| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information ResponseOur reference: FOI 25-2719Responded to: 26 September 2025 |
| --- | --- |

Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## I’m looking to find out more about a rise in antisocial behaviour in football within Inverclyde.

## Could you please provide me with:

## 1. A copy of all correspondence, electronic or written, between Police Scotland staff and officials from/representatives of Greenock Morton between July 1, 2023 and today (August 27, 2025).

## 2. The minutes of any meetings held between Police Scotland staff and officials from/representatives of Greenock Morton between July 1, 2023 and today (August 27, 2025).

## 3. For each item of correspondence/meeting, please clearly state when it took place and if it related to events which took place on a match day.

We have interpreted your request to be for correspondence and meetings held in relation antisocial behaviour at Greenock Morton football matches. In response to your request, please see the attached document.

You will note that information has been redacted and I can confirm that further data has been withheld entirely. I am refusing to provide this information in terms of section 16(1) of the Act on the basis that the following exemptions apply:

**Section 38(1)(b) - Personal Data**

Personal data is defined in Article 4 of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) as:

‘Information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person (“data subject”); an identifiable natural person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of that natural person’

Section 38(2A) of the Act provides that personal data is exempt from disclosure where disclosure would contravene any of the data protection principles set out at Article 5(1) of the GDPR which states that:

‘Personal data shall be processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subject’

Article 6 of the GDPR goes on to state that processing shall be lawful only if certain conditions are met. The only potentially applicable condition is Article 6(1)(f) which states:

‘Processing is necessary for the purposes of the legitimate interests pursued by the controller or by a third party, except where such interests are overridden by the interests or fundamental rights and freedoms of the data subject which require protection of personal data, in particular where the data subject is a child’

Whilst I accept that you may have a legitimate interest with regards the disclosure of this information and that disclosure may well be necessary for that purpose, I am nonetheless of the view that those interests are overridden by the interests or fundamental rights and freedoms of the data subject. On that basis, it is my view that disclosure of the information sought would be unlawful.

**Section 34(1)(b) - Investigations**

Information is exempt if it is held for the purposes of an investigation which in the circumstances may lead to a decision to report a matter to the Procurator Fiscal.

Public awareness would favour a disclosure as it would contribute to the public debate surrounding the use of police resources and provide additional transparency in how Police Scotland deal with matters.

I would, however, contend that the efficient/effective conduct of the service and protecting the integrity of investigations favours retention of the information as it cannot be in the public interest to release information that would prejudice law enforcement.

**Section 30(b) – Prejudice to the Effective Conduct of Public Affairs**

Information is exempt if its disclosure would, or would be likely to, inhibit substantially the free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation.

It is essential that there be some scope for privacy of discussion/ communication where it is assessed that disclosure would inhibit the ability of Police Scotland to discuss such matters freely with football clubs, in this case Greenock Morton, in the future.

This is a non-absolute exemption which requires the application of the Public Interest Test.

## Section 30 (c) – Prejudice to the Effective Conduct of Public Affairs

In this instance, email addresses and telephone numbers cannot be disclosed. Disclosure would negatively impact on the operational effectiveness of the service. The email address is used for operational/ business purposes and has been removed in order to ensure that those processes are protected.

It is accepted that there is a public interest in the disclosure of the information on the basis that it could lead to greater transparency and public debate.

That said, it can be argued that the flow of information to the Service would be harmed by release of such information. If individuals were unwilling to contribute to such deliberations or put forward proposals in the future fearing their initial views were publicly attributable, or in case any non-factual information was disclosed prior to matters being finalised, the proper purpose of such deliberation and any efforts to achieve honest opinions would be hindered.

Release of e-mail addresses and telephone numbers which are not in the public domain could also negatively impact on the operational effectiveness of Police Scotland and other agencies. Accordingly, and to ensure that internal processes are protected this information cannot be provided. There can be no public interest in disclosing information which would make it more difficult to offer an efficient and effective service.

**Section 35(1)(a)&(b) – Law Enforcement**

**Section 39(1) – Health, Safety & the Environment**

Disclosure of operational tactics, safety measures and intelligence would prejudice substantially the prevention or detection of crime and the apprehension of prosecution of offenders and the ability of Police Scotland to keep people safe from harm.

Disclosure would assist groups, organisations and those with hostile intent by providing them with a tactical advantage when planning or perpetrating any unlawful activities at future football matches and other similar events, whereby maximising the impact of destruction, harm and disruption that may be caused, whilst avoiding being brought to justice.

Public awareness would favour a disclosure as it would contribute to public debate around anti-social behaviour at football matches and it could lead to greater transparency.

However, any disclosure under the FOI Legislation is a disclosure to the world at large and any information identifying the focus of policing activity could be used to the advantage of criminals. Any such release would either compromise or significantly weaken police tactics and would undermine any ongoing investigations and potentially any future investigations, enabling targeted individuals or groups to become aware of such strategies and find way to circumvent them. The public entrust the Police Service to make appropriate decisions regarding their safety and protection and the only way of reducing risk is to be cautions with what is placed into the public domain.

Consequently, in terms of the applicability of the exemptions listed above, the need to ensure the effective conduct of the service in relation to prevention and detection of crime and the public safety considerations involved in the delivery of operational policing clearly favour non-disclosure of this specific information.

## 4. Please provide the number of banning orders that have been handed out since July 1, 2022 in relation with events which took place at Cappielow. Please state when these were imposed, how long they have been put in place for and what the reason for issuing the ban was.

I can confirm that there are no football banning orders related to Greenock Morton.

If you require any further assistance, please contact us quoting the reference above.

You can request a review of this response within the next 40 working days by email or by letter (Information Management - FOI, Police Scotland, Clyde Gateway, 2 French Street, Dalmarnock, G40 4EH). Requests must include the reason for your dissatisfaction.

If you remain dissatisfied following our review response, you can appeal to the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner (OSIC) within 6 months - [online](https://www.foi.scot/appeal), by email or by letter (OSIC, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, KY16 9DS).

Following an OSIC appeal, you can appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law only.

This response will be added to our [Disclosure Log](http://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/freedom-of-information/disclosure-log) in seven days' time.

Every effort has been taken to ensure our response is as accessible as possible. If you require this response to be provided in an alternative format, please let us know.