

Divisions Affected - All

Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee
13 November 2024
Infrastructure Funding Statement & S106 review
Report by The Director of Economy & Place

RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee is RECOMMENDED to**
 - a) **Consider the content of the Infrastructure Funding Statement 2023/24**
 - b) **Note the current work underway to review S106 expenditure and governance arrangements**

Executive Summary

2. The Infrastructure Funding Statement is a statutory statement of fact to be reported annually, by 31 December 2024 on developer contributions secured, spent or received during the previous financial year, 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024.
3. The Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) for the 2023/2024 period will be considered by Cabinet on 17 December 2024 and then published on the authority's website. The 2023/2024 IFS reports the following:
 - a) The county council secured 53 new planning obligations in 2023/24 for developer contributions worth £59m;
 - b) £33.5m funding was spent on projects in 2023/24;
 - c) £61.7m of developer contributions were received in 2023/24, mainly for education and transport;
 - d) Future service priorities to be funded either in full or part from developer contributions include new schools, school expansions and transport infrastructure. The projection for future spend in 2025/2026 is c.£60m;
 - e) £241,000 was received in administration fees which contributes towards the service costs of monitoring the planning obligations and collecting developer contributions;
 - f) There is £261m of funding held to fund future projects; this includes funding received in 2023/24;
 - g) Of the funding that is held, £136.6M is allocated to projects that are in the capital programme/have a business case. The remainder will fund the delivery of other strategic and local infrastructure projects, which will inform the pipeline of future capital investment;

- h) During the last 3 financial years from 2021/22 to 2023/24 £12,000 was repaid.

Exempt Information

4. None

Infrastructure Funding Statement 2024

5. Local authorities are required to produce an Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) on an annual basis in accordance with Schedule 2 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as inserted by the 2019 regulations).
6. The reporting period is the previous financial year, so this statement covers the period 1 April 2023 to the 31 March 2024. The purpose of the Statement is to give policy makers and communities better insight into how developer contributions are supporting new development and local infrastructure priorities.
7. The report is broken down into a number of different sections that cover new planning obligations entered into; funding of projects within the financial year; contributions received and future funding priorities.
8. The IFS reports that the County Council entered into 53 legal agreements, which secured contributions for the provision of infrastructure of £59m. The contributions are index linked and invoiced according to relevant trigger points in the delivery of the proposed developments.
9. In terms of delivery, the County Council spent £33.5m on projects in 2023/2024. The majority of the spend was on education schemes although a range of other projects were also delivered. The County Council also collected £61.7m of contributions during 2023/2024; the majority was for education projects with transport the next highest in terms of receipts.
10. £241,000 was received in administration fees, which contribute towards the service costs of monitoring the planned obligations and collecting the contributions when due from developers.

