

**Force Disclosure Unit**

Police Headquarters
London Road
DEVIZES
Wiltshire
SN10 2DN

Date: 12th March 2026

Ref: FOI 2026/078

I write in connection with your request for information dated 17th January 2026 concerning faith groups.

I am required by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to handle all requests in a manner that is blind as to the identity and motives of the requestor. Any information released as a response to a request is regarded as being published and therefore in the public domain without caveat.

You wrote and our response:

I am writing to you today as a concerned citizen of the United Kingdom.

The recent and deeply troubling scandal at West Midlands Police - involving the fabrication of AI-generated falsehoods to justify the banning of Israeli football fans and the subsequent "capitulation" of the force to sectarian interests - has raised serious questions about the impartiality of policing nationwide.

While the primary scandal is centered on the West Midlands, the principles of non-sectarian, data-driven policing are a national requirement. I am seeking formal assurances that your force has robust safeguards in place to prevent similar institutional capture.

Specifically, I request clarity on:

1. Recruitment Independence: What measures ensure that local recruitment panels and "Independent Advisory Groups" (IAGs) are not dominated by sectarian NGOs or faith groups with documented histories of radical or exclusionary rhetoric?
2. Operational Data Integrity: In light of the WMP "AI falsehoods" case, what oversight exists within your force to verify the accuracy of risk assessments for cultural or international sporting events?
3. Training Oversight: Who provides your "Islamophobia" and diversity training? Are any external NGOs with political or sectarian agendas involved in drafting these materials?
4. Impartiality Assurance: What steps are you taking to ensure that operational decisions are based on objective intelligence rather than pressure from "community gatekeepers"?

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The British public requires policing that is "without fear or favor." I look forward to your response within 21 days.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (FOI) REQUEST

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, please provide the following information for the period 1 January 2024 to the present:

1. Meeting Frequency by Faith Group: Please provide the total number of formal meetings held between senior officers (Rank of Superintendent and above) and representatives of major faith groups, broken down by category:

- Christian
- Muslim
- Jewish
- Hindu
- Other (please specify)

Externally, no information is held.

Internally, the Christian Police association, whose chair meets with the Chief Constable and senior leadership sponsor on a quarterly basis as part of staff support network in Wiltshire Police.

2. Muslim Group Engagement Details: For all meetings identified in category "Muslim" above, please provide:

- The date of the meeting.
- The names of the organizations or mosques represented (e.g., MEND, MCB, local Islamic centers).
- The names/ranks of the police officers in attendance.
- Copies of the minutes, summary notes, or action points arising from these meetings.

N/A

3. Financial Records: Provide details of any financial grants, donations, or "Prevent" related funding provided by the force to any of the organizations identified in category "Muslim" during the specified period.

This request is made in the interest of public transparency and to ensure that community engagement remains impartial and representative of all citizens.

Wiltshire Police can neither confirm nor deny whether information relevant to this request is held, as the duty in Section 1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 does not apply, by virtue of the following exemptions:

- Section 24(2) National Security
- Section 31(3) Law Enforcement

Sections 24(2) and 31(3) are qualified, prejudice-based exemptions and require evidence of harm and a public interest test to be carried out before they can be relied upon.

Evidence of Harm:

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Confirmation or denial that any information is held specific to Prevent would provide useful information about both police and Muslim community focus on Prevent at a local level.

Confirming information is held, even if exemptions were applied to any detail, would risk identifying to those already involved in extremism or those with extremist intention, that there was focus on Prevent activity within a very specific demographic of the community, namely Muslims. Conversely, denial that any information is held risks indicating a lesser focus on Prevent in the local Muslim community. A no information held response risks affording criminal individuals the opportunity to continue or even increase their activities in these communities, safe in the knowledge they are less likely to be detected. The resultant effect is that radicalisation of individuals within those communities may be more prevalent.

Where the request is made to all forces nationally, there is further risk that a mixture of confirmation responses (even where substantive exemptions are applied) and denials that information is held, could be used on its own or in conjunction with other publicly available information to "map" where in the country there was greater or lesser focus on Prevent specifically within Muslim communities. This 'mosaic effect' risks providing low level details to those operating on a wider, potentially national scale and who seek to challenge the process, which ultimately compromises the operational effectiveness of the Prevent Programme.

The security of the county is of paramount importance, and the Police will not divulge any information which would undermine national security or compromise law enforcement. 'Prevent' is part of the wider strand of CONTEST, the Government's counter terrorism strategy, and any information regarding Prevent therefore directly relates to counter-terrorism policing.

Local organisations can work with police forces in many ways to protect and safeguard those at risk, and revealing any information about this cooperation at such a specific level, including through confirmation or denial anything is held, directly impacts on the police support and delivery of CONTEST, including the risk of local community partners disengaging from the process. Additionally, in some extreme cases, potentially aiding the identification of those involved in the referral process itself.

Public Interest Test

Factors favouring Confirming or Denying for Section 24 - The public are entitled to know how public funds are spent. To confirm whether information exists or not would enable the public to hold the police to account in relation to how public money is being used in relation to Prevent in Muslim communities. Furthermore, confirming or denying may improve public debate and assist the community to take steps to protect themselves.

