



**HEDDLU
GOGLEDD CYMRU
NORTH WALES
POLICE**

Response Date:23/10/2025

2025/1004 - CHIS payments and authorisations

In response to your recent request for information regarding;

Please provide me with the following information relating to payments made to Covert Human Intelligence Sources (CHIS).

- 1. For the financial years 21/22, 22/23, 23/24, 24/25 and 25/26 (so far) please a value for how much the police force has spent on CHIS, providing a breakdown for each FY**
- 2. For the financial years 21/22, 22/23, 23/24, 24/25 and 25/26 (so far) please state how many CHIS authorisations were granted to the police force, providing a breakdown for each FY**

2021/22	£16,142
2022/23	£16,567
2023/24	£18,132
2024/25	£20,115

Harm has been identified in disclosing partial figures for the financial year 2025/26 and authorisations. A Public Interest Test has considered the following exemptions;

- Section 23(1) - Information supplied by, or relating to, bodies dealing with security matters
- Section 24(1) - National Security
- Section 30(2)(b) - Investigation
- Section 31 (1) - Law Enforcement

Section 23 is a class based absolute exemption and there is no requirement to consider the public interest.

Section 24 & section 31 are prejudiced based qualified exemptions and there is a requirement to evidence the prejudice (harm) in disclosure and consider the public interest.

Section 30 is a class based qualified exemption and there is a requirement to consider the public interest

Harm

To disclose different or shorter time periods than a full financial year will highlight patterns and spikes within the data, presenting an increased risk to those operating as CHIS and potentially compromising CHIS operations.

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Glan-y-Don, Bae Colwyn LL29 8AW
www.heddlugogleddcymru.police.uk

Police Headquarters,
Glan-y-Don, Colwyn Bay LL29 8AW
www.northwales.police.uk

**Yn gwneud Gogledd Cymru'r lle mwyaf diogel i fyw, gweithio ac ymweld yn y DU
Making North Wales the safest place to live, work and visit in the UK**

The importance of the informant programme to UK policing is so great that doing anything which could discourage informants or potential informants should be avoided.

Disclosure would make it easier for organised crime groups seeking to identify any CHIS who may be reporting within their crime group. This increases the risk to individuals, whether there are CHIS reporting on that group or not.

Further, where significant arrests and recoveries have been made from a CHIS-led operation, it is conceivable that Organised Crime Groups could effectively ascertain that it was CHIS information that led to the police action, due to any significant spike in CHIS payments.

From there they might assume, rightly or wrongly, that a particular individual was providing information to the police, putting this person at risk of harm.

The primary objectives of such measures are to preserve the lives of all assessed as immediately involved and ensure public safety.

Public Interest Test.

Factors favouring disclosure Section 24

Disclosure of information relevant to the request would lead to a better informed public and the public are entitled to know how public funds are spent.

It is acknowledged that matters relating to the use of CHIS are of public interest and disclosure would contribute to the public debate surrounding the issue.

Factors against disclosure Section 24

Other organisations outside the police service are also widely engaged in rewarding informants in a number of ways, and therefore undermining the CHIS process would harm the close relationship that exists with such organisations, where trust and confidence in this specific area has been built up in the exchange of information and financial assistance during the Criminal Justice process.

Partial figures may highlight patterns and spikes which would allow inferences to be made about the nature and extent of national security related activities. This could enable terrorist groups to take steps to avoid detection, and as such, confirmation or denial would be damaging to national security.

Factors favouring disclosure Section 30 & 31

Disclosure of information relevant to the request would lead to a better informed public and the public are entitled to know how public funds are spent.

Disclosure would provide a greater insight into policing and how resources are allocated to investigate crimes.

Factors against disclosure Section 30 & 31

To disclose different or shorter time periods than a full financial year will highlight patterns and spikes within the data, presenting an increased risk to those operating as CHIS and potentially compromising CHIS operations.

