THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

PLACE CLUSTER
ENTERPRISE & INVESTMENT SERVICE
PLANNING & BUILDING STANDARDS

JOB SPECIFICATION

Post Designation:	Research Officer
Grade / Salary:	Research Officer / HC09 Applicants will be placed on the appropriate pay point dependent on their skills and experience. However, it is the default practice of the Council to appoint on the base of the grade which would be Spinal Point 38 (which in the 2026/27 year equates to £46,155.20)
Location:	Highland Council HQ, Inverness (but hybrid location working permissible)
Responsible to:	Development Plans Manager
Job purpose:	To undertake research and monitoring that will contribute to the delivery of a high-quality planning service within Highland

Accountabilities:

1. To undertake, publish or otherwise supply, research and monitoring evidence and advice to assist in formulating, preparing, applying and delivering the Council's Development Plans and other planning policy guidance including masterplans and development briefs.

2. To provide research and monitoring evidence to contribute to reports on planning applications and wider development management functions.

3. To prepare and supply evidence in support of appeals, Gate Check or Examinations for submission to the Planning and Environmental Appeals Division (DPEA).

4. To attend and contribute at Council, public and other stakeholder meetings when the subject matter concerns research and monitoring.

5. To liaise with other Council Services and external agencies on research and monitoring.

6. To contribute to the Council's GIS functions and the use of digital planning.

6. Carry out any other duties assigned by the Manager.

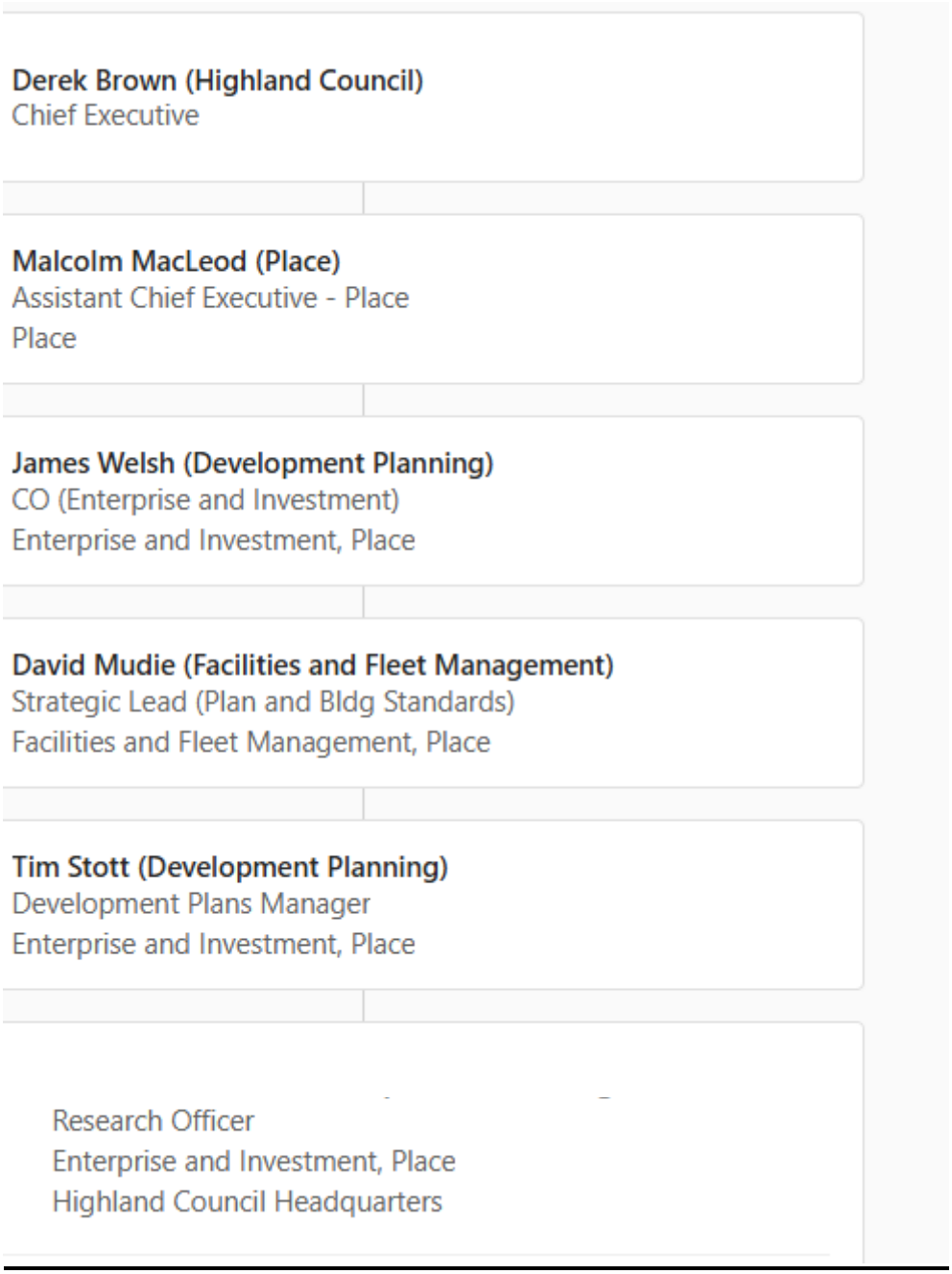
THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Service:	Enterprise and Investment
Job Title:	Research Officer
Location:	Highland Council HQ, Inverness (but hybrid location working permissible)
Date:	19 October 2026

Essential Attributes:	To be able to carry out the duties of this post effectively and safely, candidates should be able to provide evidence of the following:
Experience	• A minimum of two years' experience in a research and monitoring role. • A track record of formulating, coordinating and timeously completing research / monitoring projects.
Education & Qualifications	• An honours degree in an appropriate discipline (one including the study of the natural and built environment and/or Geographical Information Systems (GIS) skills and knowledge).
General Skills and Abilities	• Self-motivated and able to work with the minimum of supervision. • Ability to work under pressure. • High standard of written communication skills including report writing. • Ability to work as a member of a team. • Good analytical and problem-solving skills. • Willingness to undertake a varied workload. • Ability to travel efficiently and effectively between various work locations within Highland to meet the operational requirement of the Service. • Ability to communicate effectively with colleagues, customers and councillors. • Evidence of a commitment to continuing professional development. • Dedication to high-quality customer service.
Skills/Abilities Specific to Post	• A high level of competence in the use of software appropriate to research and monitoring of the natural and built environment including Geographical Information Systems (GIS) (ideally in ArcGIS Pro, ArcGIS Online or similar software) and Microsoft Office applications. • Some knowledge of the Scottish Planning System and/or local government and its procedures and administration. • An ability to formulate and supervise research and monitoring work projects and tasks for students working within the team and mentor their development. • A high degree of mental concentration and accuracy in work outputs.

ORGANOGRAM


Derek Brown (Highland Council)
Chief Executive
Malcolm MacLeod (Place)
Assistant Chief Executive - Place
Place
James Welsh (Development Planning)
CO (Enterprise and Investment)
Enterprise and Investment, Place
David Mudie (Facilities and Fleet Management)
Strategic Lead (Plan and Bldg Standards)
Facilities and Fleet Management, Place
Tim Stott (Development Planning)
Development Plans Manager
Enterprise and Investment, Place
Research Officer
Enterprise and Investment, Place
Highland Council Headquarters