

CABINET – 15 OCTOBER 2025

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

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1. Chris Lemon

Question: The Bowbrook Meadows and Darwin's Walk developments in Radbrook suffer badly from a lack of public transport. School times at Bowbrook Primary in particular are becoming dangerous for children and parents who walk and cycle as so many pupils are taken to and from school by car.

In 2013, Shropshire Council asked for the roads to be widened from 5.5m to 6.1m during the planning phases specifically so Red Deer Road and Squinter Pip Way could accommodate a bus service. The outline permission granted in 2013 (13/13534/OUT) identified as a condition a 'Local Bus Service Contribution' to provide a subsidy for 5 years to facilitate and sustain local bus services, to ensure adequate public transport links for the development(s). The Officer Report attached to the same application states that "the highway authority has negotiated a bus subsidy for a new route with the developers of both Bowbrook sites as part of the proposed s106 agreement". The sum given was £519,480.

With further development to the west of Bowbrook Meadows and Darwin's Walk on the near horizon, it is vital that regular bus services are provided as soon as possible in order to establish good travel habits early on. It is also important to correct the mistakes of the past, so my question to Cabinet is whether the £519,480 was ever collected from the developers, if not why not, and if so was it returned to them unspent as per the relevant clause in the Section 106 agreement.

Response from Councillor David Walker, Portfolio Holder for Planning

A £519,480 contribution originally identified in the 2013 planning committee report for the Bowbrook Meadows and Darwin's Walk developments, was intended to subsidise local bus services for five years, ensuring adequate public transport links for the area.

The planning approvals for the developments—13/03285/FUL and 13/03534/OUT—did include infrastructure contributions through Section 106 agreements and anticipated Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding. Specifically, the Section 106 agreements secured £33,020.93 and £33,807.75 respectively, totalling £66,828.68, which has been allocated and is currently being used to support Local Bus Service 20, operated by Lakeside Coaches.

The remaining balance of the £519,480 was expected to be funded via CIL. However, as clarified in the planning committee report and reiterated in the correspondence, CIL allocations cannot be predetermined within planning decisions. Therefore, no formal allocation of the remaining funds has yet been made. Any future allocation from CIL would require a business case to justify the expenditure.

The reference to the full £519,480 in the original committee report may have inadvertently created confusion, as it implied a guaranteed funding package. In reality, only the Section 106 portion was secured, and the remainder remains subject to further procedural steps.

In summary:

- The developer contributions from the two linked sites to support the local bus service are from both S106 and CIL funding. These are separate sources for developer funding and not dependent upon each other.
- £66,828.68 has been secured through the agreed Section 106 agreements for the two linked sites, and is actively supporting local bus services.
- The remaining £452,651.32 has been collected through the CIL receipts from the two linked sites, but has not yet been allocated and would require a formal business case for CIL funding to do so.
- Neither the S106 or CIL funds from these two linked sites have, or are due to be returned to the developers.