



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Name and Date of Committee	OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 6 NOVEMBER 2024
Subject	INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING STATEMENT (IFS) 2023/24
Wards affected	ALL
Accountable member	Councillor Hugo Ashton – Executive Member for Planning
Accountable officer	Chris Hargraves – Planning Policy Manager Email: chris.hargraves@westoxon.gov.uk
Report Author	Jasper Lamoon – Infrastructure Delivery Lead Email: jasper.lamoon@cotswold.gov.uk
Purpose	To note the West Oxfordshire Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) for 2023/24
Annexes	Annex A - Infrastructure Funding Statement 2023/24.
Recommendations	That the Committee resolves to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Note the content of the Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) 2023/24 attached at Annex A, with a view to it being published on the Council's website by 31 December 2024 in accordance with legislative requirements; and2. Request that Officers prepare an Infrastructure Spending Strategy to help prioritise the timely expenditure of unallocated S106 monies on appropriate projects for the benefit of local communities.
Corporate Priorities	The main purpose of the Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) is to provide greater clarity on the receipt and use of developer contributions including Section 106 planning obligations to fund new and enhanced infrastructure in support of planned growth. As such, the IFS helps to support several aims and objectives of the Council Plan.
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Nil.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. Local authorities are required to report annually on the receipt and use of developer contributions through the publication of an Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS).
- 1.2. The main purpose of the IFS is to set out in a transparent manner, future infrastructure requirements and expected costs, contributions received during the previous financial year, anticipated funding from developer contributions and the Council's future spending priorities.
- 1.3. In particular, the IFS must include:
 - A report relating to the previous financial year on section 106 planning obligations;
 - A report relating to the previous financial year on the Community Infrastructure Levy (where CIL is in place); and
 - A report on the infrastructure projects or types of infrastructure that the Council intends to fund wholly or partly through CIL.
- 1.4. Any authority that receives a contribution from development through Section 106 planning obligations or CIL must prepare an IFS. This includes County Councils.
- 1.5. The IFS must be updated annually (although local authorities can produce more regular updates if they wish) and should be published on the Council's website no later than 31st December each year.
- 1.6. The IFS is intended to feed back into Local Plan reviews and effectively replaces previous local authority CIL regulation 123 lists (which set out CIL spending priorities) where these were in place.
- 1.7. It should be noted that the figures in the IFS are set out as per the requirements in the CIL regulations, which is different from the Council's Statement of Accounts which is compiled in line with accounting standards.

2. WEST OXFORDSHIRE INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING STATEMENT 2023/24

- 2.1. The Council's Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) covering the period 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024 is attached at Annex A.
- 2.2. Section 2 of the IFS provides an overview of future infrastructure needs in West Oxfordshire with reference to several sources of information including the West Oxfordshire Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2016) prepared in support of the Local Plan and more recent infrastructure studies prepared for the Eynsham area and Woodstock respectively which have helped to inform the Salt Cross Area Action Plan (AAP).
- 2.3. Importantly, it notes that a new Infrastructure Delivery Plan is currently being prepared to support the emerging West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2041. This will be essential in helping to identify future infrastructure needs in West Oxfordshire to support planned growth and will feed into future iterations of the IFS as these needs are identified and prioritised.
- 2.4. Section 3 reports on S106 planning obligations (agreed, received, spent etc.) in the period 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024.

2.5. The key figures are as follows:

- £3,183,352.60 in financial contributions as well as 287 affordable homes were secured in Section 106 legal agreements during 2023/24;
- £892,062.70 of Section 106 funds were collected by the District Council in 2023/24;
- £1,510,850.55 of Section 106 funds were either spent by West Oxfordshire District Council or transferred to another party (such as Oxfordshire County Council or Town/Parish Councils) for expenditure;
- £2,281,472.15 of received Section 106 funds are allocated (i.e. committed to a certain project) but not spent;
- A total of £8,873,356.16 has been received from Section 106 funds before 1st April 2023 but has not yet been allocated (i.e. committed to a certain project) by the District Council;
- Including £1,171,107.35 in commuted sums for maintenance of open spaces, as of 1st April 2024, the District Council held a total of £13,150,009.86 in S106 monies.

2.6. It is important to note that although a relatively large amount of money is listed as being not yet allocated to a particular project, this is not an unusual position and is reflective of the fact that:

- Some agreements are received in instalments and can often only be spent once the total amount has been received in its entirety;
- Some of these monies will have only been received relatively recently and will have a long 'spend-by' deadline date of 10 years or so; and
- Some of these monies, whilst not yet formally allocated towards a particular project, are nonetheless informally being targeted for expenditure on certain schemes at a later date once those schemes have been worked up in more detail.

2.7. Notwithstanding this, Officers acknowledge that more could be done to pro-actively identify new projects that are able to be funded via S106 monies and bring them forward to delivery more quickly than at present.

2.8. This is reflected in the second report recommendation which invites relevant Officers to prepare an Infrastructure Spending Strategy to help prioritise the timely expenditure of unallocated S106 monies on appropriate projects for the benefit of local communities.

2.9. The intention is that this will be able to draw on infrastructure planning work being undertaken in support of the emerging West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2041 and will, in due course, help to prioritise the spending of CIL receipts when the Council's CIL charging schedule is formally introduced in 2025.

2.10. It could be a standalone document or could be incorporated into future iterations of the annual Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS).

2.11. Section 4 of the IFS provides a brief update on the proposed introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) into West Oxfordshire, with Section 5 explaining the extent of the infrastructure funding gap that has previously been identified for West Oxfordshire through the preparation of the adopted Local Plan.

- 2.12. Whilst the extent of the funding gap is very significant, this is not an unusual position, with most local authorities identifying funding gaps of a similar magnitude, if not greater. The extent of the funding gap serves to emphasise the importance of maximising funding through developer contributions including S106 and CIL as well as other forms of funding (e.g. central Government) wherever possible.
- 2.13. Section 5 also provides an overview of the District Council's future spending priorities with reference to several relevant sources including the West Oxfordshire Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2016) and the Council's Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which was adopted in July 2023.
- 2.14. As outlined above, this will be augmented in future iterations of the IFS as further infrastructure work is prepared in support of the emerging Local Plan 2041 and as further work takes place on the new Infrastructure Spending Strategy in accordance with the second report recommendation.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. The IFS provides information on monies received and spent in relation to Section 106 planning obligations during the period 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024. It also provides an overview of future infrastructure needs and costs and the spending priorities of the Council in relation to Section 106 planning obligations and CIL, once implemented.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. Publication of the Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) is a requirement of the Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) (England) (No. 2) Regulations 2019.
- 4.2. There are potential legal implications if the Council does not fulfil its obligations in respect of Section 106 legal agreements. The preparation of the IFS provides much greater transparency in relation to S106 funds including those which have been received, spent, allocated and not yet allocated or spent.

5. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 5.1. The report raises no specific risks.

6. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 6.1. The report raises no specific implications in respect of equality.

7. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. The report raises no specific implications in respect of climate change.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 8.1. None. The publication of the IFS is a legislative requirement. Its content is dictated by the Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) (England) (No. 2) Regulations 2019.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1. None.