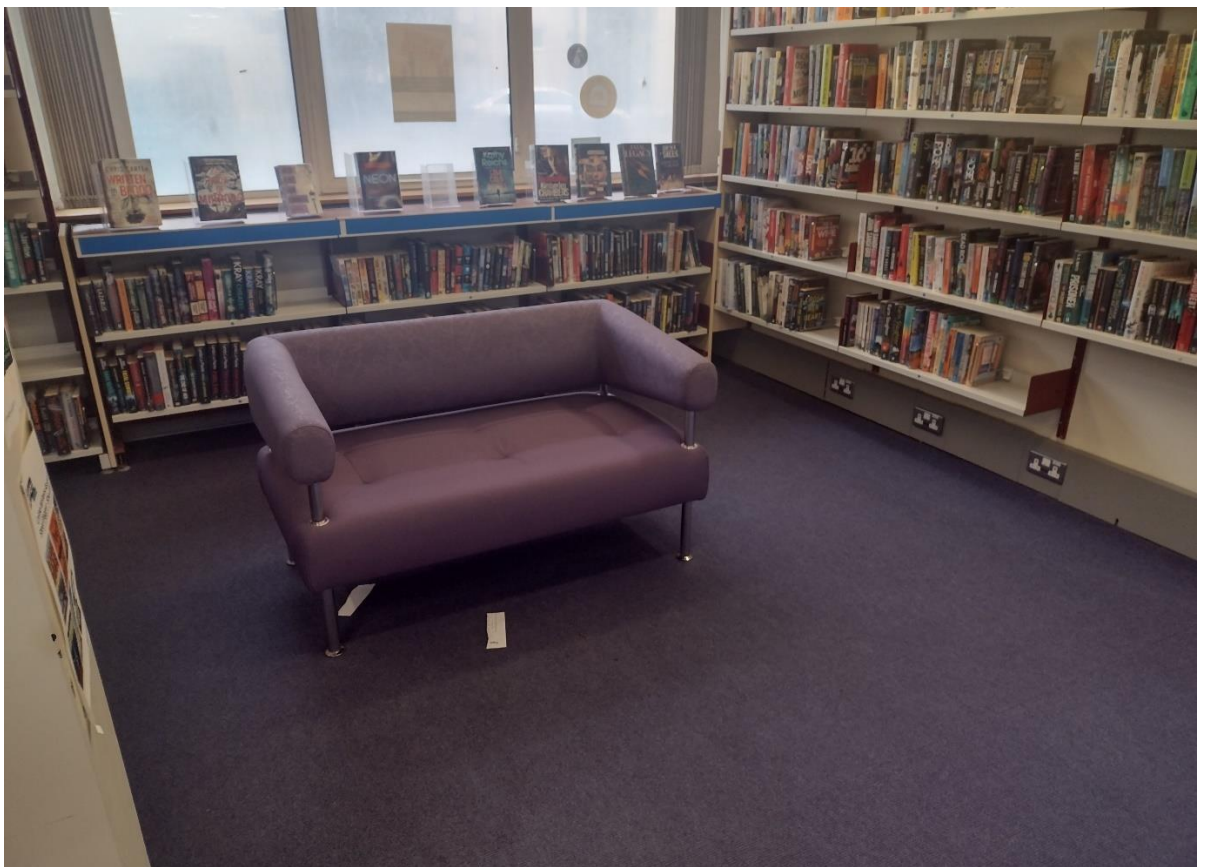
Projects - case studies

11. Oxfordshire has and will continue to experience high levels of new housing and other development through the ongoing implementation of adopted Local Plans. This requires new infrastructure to be delivered alongside the pace of development to ensure it is accommodated in a sustainable way. This section provides examples of some of the projects that have been delivered in 2023/2024 or planned for delivery in future years to highlight the County Council's infrastructure delivery work.

Country-wide library furnishing enhancement programme

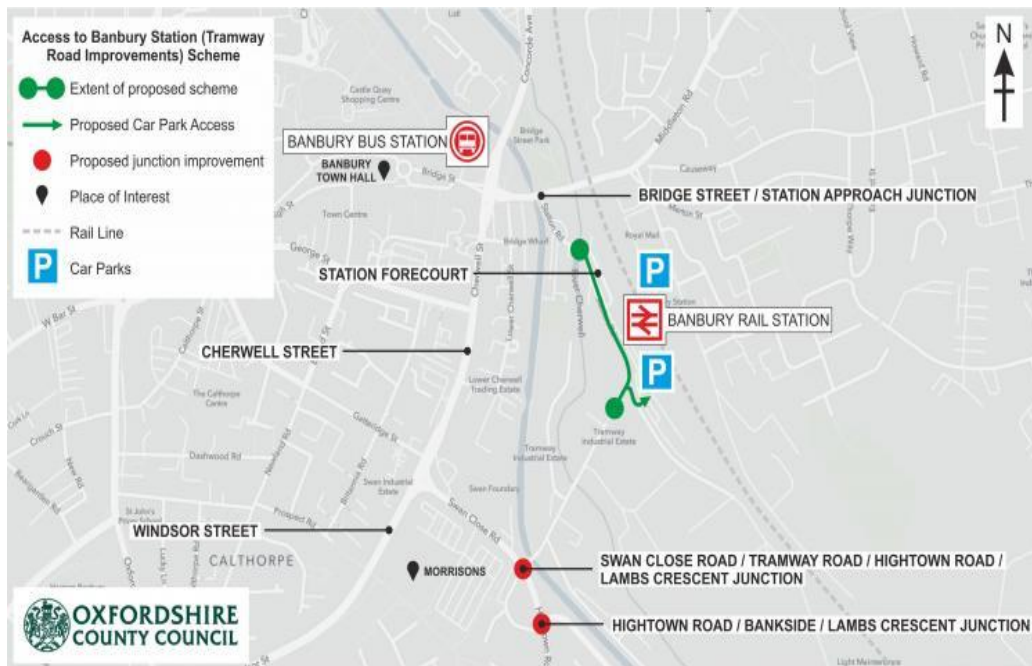
12. This programme was developed to expand the capacity at Abingdon, Didcot, Oxford, Thame, Headington, Witney, Cowley, Wantage and Bicester libraries.
13. The programme delivered increased seating and study areas across multiple sites increasing the capacity of our libraries to support independent working, and to increase the comfort of our customers.
14. The challenge was to deliver the programme without closing any of the libraries which was almost achieved with just a one-day closure.
15. The library service has reported that it is bringing in new customers to use our powered working spaces.





Tramway Road Transport Enhancements at Banbury

16. This project is to deliver improved access to Banbury Railway station.
17. The scheme will deliver a bus and taxi link past the station to improve bus journey times and improve connectivity, and a new access into the station car park to avoid car trips travelling through one of the most congested junctions in Banbury.
18. These improvements will provide benefit to many residents to the south of Banbury and help to unlock housing growth.



19. The project is using £811,000 S106 funding in addition to Growth Deal funding. This project will deliver sustainable access to the Banbury train station and town centre for bus, taxi, walk and cycle plus a southern access into one of the station car parks. There was contaminated land found that needs to be cleared but work on the scheme started in late October 2024.
20. Other s106 funding allocations will be used to build on the scheme - looking at three junctions in the area. There is s106 available for these, but the aim is to build this up through the Local Plan Review.

