



Your reference:

Our reference: FOI\_25\_0814

E-mail: FOI

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Date: 30/09/2025

Dear

**Gloucestershire Constabulary Freedom of Information request FOI\_25\_0814**

On 13/08/2025 you sent an email constituting a request under the Freedom of Information Act asking the following:

- Number of officer shifts that were used during VP JD Vance's visit to the Cotswolds between 10th-12th August 2025 in the policing of Dean Manor, local Villages, and Daylesford Organic Farm Shop, and any other locations in the Cotswolds.
- Estimated cost of this.

Gloucestershire Constabulary neither confirms nor denies that it holds the information you have requested by virtue of the following exemptions:

- Section 24(2) – National Security
- Section 31(3) – Law Enforcement
- Section 38(2) – Health and Safety
- Section 40(5) – Personal Information

Whilst Gloucestershire Constabulary can confirm that protection is provided to the King and the current serving Prime Minister, to confirm or deny that protection is afforded to others, along with the amount of any costs, time or resources that have, or have not, been utilised to assess or provide such protection arrangements, could undermine the safeguarding of national security, allow those with a criminal intent to gain an operational advantage over the constabulary and place those who are afforded protection, protection officers and members of the public at risk. As such, Sections 24(2), 31(3) and 38(2) of the Act are engaged.

In addition, Section 40(5) is engaged as to confirm or deny that information exists would be revealing personal information about specific individuals, thereby breaching the Data Protection Act.

Sections 24, 31 and 38 are prejudice based qualified exemptions therefore there is a requirement to articulate the harm that would be caused in confirming or not whether information is held as well as carrying out a public interest test.

## **Evidence of Harm**

FOIA is considered to be a release to the world as once the information is published the public authority, in this case Gloucestershire Constabulary, has no control over what use is made of that information. Whilst not questioning the motives of the applicant, it could be of use to those who seek to cause harm to any person in receipt of protection for whatever reason. To confirm or deny that Gloucestershire Constabulary is or is not protecting certain individuals would enable those who seek to threaten the safety of such individuals to calculate who was most at risk, and who was in receipt of some type of protection.

Disclosure of this information, which would make details available to those who might wish to cause harm – including terrorists, criminals and fixated individuals – would be detrimental to those in receipt of protection.

To ensure that those in receipt of protection are not subject to additional threat, and to safeguard members of the public attending events where these individuals are present, a review of the protection arrangements would be required and would, in all likelihood, result in an increase in the number of protection officers employed. This would increase the costs to the public purse.

Those with the necessary criminal intent, inclination and capacity could use the information (especially if routinely provided) to assess relative resources used for protection arrangements across forces. This would then provide them with an operational advantage over Gloucestershire Constabulary and other forces as the information can indeed be viewed as operational 'intelligence' and operationally sensitive. To confirm or deny that protection is afforded to any individual, other than those which have been publicly stated by Gloucestershire Constabulary, would have a negative effect on the safety of those being protected should the release of information be used and manipulated to try and attack the protected individuals, for example through mapping protection levels across forces.

To confirm or deny that this protection exists may lead to an attack within locations where one force is viewed to allocate lower costs per year on protection, as these locations may be viewed as a 'weak/vulnerable target' with less policing resources allocated to protection duties. Such an occurrence would harm individuals as well as result in the allocation of additional policing resources due to a FOI disclosure.

It remains the case that the publication of any information relating to an individual, or a group of individuals, who might or might not receive protection could potentially lead to harm to that individual or group, particularly if that information relates to the security arrangements for that individual(s) or has formed any part of a protection package that might or might not be provided. Disclosure of these figures damages the need to ensure protection arrangements remain covert, purely in the interests of operational sensitivity.

It is important to note that the UK does face a serious and sustained threat from violent extremists and this threat is greater in scale and ambition than any of the terrorist threats in the past. Government reports suggest that at any one time the police are contending with many terrorist plots, terrorist groups or networks and individuals who are judged to pose a threat to the well-being of the UK and or UK interests. While the plots may not

necessarily all be directed at attacks on protected individuals, Gloucestershire Constabulary considers that an attack on members of government, or significant individuals afforded protection, would be of national significance to our country. To provide the requested information, if held, regarding security arrangements for specific individuals is likely to place them at serious risk due to their prominence across the globe.

As previously explained above, in this current environment of an increased threat of terrorist activity, confirming or denying that information is held that could assist an extremist faction would undermine the safeguarding of national security.

ICO guidance emphasises there is no definition of national security and refers to the Information Tribunal (EA/2006/0045) who summarised:

- “National security” means the security of the United Kingdom and its people;
- The interests of national security are not limited to actions by an individual which are targeted at the UK, its system of government or its people;
- The protection of democracy and the legal and constitutional systems of the state are part of national security as well as military defence;
- Action against a foreign state may be capable indirectly of affecting the security of the UK;
- Reciprocal co-operation between the UK and other states in combating international terrorism is capable of promoting the United Kingdom’s national security.

