Gloucestershire Constabulary
Police Headquarters
No.1 Waterwells, Waterwells Drive
Quedgeley, Gloucester. GL2 2AN
www.gloucestershire.police.uk

Our reference: FOI_26_0871
E-mail: FOI@gloucestershire.police.uk
Direct dial: 01452 754304
Postal Address: As above
Date: 21/10/2026

Dear

Gloucestershire Constabulary Freedom of Information request FOI_26_0871

On 15/09/2026 you sent an email constituting a request under the Freedom of Information Act asking the following:

Please can you provide the official statistics related to the following in your force area:

1 – The number of people who have been formally questioned regarding direct physical or verbal abuse aimed at referees or other match officials in amateur or semi-professional football. In seasons ‘20/’21 through to ‘24/’25. Please break those figures down, season by season.

2 – The number of people who have been charged with an offence relating to direct physical or verbal abuse aimed at referees or other match officials in amateur or semi-professional football. In seasons ‘20/’21 through to ‘24/’25. Please break those figures down season by season.

3 – The number of professional referees or match officials in your force area, operating in the top four men’s leagues (Premier League, Championship, Leagues 1 and 2) that have experienced threats at any level which required police action, this includes registering a complaint or concern. Please provide figures from the ‘20/’21 season through to ‘24/’25.

4 - Where a formal complaint was registered. Has any individual been charged, or has any referee or match official been offered police protection? Please break those figures down season by season starting in ‘20/’21 and ending ‘24/’25 and differentiate between amateur and professional football.

5 – Has any of the above (1,2 or 3) resulted in a successful prosecution – including online abuse aimed at match officials. If so, what are the detailed statistics behind successful or unsuccessful prosecutions.

Also please state how many cases have been referred to a different force area or body to deal with, for example the National Police Football Unit.

We are committed to being an anti-discriminatory organisation. This means not only acting in a non-discriminatory way, but addressing systemic inequalities, disadvantage and discrimination.

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 s1, I can confirm that Gloucestershire Constabulary holds some relevant information.

Following receipt of your request, I can confirm that searchers were undertaken within Gloucestershire Constabulary to identify and locate the relevant information.

Unfortunately, there is no central register for the requested information and no way to retrieve the information by way of direct retrievable electronic searches. Therefore, a manual review of incidents either relating to the requested topic area or indicated offences within the request would be required.

In order to fulfil this request, the Constabulary would need to gather information on all amateur and semi-professional football teams and grounds within its policing area in order to then obtain a dated fixture list which would then need to be cross referenced against any incident and or offence data identified. Any incident data held would then be required to be reviewed to fulfil this request. This process would clearly take far longer than the 18 hours prescribed by the Freedom of Information Act.

Section 17(5) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires Gloucestershire Constabulary, when refusing to provide information (because the information is exempt) to provide you the applicant with a notice which: (a) states the fact, (b) specifies the exemption in question and (c) states (if not otherwise apparent) why the exemption applies.

In relation to your request Section 12 applies.

Section 12(1) – Fee Regulations states:
Section 1(1) of the Act does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit. (As detailed in the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Fees Regulations of 2004)

The appropriate limit at the moment is £450 calculated at an hourly rate of £25 per hour for all staff time incurred in:

i. Determining whether information is held
ii. Locating it
iii. Retrieving it
iv. Extracting the information to be disclosed from the other information.

In accordance with the Act, this letter represents a Refusal Notice for your request.

Section 16 – unable to assist

Unfortunately, I'm unable to assist in suggesting ways of refining your request to come within the confines of Section 12 of the Act. Even reducing the requested timescale would not reduce the number of records enough that a manual review could be conducted within the timeframe afforded by the Act but still provide the requested information.

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

Post –

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

Yours sincerely,

Disclosure Officer
Gloucestershire Constabulary