The integrity of any protective measures is significantly undermined if we confirm the level of use of CHIS, substantially prejudicing our law enforcement capabilities and responsibility to keep people safe from harm.

We assess that disclosing further detail specific to North Wales would undermine the confidence of existing or potential CHIS.

Balance Test

Although public awareness may favour a disclosure, we must not inadvertently provide potentially harmful information and place an individual at risk or undermine confidence, in turn being detrimental to our investigations or law enforcement.

In conclusion, it simply cannot be in the public interest for North Wales Police or any police force to confirm this level of detail.

Therefore, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this letter acts as a Refusal Notice under section 17 (1) of the legislation.

The annual IPCO report which details the total authorisations across the UK maybe of interest to you;

[Annual Reports - IPCO](#)

3. For the financial years 21/22, 22/23, 23/24, 24/25 and 25/26 (so far) please state how much the police force has spent on CHIS related to Palestine protest groups, providing a breakdown for each FY

There is considerable harm attributed to the confirmation or denial that any other information is held in relation to police confidential sources. Such information would not exist had Covert Human Intelligence Sources (CHIS) not been required to participate in the effective investigation of criminal matters. The information would only be held if it were obtained and recorded by the force for the purpose of its functions in relation to criminal investigations.

Any disclosure such as in this request that may reduce the flow of information to the Police Service and intelligence agencies would have a substantial prejudicial impact on the ability of such authorities to collect reliable and accurate intelligence. Furthermore, law enforcement bodies would become dependent on more costly and time-consuming methods of collecting intelligence. Whilst it may not be seen by the public to be wholly acceptable to offer payments to individuals who are close to criminal activity, CHIS are often the most valuable sources of information and enable the police and other agencies to secure evidence and subsequent prosecutions.

Covert Human Intelligence Sources (regardless of their motivation) provide information at particular personal risk to themselves and their families. As previous cases have shown, where a CHIS is identified it can result in substantial physical harm, or mental trauma resulting from the threat of physical harm. This problem is particularly acute in cases relating to serious crime and terrorism where the threat against individuals is substantial.

The use of CHIS is regulated by the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act which requires authorities to take into account the provisions of the Human Rights Act when using CHIS (and other covert techniques). Police forces are reminded of their obligation under Article 2 of the Human Rights Act which requires them to protect human life. This is further supported by a High Court hearing *Van Colle v Chief Constable Hertfordshire Police*. In this case the force concerned failed to provide adequate protection to an individual whose life was at risk because of the criminal acts of a third party. The witness was murdered by a person whom he was about to give evidence against in a criminal trial.

Those determined to identify informants have the ability to use small pieces of information in order to build a more complete picture and it is the cumulative effect of information disclosures that the Police Service feel will lead to this prejudice being realised.

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It may be viewed by those not involved in the management of informants that a statistical number in

itself is unlikely to cause any such adverse effects. However, the subject has to be viewed more holistically. Those determined to identify informants have the ability to use small pieces of information in order to build a more complete picture and it is the cumulative effect of information disclosures that the Police Service feel will lead to this prejudice being realised.

Confirming or denying any additional information exists could impact on the recruitment and retention of CHIS in general, due to the perception of (rather than the actual) risk of identification. In an Information Tribunal case relating to the payments made to CHIS in Croydon (EA/2010/0006), it was accepted that this argument applied as much to CHIS providing intelligence in relation to national security concerns as to CHIS engaged in countering more traditional criminal threats. In this way, the disclosure of payment information would damage national security through discouraging current national security CHIS from co-operating with the Police Service in other geographical areas, or preventing the recruitment of national security CHIS in the future - regardless of whether the area in question actually currently runs CHIS reporting on serious crime, terrorist or other threats.

