



FOI Ref: 2020/020

17<sup>th</sup> December 2020

## **REQUEST UNDER FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 2002**

We refer to your request for information, received by email on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2020. Your specific requests and the Park Authority's response are provided below.

- 1 Please provide a copy of legal services structure showing service structure, position in the organisation, reporting structure, team structure and number of solicitors and non-qualified officers (i.e. paralegals, legal assistants and other support officers).**

The organisational structure for the Corporate Services area of the National Park Authority is attached. This table includes the legal services staff structure, with details of staff and reporting structure.

- 2 Please provide details of professional staff numbers and their grades.**

The National Park Authority employs two full-time solicitors, grade D and one part-time solicitor, grade E.

- 3 Please provide a copy of your grading scale.**

Our pay grade scale is attached.

- 4 Please confirm your legal services staffing budget.**

The Legal Services staffing budget for financial year 2020/21 is £147k.

- 5 What are the main areas of business undertaken by legal services?**

The main areas of business undertaken by the legal services team are the provision of

### **LOCH LOMOND & THE TROSSACHS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY**

National Park Headquarters, Carrochan, Carrochan Road, Balloch, G83 8EG Long: 4°34'24"W Lat: 56°00'12"N  
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legal support to all areas of the organisation, with particular focus on planning, access, tree preservation orders, estates (leases, ownership etc.), governance, contract work and byelaw enforcement.

**6 Do you make use of or have subscriptions to legal research tools e.g. Linets, WestLaw, Practical Law and, if so, which ones?**

We do not currently make use of or subscribe to any legal research tools. Accordingly, we have to advise you under section 17(1)(b) of the Act, that this information is not held.

**7 Do you have a budget to meet the costs of solicitors annual CPD requirements? If so, what has the budget been for each of the last 3 financial years?**

There is a budget to meet the cost of solicitor's annual CPD requirements. The budget has been £300 for the last three financial years.

**8 Do you meet the costs of solicitors practising certificates?**

Yes.

**9 Do you issue customer satisfaction surveys? If so, how often, what do they measure and what are your results for each of the last 3 financial years – or calendar years if that is how you manage them?**

There have been no formal surveys carried out in the last three years. Legal staff regularly seek feedback from Operational Managers on the delivery of internal and external services via check in meetings.

**10 Do you record and monitor complaints from third parties and/or from internal clients? If so, how do you record them, how many internal complaints in each of last 3 years and likewise for complaints from third parties in each of last 3 years?**

Complaints will be recorded and processed under our formal complaints procedure. Details can be found on our website at: <https://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org/park-authority/how-to-make-a-complaint/>

There have been no complaints recorded from third parties or from internal clients about the legal team in the last three years. Accordingly, we have to advise you under section 17(1)(b) of the Act, that this information is not held.

**11 Do you regularly externalise specific areas of legal business? If so, what areas? What was the expenditure on external legal advice from private practice legal firms for each of the last 3 years?**

The areas of business sent to external advisers mostly relate to planning, governance, disputes and employment matters, with certain property matters also referred out due to pressure of business and certain contractual matters for specialist advice. Expenditure on external legal advice from private legal firms for the last three financial years is as follows:

2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21 to date
£62,046	£51,975	£72,898	£17,354

**12 Do you externalise legal business on an *ad hoc* basis? If so, what types of business**  
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**have the externalised and what was the cost associated with that for private practice legal firms for each of the last 3 years?**

Legal business has been sent externally on an ad hoc basis on construction and contract matters. We do not hold records of the specific costs associated with this ad hoc work. Accordingly, we have to advise you under section 17(1)(b) of the Act, that this information is not held.

**13 Do you have a data protection officer in post and does that post sit within or report to an officer in legal services?**

Yes, the Data Protection Officer post sits within the Governance and Legal Team and reports to the Governance and Legal Manager.

**14 Do you have a team within your organisation which deals specifically with FoI requests and/or SARs? Does that team sit within or is it supported by legal services?**

We have one Information Officer who deals with FOIs, SARs and performs the role of Data Protection Officer. The Information Officer is a member of the Governance and Legal Team and is supported by legal colleagues.

**15 Do you issue employee satisfaction surveys – WLC issue an annual employee satisfaction survey which seeks feedback on employee views on matters such as leadership, professional development, access to tools and training required to undertake their role?**

We engage the services of the organisation 'Best Companies' every two years to measure our employee engagement which goes out to all staff, more information can be found at: [www.b.co.uk](http://www.b.co.uk)

**If such a survey is issued. what are the criterion measured and what were the results over the last 3 year?.**

Details can be found via the website link as provided above.

**Is the employee survey issued to all employees within the organisation? If so, how do the legal services results compare to the average results corporately?**

The survey is issued to all staff. Results are provided to individual teams on a confidential basis. Due to the wide range of services delivered by the National Park Authority, result comparisons are not made between teams.

**16 Do you have structured engagement/communication methods with customers and partners? If so, what are they?**

The Legal Services team engage with the external SOLAR and NSPB Advisers Forums. Within the Park Authority, the Legal Manager attends Operational Managers Meetings to provide regular updates and training. The Legal Manager also attends Corporate Services Managers Meetings, and all members of the legal team attend regular workload planning meetings with key Managers which involve two way engagement. We previously operated a legal clinic which external solicitors attended. As we are doing more work in-house, this service is no longer required.

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Yours sincerely

**Governance and Legal Team**  
**Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority**

**National Park Authority Salary Structure 2020/21**

<b>Band</b>	<b>Maximum Job Evaluation Score</b>	<b>Grade Minimum (£)</b>	<b>Grade Maximum (£)</b>
A	190	17965	23062
B	230	23485	25857
C	310	26598	31115
D	400	31438	37844
E	460	38410	45215
F	580	45276	51809
G		55179	64197
<b>Integrated Pay Range for Ranger Staff</b>			
<b>A1</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>18594</b>	<b>24664</b>
<b>B1</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>25110</b>	<b>28997</b>
<b>C1</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>29630</b>	<b>34683</b>

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## Review Procedure

If you are dissatisfied with this decision, or the way in which the Authority has dealt with your request, you are entitled to require the Authority to review its decision. Please note that in order for a review to take place you are required to:

- Send your request for review in writing, setting out in full the reasons why you are requesting a review.
- Submit your review request within 40 working days of either the date on which you received a response from the Authority or the date by which you should have received a response under the terms of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, whichever is the later.
- address your review request to:

Governance & Legal Team  
Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Authority  
National Park Headquarters  
Carrochan  
Carrochan Road  
Balloch  
G83 8EG  
E-mail: [info@lochlomond-trossachs.org](mailto:info@lochlomond-trossachs.org)

The review will be handled by staff who were not involved in the original decision. You will receive notice of the result of your review within 20 working days.

If you are not satisfied with the response to your request for review, you can contact the Scottish Information Commissioner, the independent body which oversees the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, at:

Scottish Information Commissioner  
Kinburn Castle

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Online appeal portal: [www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal)

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