

FOI Reference Number: FOI/174/1819

Date: 18 July 2018

**Request:**

1. Has the council outsourced its planning department (responsible for town and country planning)? If so, who is responsible for providing these services?
2. Has the council outsourced any part of its planning services (planning policy, development management, planning enforcement)? If so, who is responsible for providing these services?
3. Please provide details of any company providing statutory planning services or service support for planning to the council. If such provision exists, how long has the company provided services to the council, how long does the contract last for and what is the value of the contract?
4. Are planning officers responsible for delivering the council's town and country planning responsibilities employed directly by the council? If not, who are they employed by?
5. Is routine use of private sector consultants made to process planning applications on behalf of the council? If so, which company/companies are used for this and how much was paid for such consultancy in the 2017-18 financial year?
6. Is routine use of private sector consultants made to develop planning policy on behalf of the council? If so, which company/companies are used for this and how much was paid for such consultancy in the 2017-18 financial year?
7. Is routine use of private sector consultants made to conduct planning enforcement work on behalf of the council? If so, which company/companies are used for this and how much was paid for such consultancy in the 2017-18 financial year?

**Answer:**

Thank you for your information request which Mid and East Antrim Borough Council received on 16 July 2018.

Please find below Mid and East Antrim Borough Council's response to the information you requested.

1. No
2. No
3. N/A
4. Yes, all are employed directly by the Council.
5. No
6. No, however, it may be necessary to engage consultants to gather an evidence base on a particular topic, such as, retailing or landscape character assessments. But all planning policy will be developed in-house.
7. No

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of part of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to the Chief Executive at the Braid Ballymena Town Hall, 1-29 Bridge Street, Ballymena, BT43 5EJ.

Please remember to quote the reference number FOI/174/1819 in any future communications.

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: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Please be advised that Mid and East Antrim Borough Council may release the response to this information request into the public domain via our website at <https://www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/>. If this is the case, any personal details in relation to your request will be removed to protect your privacy.