Factors against Confirming or Denying for Section 24 - Considering the current security climate within the United Kingdom, no information which may aid a terrorist or extremist should be disclosed. To what extent this information may aid such an individual is unknown, but it is clear it will have an impact on a force's ability to monitor extremist and terrorist activity.

The public entrust the police to make appropriate decisions about their safety and protection. The only way of reducing risk is to be cautious with what is placed into the public domain. A confirmation or denial information is held would give insight into a force's focus on extremist ideology at a low level; this information could be used by extremists and terrorists to significantly affect the national infrastructure by targeting their extremist ideology in locations and communities where there was perceived to be a lesser police focus and on, and community interaction with, Prevent.

Factors favouring Neither Confirming or Denying for Section 31 - Confirmation or denial information is held would demonstrate openness and transparency about the force's response to extremism.

Factors against Confirming or Denying for Section 31 - The Police have a duty of care to the community at large and public safety is of paramount importance. If an FOI disclosure revealed information to the world (by citing an exemption or stating no information held) that would assist an extremist or terrorist, it would undermine the work of the police in the delivery of CONTEST, as illustrated in the harm. As a counter terrorism strategy any prejudice, by extension, risks the security of the national infrastructure and the safety of the population from the threat of extremism.

As further referenced in the harm, the mosaic effect created by national responses could be used by offenders as grounds to assume a greater or lesser focus/level of activity in specific geographic areas across the UK as a whole, increasing the risk of targeted extremism in Muslim communities where there was a perceived lesser focus on Prevent engagement with organisations.

Balance test

The security of the country is of paramount importance, and the Police service will not divulge information if to do so would place the safety of an individual at risk or undermine National Security. Whilst there is a public interest in transparency on how public funds are spent safeguarding those vulnerable to radicalisation, there is a very strong public interest in safeguarding both national security and the integrity of police operations in the highly sensitive area.

The police will not divulge information if it is likely to compromise the work of the Police Service or place members of the public at risk. It is known that terrorist cells will try to radicalise people and children so that they believe in their ideology, to encourage them to commit acts of terror. Confirmation or denial in this case would highlight which forces may have a greater or lesser organisational engagement with preventing radicalisation in Muslim communities. Undermining this engagement will adversely affect the police's ability to detect and act upon extremism. This could put endanger the public and threaten National Security.

It is therefore our belief that the balance test lies in favour of neither confirming nor denying information is held.

Under Section 16 of our duty to provide advice and assistance, I can confirm that Wiltshire Police have responded to the part of the request that falls under the Freedom of Information Act. I can confirm that the first part of your request will be responded to separately, outside of the FOI Act by the Chief Constable's Office.

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Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires Wiltshire Police, when refusing to provide such information (because the 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 exemption applicable to the information requested is:

- Section 24(2) National Security
- Section 31(3) Law Enforcement

In accordance with Section 17 of the Act, this letter represents a Refusal Notice for this particular request.

I am satisfied that all the relevant information has been passed to me and been considered in the light of your request within the time constraints applicable under the legislation.

Wiltshire Police would like to thank you for the interest that you have shown in the Force.

Yours sincerely

Force Disclosure Decision Maker

Wiltshire Police offers a re-examination of your case under its review procedure.



Force Disclosure Unit

Wiltshire Police HQ, London Road, Devizes, Wiltshire SN10 2DN
Freedom of Information Request Appeals Procedure

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1. Who Can Ask for a Review

Any person who has requested information from Wiltshire Police, which has been dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act, is entitled to complain and request an internal review, if they are dissatisfied with the response they received.

2. How to Request a Review

Requests for review of a Freedom of Information request must be made in writing to the:

Force Disclosure Unit
Wiltshire Police Headquarters,
London Road, Devizes,
Wiltshire,
SN10 2DN

Email at disclosure@wiltshire.police.uk.

The reference number, date of the request and details of why the review is being requested must be included. Requests for review should be brought to the attention of the Force Disclosure Unit within 20 working days of the Force's response to the original FOI request.

3. Review Procedure

Receipt of a request for review will be acknowledged in writing to include confirmation of the reasons for the review. The review will be conducted by another Decision Maker, who is independent from the original Decision Maker. The Force Disclosure Unit will set a target date for a response. The response will be made as soon as is practicable with the intention to complete the review within twenty working days. In more complex cases the review may take up to 40 working days.

The Independent Decision Maker will conduct a review of the handling of the request for information and of decisions taken, including decisions taken about where the public interest lies in respect of exempt information where applicable. The review enables a re-evaluation of the case, taking into account the matters raised by the complaint.

4. Conclusion of the Appeal

On completion of the review the Independent Decision Maker will reply to the complainant with the result of the review. If the complainant is still dissatisfied following the review, they should contact the Information Commissioner to make an appeal. The Information Commissioner can be contacted via the following details:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Tel: 01625 545 700
Fax: 01625 524 510

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Email: mail@ico.gsi.gov.uk

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