

Divisions Affected – All

CABINET

16 December 2025

Infrastructure Funding Statement 2024/2025 and s.106 Improvement Programme

Report of Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Cabinet is **RECOMMENDED** to —
 - a) Note the recommendations contained in the body of this report and to consider and determine its response to the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and
 - b) Agree that relevant officers will continue to update Scrutiny for 12 months on progress made against actions committed to in response to the recommendations, or until they are completed (if earlier).

REQUIREMENT TO RESPOND

2. In accordance with section 9FE of the Local Government Act 2000, the Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee requires that, within two months of the consideration of this report, the Cabinet publish a response to this report and any recommendations.

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

3. The Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a report on the Infrastructure Funding Statement 2024/25 and s.106 Improvement Programme Update at its meeting on 12 November 2025.
4. The Committee would like to thank Cllr Judy Roberts, Cabinet member for Place, Environment and Climate Action, for presenting the report as well as Robin Rogers, Director of Economy and Place, and Ian Dyson, Director of Financial and Commercial Services, for attending to answer the Committee's questions.

SUMMARY

5. The Cabinet member for Place, Environment and Climate Action introduced the report to remind the Committee that the Infrastructure Funding Statement is a retrospective statutory report required by Government. Included with it was a report updating the Committee on progress following the Committee's detailed scrutiny over the past 18 months. In her brief introduction, the Cabinet member emphasised her gratitude to the Committee and emphasised the significant strides that had been made.
6. The Committee explored learning from other authorities; the detail in the s.106 dashboard; the importance of transparency and of speeding up expenditure; member engagement.
7. The Committee has previously made a number of recommendations, many of which remain pertinent, but it is content to receive updates on those rather than submitting them again as formal recommendations. It contents itself with two formal recommendations which act as umbrellas for its concerns: namely about ensuring local members are engaged and, also, about the urgency of sufficient processes for timely spending.

RECOMMENDATIONS

8. One of the long-standing concerns the Committee has had is there has been a sense whereby local members have felt distant from projects and proposals relating to s.106 funding. That has improved and longer-serving members of the Council in particular are grateful for the launch of the s.106 dashboard at the beginning of the municipal year which has been a great boon to transparency. This has enabled members to interrogate data regarding projects and expenditure within their own divisions as well as across the county council footprint.
9. Members would welcome the opportunity to be involved in early discussions about what infrastructure is needed within their divisions and where it should go. Their democratic mandate means that they are the ones who represent and understand their respective divisions.
10. Members recognise that the commercial sensitivity of some discussions with developers and the like means it would not always be appropriate for members to be engaged from the outset but it would be a good thing were they to be involved as soon as was possible. It would also be a good thing if members were engaged proactively during ensuing discussions and decision-making.
11. Questions of funding and infrastructure within divisions are ones that matter a great deal to residents within them and the Committee is of the view that their elected members should have input into them.

Recommendation 1: That the Council should ensure that local members are engaged and involved with questions of funding and infrastructure in their divisions.

12. Significant progress has been made on resolving challenges related to s.106 expenditure and the Committee is very happy to recognise that. The Council's processes and systems are much improved from where they were when the Committee began paying close attention to these matters. Neither the Cabinet member nor the officers appearing before the Committee appeared complacent about the task ahead but the Committee is keen to emphasise that a significant task nonetheless remains.
13. The system is complex and funds are often fragmented and bound to specific localities and projects which makes spending difficult. The Committee recognises that and recognises that gathering enough funding for larger schemes was a challenge, with strict legal requirements needing to be met. The Committee was pleased to receive reassurance that efforts are underway both to improve transparency and to ensure more effective use of the contributions received.
14. The Committee was pleased to hear that the Council had taken action with the s.106 improvement programme and that it was continuing to do so. The Committee would strongly ward against any sense of relaxation or hesitation in pursuing this improvement journey. The Committee accepts that increasing development means increasing the incoming s.106 funds and thus that it would be very unlikely for there ever to be none. However, the view of the Committee is that the balance is still too high. The processes in place have improved things but the Council must accept the urgency of the situation and commit to prioritising this workstream so that processes are sufficient and s.106 funds can be spent in a timely fashion.

Recommendation 2: That the Council should recognise the urgency of ensuring its processes are sufficient for timely spending of s.106 funds.

FURTHER CONSIDERATION

15. The Committee does not anticipate revisiting this topic again during this municipal year but would hope that the 2026/2027 Committee does so at an early opportunity.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

16. Under Part 6.2 (13) (a) of the Constitution Scrutiny has the following power: 'Once a Scrutiny Committee has completed its deliberations on any matter a formal report may be prepared on behalf of the Committee and when agreed by them the Proper Officer will normally refer it to the Cabinet for consideration.

17. Under Part 4.2 of the Constitution, the Cabinet Procedure Rules, s 2 (3) iv) the Cabinet will consider any reports from Scrutiny Committees.

Anita Bradley, Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer

Annex: Pro-forma Response Template

Background papers: None

Other Documents: None

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