



My Ref: EIR5714
Enquiries to: Information Requests
E-Mail: informationrequests@barnsley.gov.uk

Dear Requester,

Re: Request for Information – Environmental Information Regulations (EIR)

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: -

The 2022 Principal Investment Plan as stated above, had a range of investments. The one I am on this request looking at mainly is the Project of Reducing Carbon Emissions.

This stated to look at the possibility of creating a solar farm and explore the potential mine water opportunities for the specified area to reduce carbon emissions. No set time scale to be delivered, with outputs as a feasibility study with the funding of £75,000 for each area.

When these Investment Plans were introduced in February of 2022, and I would have thought been through due process. This been a full financial check of affordability and ensuring the funds were in place for this investment. As the word investment means the money is there to invest in these Principal Town and Local Village Centres. Again I would presume all aspects of these plans to have been thoroughly assessed and the funding ensured to be available to each village etc.

The £75,000 set aside for the Solar assessed, sibility study will have been agreed via due process.

1. Can you provide how this money was allocated and where the money coming from.

Following the successful approval of the Goldthorpe Town Investment Plan through Stronger Towns Fund it was felt a similar approach was needed for the remaining 5 Principal Towns to ensure we have robust investable growth plans to secure the economic future of our localities. Additionally, key priorities for local centres were identified to include in a separate local centre investment plan.

These plans were speculative to provide an overview of potential projects for each area with rough estimates of costs to indicate how much funding would be required. There was no available funding at the time this exercise was to ascertain levels of investment required.

Having these plans in place would then put us in a strong position to bid for any future funding becoming available. at the time it was envisaged national opportunities such as UK Shared Prosperity / Levelling Up / Towns Funding and regional capital gainshare programme could provide opportunities.

2. Who was designated to do these roles for each area and what expertise did they have to obtain the best outcome for these villages.

The investment plans were produced in house no roles were allocated for the various projects as the plans were speculative. If funding became available each project would have been overseen by the relevant Council Business Unit with procurement regulations being followed.

3. What had been done prior to these plans and since the plans were released in February 2022?

No specific work had been undertaken prior this was a high level exercise to highlight priorities and potential future projects. The solar panels were based on community solar farm models to allow renters, homeowners and businesses to subscribe to clean energy without the need to install solar panels. As the investments plans were looking at creating sustainable High Streets it was deemed worth investigating the feasibility of such a scheme to determine whether it would benefit local high streets.

4. How did you breakdown the expenditure in regards to doing the job. Example the person allocated these roles or role, what was their wage etc and any running costs of research etc.

This would only have been undertaken if funding had been secured, costs were based on costs secured for the Goldthorpe Town Investment Fund.

5. How many companies have they engaged with over any solar projects, including solar farms.

Companies were not specifically engaged with for the solar projects but they were and are engaged with more broadly in relation to the Principal Towns project.

6. What research has been done prior to this plan been released and since, on any solar powered systems to help reduce the carbon footprint.

Research was focussed on reducing businesses/residents energy costs however the scheme initially explored for Goldthorpe was not developed due to cost/benefit analysis and this would have been fed in to the other Principal Towns areas had funding become available.

7. What were the aims of these projects in the terms of what each area was omitting carbon into the atmosphere. And how much this was targeting to reduce by what percentage or figure.

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The focus was on sustainability to reduce energy bills.

This is for the complete Barnsley MBC and if you can put the figures to each village etc.

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: -

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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