

Chief Constable
Chief Constable Robert Carden
Police Headquarters
Carleton Hall Penrith,
Cumbria
CA10 2AU



11th December 2024

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST – FOI 1039/24 Electric vehicles owned

I refer to your request for information received by Cumbria Constabulary on the 20th of November 2024. I note you seek access to the following information:

1. *How many motor vehicles are owned by the force as of November 2024*
2. *How many electric vehicles (including hybrid) are owned by the force as of November 2024*
3. *The manufacturer name of electric vehicles bought by the force up to November 2024*
4. *How much has the force spent on electric vehicles up to November 2024*
5. *What are electric vehicles used in the force*
6. *How many electric vehicles does the force plan to purchase in the five-year period to March 2030*
7. *What budget has the force allocated to purchase electric vehicles every year up to March 2030*

Your request for information has now been considered and I can confirm Cumbria Constabulary does hold some information relevant to your request and where this is the case I have today decided to disclose this to you.

The information in response to your request has been provided by the Constabulary's fleet department. Please note that the information provided below relates to marked vehicles only.

Question 1 – As of November 24, Cumbria Constabulary own 163 marked vehicles.

Question 2 – As of November 2024, Cumbria Constabulary own 22 marked electric vehicles (including hybrid).

Question 3 – The manufacturer name for marked electric vehicles owned is BMW and Volvo.

Question 4 – The constabulary have spent £645,371 on marked electric vehicles (including hybrid)

Question 5 – The marked electric vehicles owned by the force are used for territorial policing and traffic policing.

Question 6 – No information held. Sustainability targets are still being derived and developed.

Question 7 – No information held. Sustainability targets are still being derived and developed.



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The information provided above does not include information relating any unmarked or armed response vehicles. For this information I will be citing the following exemption: Section 31(1)(a)(b) Law Enforcement.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires Cumbria Constabulary when refusing such information (because the information is exempt) to provide you the applicant with a notice which:

- (a) states the fact,
- (b) specifies the exemption and
- (c) states (if it would not be apparent) why the exemption applies.

Section 31(1) (a) (b) Law Enforcement states: -

Information which is not exempt information by virtue of section 31 is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice-

- a) The prevention or detection of crime.
- b) The apprehension or prosecution of offenders.

Section 31 is a prejudice based, qualified exemption which means that it is necessary to describe the harm that is likely to occur if the information is released into the public domain. There is also a requirement to consider whether the public interest considerations in favour of withholding the information you have requested outweigh the considerations in favour of its release.

Harm Test

Every effort should be made to release information under Freedom of Information. However, a FOIA response is a release to the world, as once the information is published, the public authority has no control over what use is made of that information.

Disclosure of full information on fleet, could be of intelligence value to a person or persons with criminal or malicious intent. Full disclosure could provide and enable targeted malicious actions, be that some form of attack on an operational unit or avoiding that unit for example where strengths and weakness may be perceived (whether incorrectly or not).

Disclosing details on the specific numbers of vehicles within the Cumbria Constabulary fleet could, allow individuals to deduce or calculate the number of vehicles being employed in sensitive or covert roles. This would therefore allow the criminal fraternity, or individuals intent upon causing disruption, access to valuable data upon the potential tactical capability or capacity of Cumbria Police. This would then indicate the level of tactical options open and available to the force and thus arm individuals with criminal intent the intelligence required to disrupt Police activity and therefore render law enforcement activities less effective. This, in turn, would place members of the public and officers employed in such roles at an increased risk of harm.

Public Interest Test.

Factors Favouring Disclosure

Accountability and Use of Public Funds: There is a legitimate public interest in knowing that Cumbria Constabulary fulfils its policing functions effectively and efficiently, in this case by providing adequate levels of police vehicles and resources within force areas. In addition,



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where public funds are being spent, there is a public interest in accountability and justification. There is a legitimate public interest in knowing that Cumbria Constabulary's resources are used appropriately, effectively.

Factors Favouring Non-Disclosure

The Police Service has a duty to deliver effective law enforcement ensuring that the prevention and detection of crime, apprehension or prosecution of offenders and administration of justice is carried out appropriately.

Disclosing details of specific numbers of fleet within Cumbria constabulary may reveal what resources are available for a given role and this information could enable police strength to be determined and circumvented by those intent on committing crime. The release of this information could therefore provide a tactical advantage to offenders which would negatively impact on public safety and undermine the policing purpose.

Disclosing the details of covert vehicles would provide sufficient information to those involved in criminal activity of the capabilities available to the force when carrying out covert activities in certain areas. This could result in them taking steps to evade detection and to destroy evidence if they believe that their movements are being monitored. This could also lead to vehicles and officers being identified which would render their covert capabilities useless.

Balance Test

Such a disclosure that would allow those with criminal intent the ability to build up a mosaic picture of force capabilities and resources which could be used to undermine law enforcement. This would not be in the public interest.

Disclosure is also not in the public interest as it places the community at increased unnecessary risk of harm and impacts on police resources. This is especially the case if additional tactics/resources need to be put in place to counter harm caused by an adverse FOIA request regarding police vehicles. It is clearly not in the public interest for law enforcement tactics and operational capability to be compromised and disclosure of the overall numbers of fleet vehicles would provide criminals with an insight into the level of armed response, covert and specialist capability.

The police service is tasked with protecting the community we serve, detecting crime and administering law enforcement and disclosure of the overall number of fleet vehicles would jeopardize thus making criminal investigations less effective.

The negligible increase in public awareness would not be adequate compensation for such an impact and therefore we have determined that this information shall not be provided.

In accordance with Section 17(1) of the Freedom of Information Act, this letter acts as a Refusal Notice for this part of your request.

Complaint Rights

Your attention is drawn to the attached sheet, which details your right of complaint.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your interest in Cumbria Constabulary.



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