for checks if required.

District senior leadership team

Responsible for monitoring the use of VA, including ensuring that VA is not being used less often for some ethnic groups than others in similar circumstances.

Responsible for ensuring that all VA records are being managed correctly, including those previously overseen by bail managers.

4. Terms and Definitions

ARCO	ARCO Criminal Records Office
CDO	custody detention officer (sergeant)
CLPD	Common Law Police Disclosure - provisions to supersede the Notifiable Occupations Scheme: professions or occupations (including voluntary work) which bear special trust and responsibility where substantial public interest considerations arise, specifically in relation to the protection of vulnerable adults and children, national security and probity in the administration of justice. The term also applies to less sensitive professions or occupations where probity and integrity may nevertheless be an important factor in preventing crime, for example, those with particular financial responsibilities
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
DO	detention officer
EDL	electronic detention log
FNO	foreign national offender
I-24/7	Interpol secure global police communications system
L&D	Liaison & Diversion Services
LIBRA	Magistrates' Court case management system
NCCU	National Command and Control Unit
OIC	officer in the case
OOCR	Out of Court Resolution
PACE	Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984
PNC	Police National Computer
PW	PoliceWorks
VA	voluntary attendance/attendee
YJS	Youth Justice Service

5. Procedure

For further detail and practice guidance, refer to:

- [Voluntary attendance process map](#)
- [Detention officer process map for voluntary attendees](#)

5.1 Suitability for voluntary attendance

When assessing the suitability of a suspect for VA, the OIC should:

- [REDACTED]
- consider safeguarding of victims, witnesses and the suspect
- discuss with their supervisor and record the reasons for using VA.

Foreign nationals

If the suspect is a foreign national (including an EU/EEA citizen with settled status), complete the following checks before any disposal decision is made:

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

Liaison & Diversion (L&D) Services referral

Any referral needs the agreement of the suspect, but those groups deemed mandatory in custody (i.e. children) should be encouraged to support a referral.

Consider L&D at the earliest point in the process. This will enable the L&D team to consider the referral and contact the suspect before interview to offer support.

Click [here](#) to view the L&D referral form.

5.2 Creating a VA record (supervisor)

A supervisor is responsible for creating the VA record on PoliceWorks (PW), in accordance with the [PoliceWorks VA guide](#). Once created, suspend the record, pending interview. For those offences which require a crime report, submit this before the VA record is created. This will allow the crime number to be used to record the offence details correctly within PW and PNC. The suspect should be attached to the crime report with a status of 'Locate/Trace'. Supervisors should monitor the VA records they have created to ensure these are managed and closed correctly.

5.3 Before the interview - considerations

Common Law Police Disclosure (CLPD)

Consider whether the suspect's employer needs to be contacted in the interests of public safety. If so, consult an officer of superintendent rank or above. For further information about CLPD, click [here](#).

Special warnings

PACE Code C10.10 advises a special warning **after arrest** falls under sections 36-37 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994. Therefore, only when a suspect is under arrest will they become eligible for a special warning. This must form part of the OIC and supervisor's decision making process.

Evidential Drug Identification Testing (EDIT)

EDIT enables investigations into possession only drug offences to be expedited to deliver an outcome in a timely manner. The EDIT process can be used when the individual concerned is part of the VA process for possession only offences. The EDIT test should ideally take place before a VA interview. However, if this is not possible then arrangements must be made for testing to take place at a future date.

Invite to attend a police station for VA Interview

Arrange for the suspect to attend at the police station for the interview and make a written record of this (use [form 1146](#)¹ which can also be referred to if the suspect fails to attend voluntarily). Consider the need for an appropriate adult and/or interpreter, and inform the suspect of their rights and entitlements to legal advice (use [form 1146A](#)², which should be offered to them when sending form 1146 request to attend).

Rights and entitlements and risk assessment

When the suspect attends for interview, the VA record on PW will be re-opened. Before conducting the interview, remind the suspect of their rights under PACE, and give them [form 602H](#)³. Ensure that the suspect reads, understands and signs their consent. Conduct a [pre interview risk assessment](#).