North Wales Police can Neither Confirm Nor Deny that it holds the information relevant to your requests 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 23(5) – Information Supplied By Or Concerning Certain Security Bodies:

Section 24(2) - National Security

Section 30(3) - Investigations

Section 31(3) – Law Enforcement

Section 40(5) – Personal Information

Section 23 and 40 are absolute exemptions and do not need to be considered as part of the public interest test.

Public Interest Test

Factors Favouring Confirmation or Denial – Section 24(2)

The public are entitled to know how public funds are spent and by confirming or denying that this information is held would allow them to see where money is being spent and know that North Wales Police is undertaking its duty to robustly tackle any form of activity relevant to this request. The information simply relates to national security and disclosure would not actually harm it.

Factors Against Confirmation or Denial - Section 24(2)

Confirmation of any policing arrangements of this nature would render security measures less effective. This would lead to the compromise of ongoing or future operations to protect the security or infrastructure of the UK and increase the risk of harm to the public. To counter this, a full review of security measures would be needed and additional costs would be incurred.

By confirming or denying any policing arrangements of this nature would render national security measures less effective. This would lead to the compromise of ongoing or future operations to protect the security or infra-structure of the UK and increase the risk of harm to the public.

Factors Favouring Confirmation or Denial - Section 30(3)

The confirmation or denial that information is held by North Wales Police would provide a greater insight into policing and how resources are allocated to investigate crimes. The confirmation or denial that any other information is or is not held would identify how often North Wales Police utilise CHIS within this type of investigation.

Factors Against Confirmation or Denial - Section 30(3)

To confirm that North Wales Police have used informants with previous investigations and criminal convictions in specific investigations would provide sensitive information that would undermine policing and investigations.

Factors Favouring Confirmation or Denial - Section 31(3)

Confirming or denying whether North Wales Police holds information relevant to this request the public would see where public funds have been spent and allow the Police service to appear more open and transparent. North Wales Police is committed to openness and transparency with the general public. When a request for information is made, it is correct that the police make appropriate information available to the general public. The provision of information, through confirming or denying whether information relevant to this request is held would accordingly, reinforce our commitment to be an open and transparent organisation.

Factors Against Confirmation or Denial - Section 31(3)

By confirming or denying whether information is held could compromise law enforcement tactics which would hinder the prevention and detection of crime and impact on police resources which may need to be increased to reassure the public and protect the surrounding community. This would result in more risk to the public and consequently require the use of more police resources.

Overall Balance Test:

When balancing the Public Interest Test we have to consider whether the information, if held, should be released into the public domain. Arguments need to be weighed against each other. The security of the country is of paramount importance and North Wales Police will not divulge whether information is or is not held if to do so would undermine National Security, our law enforcement functions or the investigative process. Whilst it is recognised that 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 various groups or individuals, there is a very strong public interest in safeguarding the integrity of police investigations and operations in this highly sensitive area.

As much as there is public interest in knowing that policing activity is appropriate and balanced this will only be overridden in exceptional circumstances. Areas of interest to the police are sensitive to the extent that they reveal local intelligence. To confirm or deny the existence of the requested information, would allow interested parties to gain an upper hand and awareness of policing decisions used during investigations, leading to an increase of harm to either the investigation itself, and the subject of the investigation.

Whilst to confirm or deny that information is held, would reassure the public that any operation had been or was being properly conducted and allow for a greater understanding of how information has been gathered, this could undermine the role and effectiveness of any future operations. Any disclosure of information, if held, which has the potential to jeopardise an operation/investigation, is therefore likely to prejudice law enforcement.

Therefore, at this time North Wales Police have determined that confirmation or denial that any other information is held relating to CHIS and Palestine Protest groups would not be in the public interest.

However, this should not be taken as necessarily indicating that any information that would meet your request exists or does not exist.

Therefore, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this letter acts as a Refusal Notice under section 17 (1) of the legislation.

THIS INFORMATION HAS BEEN PROVIDED IN RESPONSE TO A REQUEST
UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000, AND IS CORRECT AS AT 23/10/2025