



Transformation and Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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Item

Public



Part One Report of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Task and Finish Group

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1. Synopsis

This is the first report of the Transformation and Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Task and Finish Group concerning the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) as applied by Shropshire Council. The Task and Finish group have explored the processes of CIL allocation, governance, and member involvement to ensure that funds collected from developers are effectively used to support local and strategic infrastructure needs arising from new developments and make the recommendations detailed at 3.0 in light of their investigations.

This report outlines Phase One of their work concerning CIL allocations and is coming to committee at this time to align with the development of the Local Plan. The Task and Finish Group intend to investigate CIL Charging as part of Phase Two of their work and will report back to committee on this element at the appropriate time.

2. Executive Summary

Shropshire Council were one of the first adopters of CIL in 2012. Therefore, it was felt by the Transformation and Improvement Overview and Scrutiny

Committee that it would be timely to establish a Task and Finish Group, with cross-party membership, to review CIL processes. The Task and Finish Group formed in November 2025 with the aim of assessing whether the current CIL allocation process meets community needs and to explore options around increased member involvement in this process.

The terms of reference of the Task and Finish Group were later expanded to develop a comprehensive understanding of CIL charging, alongside CIL allocation, to provide more robust holistic recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.

The group's objectives included:

- Making recommendations on the allocation process and member roles.
- Reviewing the suitability of the 90/10 split between CIL Local and CIL Strategic funds.
- Examining the criteria and timing of member involvement and awareness of funding decisions.
- Considering transparency, communication and access for town and parish Councils to apply for CIL funding.

3. Recommendations

The Task and Finish Group propose the following recommendations which are evidence based as a result of their various investigations to date. Recommendation 8 as detailed below is specifically for the Transformation and Improvement overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider -

Recommendation 1 – Consideration of the revision of the 90/10 split between CIL Local and CIL Strategic funds.

The Task and Finish Group felt in the majority although not unanimously, that they were unable to reach a fully informed decision on this point at this stage. It was therefore agreed that any determination should be deferred until further information becomes available. The group recognised that ultimate decision-making authority rests with Cabinet and that Cabinet may be better placed to make an informed decision, with the findings of this report contributing to that process.

The group also recognised that towns impacted by developments in neighbouring wards do not necessarily benefit from CIL and demand on local services is not limited to place plan areas but is more fluid. The group therefore resolved to revisit this matter at a later date, once further information is available or for a decision to be made by a more informed party such as Cabinet.

Recommendation 2 – Annual CIL Strategy

The Task and Finish Group recommend that the overall direction and prioritisation of CIL Strategic and CIL Local money be subject to an annual strategy document that is developed by Cabinet and agreed by Council. This would be implemented by officers through the Internal Infrastructure Group.

Recommendation 3 – Internal Infrastructure Group (IIG)

The Task and Finish Group ask that Cabinet review the decision making structure of the IIG by amending its composition to allow more Member insight. It is recommended that Cabinet and Portfolio Holders should be invited to observe IIG meetings, via MS Teams.

IIG quarterly reports, annual statements, formal minutes and actions should be routinely shared with Cabinet and Portfolio Holders.

IIG meeting minutes should be formal, standardised and shared with those Local members affected by the developments discussed and made available on the Member Gateway.

Reporting should also include the outcome and completion of previous CIL funded projects, as well as those applications that have been unsuccessful together with an explanation as to why.

A regular CIL spending report should also be presented to the relevant Scrutiny Committee, including updates on smaller schemes and their delivery status, to improve transparency and information sharing.

Recommendation 4 – Alternative Models

The Task and Finish Group were particularly impressed with the Cornwall model (Appendix B) regarding its methods of determination, member involvement and allocation, and favoured a community led approach that Cornwall adopt. After further discussion the T&F Group were not in favour of the Cheshire East model (Appendix C) due to limited community involvement and large sums of money spent on a small number of projects.

Members recommend that Cabinet explore the Cornwall model in more detail, with a view to seeing how this could work in Shropshire.

Recommendation 5 – Town and Parish Council Communication and Awareness

Ongoing and regular communication and guidance around CIL should be shared with Town and Parish Councils through Clerks Networks and the Shropshire Association of Local Councils (SALC)

Provision of CIL training events could be explored with SALC as well as increased promotion through digital media via video and literature format.

