

**From:** Freedom of Information Requests  
**Sent:** 15 August 2025 14:19  
**To:**  
**Subject:** Freedom of information response:

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request dated 29 July 2025 for information about digital planning. Please find below City of Doncaster Council's responses to the questions you have raised.

For financial years 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23, 2023/24, 2024/25 and the current financial year please provide the following: -

1. Payments and Grants Received from MHCLG (and predecessor organisations) specifically for Digital Planning Projects and Programs. Please list the amount of payment in each year and the purpose for which it was received

<b>2021/22</b>	-	£35358,000.00
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Local Digital Fund - Participation in the RIPA/BOPS (Reducing Invalid Planning Applications and Back Office Planning System) project

<b>2024/25</b>	-	£250,000.00
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Local Digital Fund - Continue our participation in the [Open Digital Planning project](#) (formerly known as RIPA/BOPS)

2. Payments and Grants given by the Local Authority to third party providers and consultants for the purposes of Digital Planning Projects and Programs. Please list individually the recipient of each payment and in which year it was received and which project or program it related to.

**2022/23** - £10,000 to Open Systems Lab – Open Digital Planning  
**2023/24** - £10,000 to Open Systems Lab – Open Digital Planning  
**2024/25** - £15,000 to Open Systems Lab – Open Digital Planning

3. For each of the financial years, please provide the numbers of planning applications or service transactions received or otherwise processed through BOPS and through PLANX, listed separately.

PlanX provides a suite of digital services designed not only for submitting applications but also for delivering information, guidance, and self-assessment tools. Many of these services are intentionally structured to **triage and resolve enquiries without requiring a formal submission**, unless one is strictly necessary.

As such, a **smaller number of submissions should not be interpreted as limited usage or reduced effectiveness** of the platform. On the contrary, this reflects the success of PlanX in streamlining the user journey — enabling users to confidently self-serve, avoid unnecessary form-filling, and gain clarity on their planning obligations.

To accurately represent usage, we have provided data in two parts:

1. **Service Uses** – the number of times users have interacted with PlanX services, including guidance checks and eligibility tools; and
2. **Submissions** – the number of formal applications or forms submitted through PlanX **following interactions with services where a submission is required.**

This breakdown offers a more complete view of the platform's role in delivering efficient, user-friendly planning services and improving the overall customer experience.

**2022/23**

Service uses: 483

**2023/24**

Service uses: 2568

**2024/25**

Service uses: 4425

Submission: 307

**2025/26 (covering period 01/04/2025 – 31/07/2025)**

Service uses: 1991

Submission: 209

4. For each year list the number of staff posts (FTE), funded from MHCLG, grants and income relating to digital planning.

**2022/23**

1fte, 1.4fte backfill requirements – Totalling £81,357.02

**2023/24**

1fte – Totalling £52,945.66

**2024/25**

1fte and 1fte uplift – Totalling £71,380.28

**2025/26**

4fte and 1fte uplift – Totalling £166,394.69

I hope that this information is useful to you.

The City of Doncaster Council estimates that it has cost £98 to respond to this request for information.

**Reviewing any decisions made:**

If you are not happy with this reply you can ask us to review our response. To do this write to us within 40 working days of receiving your response at the address below or email [FOIAppeals@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:FOIAppeals@doncaster.gov.uk)

If you do not agree with the review decision you can apply to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for a decision about our compliance or otherwise with the Freedom of Information legislation. Contact details for the ICO are: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk) Telephone 0303 123 1113.

Yours faithfully,

**Ellen Dook**

**Information Governance Officer**

Corporate Resources

City of Doncaster Council

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