

DE/2026-072– Freedom of Information Request

Request:

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, please provide the following recorded information.

>From the last three financial year's budgeted figures (22/23, 23/24, 24/25):

1. Climate-related posts

a) The number of posts (headcount, and FTE where recorded) employed with job titles that include any of the following terms:

Climate; Net Zero; Sustainability; Carbon; Emissions; Environmental Sustainability; Climate Change; Climate Action; Climate Policy; Climate Programme; Climate Project; Climate Data; Climate Reporting; Climate Adaptation; Climate Resilience; Energy and Climate; Sustainable Procurement; Green Finance; Green.

2. Cost of those posts

The total employment cost for the posts identified in Question 1, including salary and employer on-costs (e.g. pension and National Insurance).

3. External consultants

The total amount paid during the same financial year to external consultants, companies, or contractors where the expenditure is recorded under any cost centre, project code, budget line, or purchase description that includes one or more of the following terms:

Climate; Net Zero; Sustainability; Carbon; Emissions; Environmental Sustainability; Climate Change; Climate Action; Climate Policy; Climate Programme; Climate Project; Climate Data; Climate Reporting; Climate Adaptation; Climate Resilience; Energy and Climate; Sustainable Procurement; Green Finance; Green.

This should include, but not be limited to, expenditure coded to professional services, consultancy, advisory services, or specialist support.

If the council does not record expenditure in this way, please provide the closest equivalent recorded information held (for example, totals by relevant cost centre or project).

If any information requested is not held, please state this clearly. If figures are held only in aggregated form, please provide the aggregated figures. Estimates derived from recorded financial information are acceptable.

If complying with this request would exceed the cost limit under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act, please provide advice and assistance under Section 16 as to how the request may be refined.

Please provide the information requested above in the following table format, where held:

Financial Year

Job Title

Staff Costs including on-costs (£)

Headcount

Consultant Spend

Department Response:

Thank you for your request for information relating to Net Zero Staff and Consultant Spending. The request was received on 21 April 2026.

In respect of Section 1(1)(a) of the act I can confirm that the Department does not hold all the information as requested, I must however clarify that there are no Departmental posts which contain the specified wording "*Climate; Net Zero; Sustainability; Carbon; Emissions; Environmental Sustainability; Climate Change; Climate Action; Climate Policy; Climate Programme; Climate Project; Climate Data; Climate Reporting; Climate Adaptation; Climate Resilience; Energy and Climate; Sustainable Procurement; Green Finance; Green*".

From September 2022 to March 2026, there was a team of officials within the Department who worked across Integrated Education Act implementation, Covid Inquiry and Climate Change/Green issues. However, it is not possible to accurately determine or apportion the time spent by individual staff between Integrated Education Act Implementation, Covid Inquiry work and Climate Change or Green-related activity. This information was not recorded at the time the work was undertaken and, as such, the Department does not hold the specific information requested.

You asked for aggregated figures relating to staffing costs. In the absence of time-recorded data, I have instead provided, at Annex A, a breakdown of overall salary costs for the Integrated Education Act, Covid Inquiry and Climate Change Teams. It includes the cost the Grade 5 responsible for the Directorate of Collaboration and Climate Change. This is offered to provide some context, but it should be noted that it does not represent a precise allocation of costs attributable solely to Climate or Green work.

In addition, there are other teams within the Department whose work may, at times, relate to Climate or Green issues as part of broader responsibilities, rather than as a discrete or standalone function. For example, staff within Major Capital Works consider BREEAM standards when undertaking refurbishment projects or new builds across the education estate. As with the team referenced above, these staff do not record time spent specifically on Climate or Green issues, and therefore only overall salary costs could be provided. Any attempt to isolate the proportion of work relating solely to Climate or Green matters would not be possible.

Accordingly, and with an important caveat, the staffing costs provided relate only to the Integrated Education Act Implementation, Covid Inquiry and Climate Change Team and do not reflect the full extent of climate or green related activity undertaken across the Department. Much of this activity is embedded within routine policy development, operational delivery and corporate functions and is therefore met from existing day to day budgets. The figures should not be interpreted as a separate or additional cost burden, nor as a comprehensive indication of the overall cost associated with climate or green issues within the Department.

I have therefore provided details of the staff grades within the relevant teams for the periods requested, together with an overall staffing cost. Please note that these figures include work unrelated to your request.

I am unable to provide a further breakdown of costs at an individual staff member level, would be exempt from disclosure under Section 40 (Personal Information) of the Freedom of Information Act.

I hope this explanation is helpful and clarifies the scope and limitations of the information that the Department can provide.