The ICO guidance also states ‘safeguarding national security also includes protecting potential targets even if there is no evidence that an attack is imminent...the Commissioner also recognises terrorist can be highly motivated and may go to great lengths to gather intelligence. This means there may be grounds for withholding what seems harmless information on the basis that it may assist terrorists when pieced together with other information they may obtain.’

Based on this definition, national security encompasses a wide spectrum and it is our duty to protect the people within the UK. Public safety is of paramount importance to the policing purpose and must be taken into account in deciding whether to disclose any requested information.

## **Public Interest Test**

### Factors favouring confirmation or denial for S24 –

The information simply relates to national security and disclosure would not actually harm it. Confirming or denying that the information is held would allow individuals to contribute to more accurate public debate on matters that are of public relevance - in this case information pertinent to protection and the use of public funds.

### Factors against confirmation or denial for S24 –

Confirming or denying any policing arrangements which refer to the personal protection of specific individuals would render security measures less effective. Personal protection is provided by Gloucestershire Constabulary to a number of people where it is in the national interest or where intelligence (information) suggests protection is necessary. Specific protection arrangements are applied in order to safeguard national security by ensuring that appropriate safety and security is provided to key figures such as the King and the Prime Minister. The disclosure of any other information would ultimately increase the risk of harm to those afforded personal protection and to the general public within that vicinity.

Persons/groups would be able to ascertain which individuals Gloucestershire Constabulary considers to be currently at most risk, and therefore which threats or campaigns to undermine UK security the police believe to be most pertinent.

Factors favouring confirmation or denial for S31 –

Confirming or denying whether information is held in relation to protection would allow the public to see where public funds are being spent. Better public awareness may assist to reduce crime or lead to more information being provided by the public.

Factors against confirmation or denial for S31 –

Confirming or denying that any information is held in relation to the security or protection of individuals would lead to law enforcement tactics being compromised which would ultimately hinder the prevention and detection of crime. Security arrangements and tactics are re-used and have been monitored by criminal groups, fixated individuals and terrorists. Protection is provided in several forms after careful evaluation of the threat and risks posed to those individuals by operational experts in this field of policing. It therefore follows that anything that would negate the benefits of that protection would place individuals at risk. This would be the individuals receiving protection, the police officers providing the protection and any member of the public in the vicinity of the principal.

Factors favouring confirmation or denial for S38 –

The public are entitled to know what areas of criminal activity the police service allocates public funds, therefore confirming or denying the provision of protection would lead to better informed public awareness and debate. Confirmation or denial would assist communities to be more aware of the level of protection afforded to them.

Factors against confirmation or denial for S38 –

Confirming or denying that information is held in relation to the protection of any individual would have the effect of increasing the threat to those individuals who are in receipt of protection and, in addition, to those who do not receive protection and might therefore appear to be soft targets. The risks to individuals are significant as evidenced and there would be a loss of confidence in the police service to protect the well-being of the community. Furthermore, if an individual/group decides to counter the protection arrangements and target an individual, members of the public within the vicinity could be exposed to either physical or psychological harm.

## **Balance Test**

The security of the country is of paramount importance and the Police service will not divulge whether information is or is not held if to do so would place the safety of individuals in receipt, or not in receipt, of protection at risk or undermine National Security. Whilst there is a public interest in the transparency of policing operations and providing assurance that the police service is appropriately and effectively engaging with the threat posed by a potential attack on a VIP, there is a very strong public interest in safeguarding both national security and the integrity of police operations in the highly sensitive area of personal protection.

The public interest is defined not as what the public might find interesting, but that there must be some tangible benefit to the public in the disclosure of the interest. In this case, where the request is about costs and resources incurred for protection, the net result of publishing that information would be that a review would need to be conducted, plans changed to ensure that the threat level was effectively challenged and, in all likelihood,

require additional resources to be provided and probably the extension of protection to those who had not been in receipt of it before the release of the requested information.

After weighing up the competing interests, I have determined that to confirm or deny that we hold the requested information would not be in the public interest. Gloucestershire Constabulary considers that the benefit that would result from the information being disclosed does not outweigh the harm arising from disclosing information relating to who is provided with protection.

No inference can be drawn from this refusal that information is or is not held.

If you are not satisfied with this response or any actions taken in dealing with your request, you have the right to ask that we review your case under our internal procedure. Please note that a request for an internal review must be made within 20 working days of the response to your original request.

If you decide to request that such a review is undertaken and following this process you are still unsatisfied, you then have the right to direct your complaint to the Information Commissioner for consideration.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted via the following means:

Website - <https://ico.org.uk/>

Call their helpline - 0303 123 1113

Email - [casework@ico.org.uk](mailto:casework@ico.org.uk)

Post –

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely,

Disclosure Officer  
Gloucestershire Constabulary