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**From:** Suttie, David [mailto:David.Suttie@dumgal.gsx.gov.uk]  
**Sent:** 14 October 2009 13:21  
**To:** Wormald L (Luke); Murray V (Victoria)  
**Cc:** Nix, Volkmar  
**Subject:** RE: HS Consultation

Dear Luke / Victoria,

I confirm that the position of Dumfries & Galloway Council in respect of the consultation document is as was discussed at our meeting on 10 September 2009.

This is basically that we are open to the principle of taking sole responsibility for certain LBC applications (were the scheme to be rolled out) and accept that there would be the potential for some improvement in performance were this were to occur.

However, our reservations are two-fold. Firstly, it is noted that the 3 authorities which took part in the pilot are considerably better resourced than we are, in that we have one Conservation Officer to cover the whole of the authority. As you will be aware, Dumfries & Galloway Council is geographically the third largest local authority in Scotland so there are genuine concerns regarding our capacity to take on this additional responsibility. With the Council's current budgetary position, there is no reasonable prospect of additional staff being employed in the short term to assist with this role.

Secondly, the Council's development management service has undergone a number of significant changes in the last year:- the introduction of e-planning; the introduction of the Planning Reforms; and the retirement of 3 senior members of its management team (together with the departmental Corporate Director). The resultant restructuring of the department is still ongoing and will be for some time yet.

The combination of all these changes is that we are not currently in a position to take on any additional responsibility and a period of stability and 'bedding in' is really required before we will be in a position to further consider taking on this role.

I would suggest that by spring / summer 2010, we should be ready to re-examine our position and I would be happy to discuss the matter further again at that time.

I confirm that I am happy for these comments to be made public.

Should you have any queries, please contact me at the office below.

Your sincerely

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