Countryside Access

21. The countryside service received funding for recruitment of a fixed term Countryside Access Development Officer to enable delivery of some of the S106 funded schemes that otherwise may not have moved to delivery. Examples of these are -

- surfacing works to bridleway 311/4/10 from Limes Road, Botley

- Purchase and installation of a fully accessible kissing gate – footpath 206/7/10 Eynsham
- Surfacing work of 245/1/20 Mill Lane car park, Henley-on-Thames
- Surfacing of final 1km stretch of bridleway 349/9/30, Upper Heyford
- Removal of wire and concrete posts to increase width of footpath 180/18/10, Chinnor
- Monitoring pipes – cut to ground level and re-cap bridleway 109/27/20, Ardley

Schools - St John's CE Academy

22. St John's CE Academy is a new two form of entry primary school in Grove with a capacity of 420 pupil places and a 75 place nursery.
23. The project was delivered through developer contributions by the Thame Partnership Academy Trust and opened to pupils in September 2023. The project has been delivered as part of the infrastructure package required to support new housing brought forward on land at the former Grove airfield, which was allocated to provide new housing in the Vale of White Horse Local Plan.



S106 Review Project Update

24. It is recognised that the timely delivery of infrastructure required to support development across the county is a key priority for the County Council. The County Council holds £261m of developer contributions, which is earmarked to deliver a range of education, transport, waste, library, countryside and social infrastructure in future years.
25. Whilst the delivery of infrastructure is complex and, in many cases, can take years to complete due to the phasing of large-scale developments, it is also recognised that the County Council needs to ensure that delivery is accelerated wherever possible to ensure existing and future communities are not disproportionately affected by new development in terms of the impact on infrastructure.
26. In response, at the December 2023 Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee, officers reported that a S106 review project had started aimed at expediting the delivery of infrastructure and improving access to information and communications.
27. Phase 1 of the review of S106 funding has now been completed with recommendations on how to improve the pipeline of projects and move them to delivery. The outputs and recommendations from Phase 1 of the S106 project are as follows:
 - 1) Due to a combination of projects coming on stream and focus on accelerating delivery of held S106 monies, the County Council are projecting to spend c.£60m of S106 in 2025/2026 mainly through delivery of major education and transport projects. The County Council normally deliver around £30m of S106 monies in any given year meaning that the projection for 2025/26 is a significant increase in S106 delivery.
 - 2) The amount of held S106 has reduced to c.£261m. This has been due to ongoing focus on delivery as well as re-categorisation of held monies to remove aspects such as commuted sums for S278 works that previously were being reported as part of the overall S106 held monies. This has also resulted in the proportion of S106 monies that are identified for delivery through the County Council's Capital Programme increasing from around 40% in the 2023 IFS to around 50% in this years'.
 - 3) A comprehensive audit of the S106 process has identified significant deficiencies in how the various ICT systems are currently configured. In short, the three systems (Mastergov (collection), PPM (pipeline) and SAP (finance) are not connected together. This has been a key barrier for accelerating delivery as infrastructure teams have not been able to have access to the live data for what is available to progress projects. The priority for the Phase 2 of the S106 project is to have the connections between these systems significantly enhanced as soon as practicable.

- 4) S106 reporting – As part of the above, a trial has been undertaken on the creation of a S106 Dashboard that reports ‘live’ data of held monies across the County, which was demonstrated to Members through the Summer 2024 locality meetings. The dashboard will be released to services and members once the corporate Microsoft Power BI licence is rolled out.
 - 5) Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Governance Review – A review is underway to propose a change in the way in which the County Council accesses CIL monies collected in the relevant Oxfordshire CIL Charging Authorities. This review has identified that the process needs to be framed around delivery the Council’s strategic infrastructure priorities as opposed to the existing reactive approach that exists. This process will be agreed through Cabinet before 31 March 2025. Members should note that Cherwell District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council consulted on draft CIL Charging Schedules in Autumn 2024, raising the prospect that there will be universal CIL coverage across the County in the near future. This supports the need for a new and strategic-based approach to the collection and use of CIL by the County Council.
28. Phase 2 of the project has commenced and will focus on improving systems, process and reporting to put in place a significantly improved S106 delivery system. Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee may want to consider progress of Phase 2 at a future meeting date.

Financial Implications

29. None. This report is introducing the Infrastructure Funding Statement which is a statement of fact with no additional financial implications.

Comments checked by: Filipp Skiffins

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(Finance)

Legal Implications

30. None. This report is introducing the Infrastructure Funding Statement which is a statement of fact with no additional financial implications.

Comments checked by: Paul Grant

Head of Legal Services

Staff Implications

31. There are no new staff implications as the report is introducing the Infrastructure Funding Statement which is a statement of fact

Equality & Inclusion Implications

32. There are no Equality and Inclusion implications as there are no new proposals. The report is introducing the Infrastructure Funding Statement which is a statement of fact.

Sustainability Implications

33. There are no sustainability implications as the report is introducing the Infrastructure funding statement which is a statement of fact.

Risk Management

34. There are reputational risks related to publication or non-publication of the Infrastructure Funding Statement. The report is a statutory document that highlights the amount of funding held under S106 agreements.

Consultations

35. None required.

Robin Rogers – Director of Economy & Place

Annex: Infrastructure Funding Statement

Background papers: None

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