

Community Infrastructure Levy Review Education, Skills and Growth Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Reason for review

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a charge applied to new local development to help fund local infrastructure needs. Receipts from CIL differ from other local contributions for development (i.e. S106) in that these are not site-specific and can be used to support wider community infrastructure needs in that locality. It was noted by members of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission at a budget scrutiny session that few Parish/Town Councils maximised their CIL funding or achieved project spend in a timely manner. There was an identified need to understand the barriers preventing CIL allocation and spend.

Objectives/scope

The review will look to:

- Identify key principles and practice that should underpin governance arrangements for distribution of the neighbourhood element of the CIL, particularly in relation to how community infrastructure projects are identified, prioritised and authorised;
- Understand how Parish/Town Councils use CIL funding and assess if they achieve maximum impact for residents;
- Assess whether there has been an impact on enacting projects due to COVID-19.

The review Panel will do this by:

- Carrying out a desk top analysis to review the amount of CIL funding given to each Parish/Town Council in the borough and how it has been spent;
- Surveying Parish/Town Councils to capture examples of good practice, facilitated by CIL funding;
- Interviewing a developer
- Interviewing comparator local authorities
- Interviewing BFC officers on how they assist/support Parish/Town Councils with managing CIL funds, including recovery from COVID-19
- Exploring how residents can be engaged in deciding priorities for CIL funded projects.

At the conclusion of this work the Panel will produce a report highlighting its findings and propose recommendations to the Executive about how Parish/Town Councils, in conjunction with Bracknell Forest Council, could maximise the use of CIL funding for residents.

Delivery methods: Surveys; desk top analysis; consultation and evidence gathering sessions

Council theme: Value for money

Council team: Infrastructure & Implementation Team from Place, Planning & Regeneration and Finance and Business Services from Resources

Review due: July 2021

Proposed by: Cllr Gill Birch, Chair Education, Skills and Growth Panel

Equalities Impact Assessment

The Council has a duty under the Equalities Act (2010) to have due regard to tackling discrimination of persons that share the characteristics protected under Section 4 of the Act; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share those

protected characteristics and people who do not.

CIL funding should have a positive impact upon all residents and service users through enhancing provision of community facilities. This review will consider how CIL funding is targeted where needs are evidenced and with respect to people who have protected characteristics.

Financial and legal implications

There are potentially legal and financial implications of any recommendations arising from this review which will be fully addressed in the review report.

Climate Change implications

CIL funding can support climate change issues, such as reducing carbon emissions in a local neighbourhood, and underpin the Council's vision for thriving communities. This review will assess whether climate change issues should be considered as part of the prioritisation process for allocating CIL funding to Parish/Town Councils.