Bring any issues to the attention of a supervisor and note on the VA record (the VA record cannot be closed until the risk assessment is completed). If conducting the VA interview using a mobile device, note that there is no prompt to complete the risk assessment, although the questions are accessible - complete the risk assessment on the PW record at a police station.

5.4 VA interview

Invite away from police premises

A VA interview can be conducted away from a police station using the Axon Capture App ([mobile capture guidance document](#)). Before the interview, a supervisor should open a VA record. Consider any vulnerability or mobility issues, as well as whether it is in the best interests of the investigation and L&D. If a VA record is not opened before the interview, contact a supervisor afterwards to open the VA record so that the interview details can be recorded. The record will then be suspended pending any disposal decision.

¹ Form 1146 - Invite to attend form

² Form 1146A - Rights and entitlements for voluntary attendees form

³ Form 602H – Voluntary attendee rights and consent form

Completing the interview

Conduct a [post interview exit risk assessment](#) and then discuss the case with a supervisor who will update and suspend the record. Give particular consideration to suspects under investigation for sexual offences due to the heightened risk of self-harm and suicide. For these cases, contact district CID in relation to completing the [understanding and preventing suicide pack](#).

Updating the crime report

If applicable, update the crime report and investigation plan with details of the interview. Contact the suspect at regular intervals (at least monthly) and the victim (if applicable). Update the suspect's status as 'Decision Pending' until a final disposal has been made. Update the crime report with an entry confirming when and how contact has been made with the suspect (e.g. in person/text/email/telephone call).

5.5 Charging decisions and other outcomes

For offences that are a police charging decision, discuss with a supervisor and note the decision on the VA record and crime report. A prosecution file will be created within case on PW, reviewed by a supervisor then sent to the relevant criminal justice unit (CJU) cluster for onward process. For those offences that require a CPS charging decision, a supervisor will review the content, complete a pre-charge decision (PCD) and send the file to the relevant CJU cluster.

Out of court resolution (OOCR)

Each district has a dedicated officer who can provide advice on the appropriate use of OOCR, conduct needs assessments, and make and monitor referrals.

For advice and support in relation to adult offenders, contact the district OOCR officer. If the suspect is a child and the offence is summary only or either way and an admission has been made, consider use of an OOCR.

Refer to the relevant gravity matrix ([Two Tier Gravity Matrix for Adults](#) and [Child Gravity Matrix](#)) to assess the severity of the offence and any aggravating or mitigating factors. The evidential threshold and public interest test must also be met.

For children aged 10-17, most decisions to use an OOCR will be made jointly with the Youth Justice Service (YJS). Seek advice from the district YJS constable or district OOCR officer at the earliest opportunity. Make a referral to the YJS where the child lives rather than where the offence was committed. An assessment will be made, and the case will then be discussed at a multi agency joint decision making panel to determine the appropriate outcome, interventions and support. The YJS constable will then advise on any further steps.

Postal charge notice - process

- arrange for a detention officer (DO) to update the appropriate charges on the VA record in accordance with the supervisor/CPS decision before the suspect attends
- arrange a date/time in advance with custody staff for the postal charge to be served and biometrics obtained
- a DO will create an entry in the bail diary on PW. The OIC will send a letter to the suspect inviting them in for biometrics to be taken using [form 1127](#)⁴
- custody staff will take biometric samples and print the postal charge

⁴ Form 1127 - Requirement to attend at police station to provide biometric samples letter

- whilst biometric samples are being taken, the OIC will speak to the suspect and, if appropriate, complete the [L&D electronic referral form](#)
- the DO printing the postal charge notice will complete the Certificate of Service
- the OIC will always accompany the suspect in the custody suite and is responsible for them until they leave
- custody staff are responsible for updating and closing the VA record once the process is complete.

Simple cautions - process

- the OIC should add the offences to the crime and liaise with a DO to create an entry in the bail diary on PW for biometrics to be obtained
- send [form 1127](#)⁵ to the suspect
- when the suspect returns to the police station, ensure the PW12 simple caution form is completed, signed and uploaded to the crime
- the DO will complete biometrics and close the VA record
- complete any L&D referral whilst biometrics are being taken
- for **youth cautions**, liaise with the YJS who will decide on the most appropriate outcome and pathway, including L&D referral, via a joint decision making panel.

