



My Ref: FOI5386
Enquiries to: Information Requests
E-Mail: informationrequests@barnsley.gov.uk

Dear Requester,

Re: Request for Information – Freedom of Information Act 2000

I wish to confirm that the council has completed its search for the information which you requested.

The information requested and our findings are as follows: -

I am writing to make a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Please provide a breakdown of costs incurred by the Council in relation to Planning Appeals for each financial year from 2010/11 to the current date in 2025.

Specifically, I request the data be provided in a table format containing the following two categories:

- 1. . The total amount spent by the Council on legal fees, external consultants, and administrative costs for defending planning appeals.**
- 2. . The total number of planning appeals defended by the Council (if an appeal crosses a financial year please include it in the same year as the costs were paid).**
- 3. . The total amount paid out to appellants (third parties) following a decision by the Planning Inspectorate that the Council acted "unreasonably" (Awards of Costs).**
- 4. . The total number of instances where costs were paid out to appellants (third parties) following a decision by the Planning Inspectorate that the Council acted "unreasonably" (Awards of Costs).**

Please present the data in the following format as an excel sheet:

Financial year	Own legal/appeal costs (£)	Number of planning appeals defended	Costs paid due to "Unreasonable" decision (£)	Number of instances where costs were paid for "Unreasonable" decision
2010/2011				
2011/2012				
...				

2025/26 (to date)				
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In order to look into your request we have looked through our records in relation to planning appeals the Council has defended over the period requested. The number of appeals for each year is as follows:

2010/11 - 44 (3 Withdrawn)
 2011/12 – 69 (2 Withdrawn)
 2012/13 – 27
 2013/14 – 24 (1 Withdrawn)
 2014/15 – 42 (2 Out of Time)
 2015/16 – 23
 2016/17 - 23 (1 Withdrawn, 1 Out of Time)
 2017/18 – 27
 2018/19 – 41 (1 Withdrawn, 2 Out of Time)
 2019/20 – 35 (1 Withdrawn, 1 Out of Time)
 2020/21- 50
 2021/22 – 43 (3 Withdrawn)
 2022/23 – 39 (1 Out of Time)
 2023/24 – 25 (1 Out of Time)
 2024/25 – 18 (1 Out of Time)
 2025/26 (to 26/02/2026) -25 (1 Withdrawn)

The number of appeals dealt with during the time period requested equates to over 500 appeals. In your request you have asked for costs relating to legal fees, external consultants, and administrative costs for defending planning appeals for each of the years. However, each appeal is different and would involve different officer time, consultee time, and external consultee time. To cost this up would require us to go through each and every appeal to assess who was involved, what work they did, and the time spent on the appeal. We would also need to go into every appeal to assess whether any costs would have been awarded and paid. For over 500 appeals, the amount of time and resources to do that would be far in excess of the 18 hours that is considered a reasonable limit for an FOI request. As such the council applies Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to this aspect of your request. In order to make your request manageable within the cost limit you may wish to consider narrowing the scope of the request by reducing the number of years data you are requesting.

Notwithstanding the above, having carried out work on external legal costs in the past, we were able to source data on external legal costs relating to planning appeals. This includes all planning appeals including enforcement appeals. The figures for these would be as follows:

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2009/2010	£0
2010/2011	£5,934
2011/2012	£26,684
2012/2013	£0
2013/2014	£0
2014/2015	£0
2015/2016	£0
2016/2017	£0
2017/2018	£0
2018/2019	£1,920
2019/2020	£1,920
2020/2021	£0
2021/2022	£0
2022/2023	£0
2023/2024	£646
2024/2025	£38,623
2025/2026	£31,500)

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact Information Requests Via email.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are unhappy with the way the Directorate has handled your request, you may ask for an internal review. Please clearly mark your correspondence 'Complaint' and address it to:

Barnsley MBC
 Information Requests Team
 PO Box 634
 Barnsley
 S70 9GG
 email: informationrequests@barnsley.gov.uk

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: -

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PO Box 634, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S70 9GG

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

Email: <http://www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints>

Kind regards,

Information Requests Team, Barnsley MBC

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