Conditional cautions - process

- the OIC should add the offences to the crime and liaise with the OOCR officer for advice on caution options
- the OOCR officer will complete the L&D referral if appropriate
- the OIC should liaise with a DO to create an entry in the bail diary on PW for biometrics to be obtained
- send [form 1127](#)⁵ to the suspect
- when the suspect returns to the police station, ensure the [MG14 condition caution form](#) is completed, signed and uploaded to the crime
- the DO will complete biometrics and close the VA record
- the OIC should task the crime to the OOCR officer who will monitor compliance and once completed, send the crime for closure
- for **youth cautions**, liaise with the YJS who will decide on the most appropriate outcome and pathway, including L&D referral, via a joint decision making panel.

Community resolution/outcome 22

- the OIC should add the offences to the crime and update the nominal record on the crime
- consult the district OOCR officer who will also consider referral options, including L&D
- a supervisor must close the VA record and ensure there is a comment on the electronic detention log to explain the disposal of the suspect as community resolution/outcome 22.

Case and VA records

All suspects dealt with by VA must have a VA record created on PW and follow the VA process. This applies to all crime, non-crime and traffic offences. CJU clusters will return any case record dealt with by VA that does not have an associated VA record on PW.

Common Law Police Disclosure for Notifiable Offences

Always consider whether CLPD is required. Click [here](#) for further information on CLPD.

⁵ Form 1127 - Requirement to attend at police station to provide biometric samples letter

6. Associated Documents

[Authorised Professional Practice – voluntary attendance/voluntary interview](#)

7. Statutory Compliance & Consultation

7.1 Statutory Compliance

7.1.1 Equality Act (2010)

Click [here](#) to view the Equality Impact Assessment for this procedure.

Date that Decision Maker reviewed the EIA	21.04.2024
Summary of Decision Maker's discussions/considerations	The evidence considered is set in the corresponding EIA document and within this V2.2 document. Analysis demonstrates that the policy is robust and the evidence shows no potential for discrimination and appropriate opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations between groups have been taken.

Outcome	EIA recommended	Decision Maker
Approve – no changes. The procedure is robust and the evidence shows no potential for discrimination. All appropriate opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations between groups have been taken.	Yes	
Approve – subject to amends. Changes are required to remove barriers, better advance equality or mitigate potential effects. This should be done before the procedure is implemented.		
Approve – continue with procedure. Despite any adverse effect or missed opportunities to advance equality, provided that it does not unlawfully discriminate. The objective justification must be recorded.		
Reject – stop the procedure. If there are adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated, or any unlawful discrimination.		

7.1.2 The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Data Protection Act (2018)

Greater Manchester Police has a duty to ensure, so far as is possible, that all staff comply with the provisions of the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, particularly relating to their access to, and dissemination of, a wide variety of personal information and intelligence.

This procedure/policy has been assessed for compliance issues by the Information Compliance and Records Management Unit (ICRMU), and is considered to be compliant with the legislation as there is a clear lawful basis for the processing of personal data and special category data. It should be read in conjunction with GMP's Data Protection Policy and guidance issued on the Data Protection Intranet pages.

For further information on Data Protection, you should refer to the [Force Data Protection Policy](#) or consult the ICRMU on [REDACTED]

7.1.3 Freedom of Information Act (2000)

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) grants a general right of access to all types of recorded information held by public authorities. Requests for data will be assessed carefully by the Information Compliance and Records Management Unit, considering the harm of disclosure and release into the public domain.

This document is classified as OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE under the Government Security Classifications and should not be published in its entirety into the public domain. Parts may be disclosed upon request and with prior approval from the author.

However, any requests for its disclosure should be directed through the Information Compliance and Records Management Unit via the [Freedom of Information mailbox](#).

7.2 Consultation

Consulted	Date	Feedback
Information Compliance	5/4/24	Assessed for compliance – no changes required. Sections 7.1.2 and 7.1.3 completed. [REDACTED], Information Compliance & Records Management Unit Officer

8. Appendices

- [Voluntary attendance process map](#)
- [Detention officer process map for voluntary attendees](#)