The Shropshire Council websites planning pages should include signposting to CIL for ease of user engagement and include clarification of the application processes and fund usage, in order to address ongoing confusion and ensure effective use of funds. Inclusion of information about previously successful projects would help in providing guidance to Town and Parish Councils.

In addition, it is recommended that options are explored for a member dashboard or BOT specifically for town and parishes. This could contain CIL information as well as wider town and parish communications and information.

Recommendation 6 – Member Communication and Awareness

The Task and Finish Group propose that a button is added to the Member Gateway which will give them access to the most up to the minute and live data available, detailing CIL spend in local areas, including progress of applications, completion, timescales and outcomes.

A document on the planning portal could also show how CIL money has been used.

Recommendation 7 – Resident Communication and Awareness

Enhance communication to residents by highlighting tangible benefits from CIL-funded developments both in physical and in digital format.

Increase resident understanding and awareness through publicising completed projects as a result of CIL applications

Increase community groups understanding of what CIL is, how to apply for it and explore ways to make it accessible not just to Town and Parish councils, but the wider community through digital means. Some discussion was put forward that Members should be actively engaged to inform their parishes on how CIL works.

Recommendation to Transformation and Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee –

Recommendation 8 – Community led boards

The Task and Finish Group propose that work is undertaken through the Transformation and Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee to explore how the management and administration of CIL Local might be undertaken by Community Boards under new arrangements, these would be Member led with support from officers. These boards could operate on a multi-divisional / multi ward basis.

Report

4. Financial Implications

As part of this Task and Finish Group investigation members heard about the 90/10 split between CIL Local and CIL Strategic and considered ways in which this could be realigned to best suit need. They also acknowledged that the purchasing power of unspent CIL funds can decrease over time due to inflation, as interest earned does not compensate for rising construction costs, leading to a form of depreciation if funds are not used promptly. Finance officers also clarified that interest earned on CIL funds held by the Council is not ring-fenced to CIL but is pooled with other Council investments and supports the general revenue budget.

A key focus of the Task and Finish Group was the consideration of the 90/10 split between CIL Local and CIL Strategic, and whether this balance could be adjusted to achieve greater impact. The group heard a range of views on the matter, from a complete reversal of the split to proposals for a more moderate adjustment, such as a 70/30 division. Members spent time carefully weighing the merits of each approach but were unable to reach a final decision at this stage.

After consideration, a majority voted in favour of a resolution to revisit the issue later. However, there was a recognition among members that the current arrangement may not be ideal, and this decision could be better determined by Cabinet.

5. Climate Change Appraisal

Task and Finish Group Members discussed how CIL contributions can be used to mitigate the impacts of developments, including climate related effects such as improved drainage to cope with more frequent weather events, and potential for CIL money to be spent upon green infrastructure.

6. Background

The CIL Task and Finish group conducted multiple meetings with Shropshire Council officers, Portfolio Holders, representatives from a number of Shropshire Town and Parish Councils and Planning officers from Cornwall and Cheshire East Councils for comparative insight.

As a result of their investigations Members were able to develop a thorough understanding of Shropshire Council's CIL allocations process. Recognising that 15% of CIL collected is sent to the relevant parish or town council as the Neighbourhood Fund, rising to 25% in areas with an adopted Neighbourhood Plan, an additional 5% is retained for administration and the remaining CIL is

split into 90% for local infrastructure (CIL Local) and 10% for strategic infrastructure (CIL Strategic).

This 90/10 split is unique to Shropshire and not mandated nationally. The 90/10 split aims to balance local benefits with strategic needs but has been identified as potentially limiting for growing strategic infrastructure demands.

The Internal Infrastructure Group (IIG), an officer-led body, assesses funding applications through Expressions of Interest (EoI). Member involvement in funding decisions is limited to large projects requiring Cabinet or Council approval, with operational decisions made by officers. Some other councils, such as Cornwall, include members in advisory panels and decision-making processes.

Cornwall Council uses a themed approach with community and strategic CIL funds, involving members and parishes in advisory panels and approving projects based on scored criteria. They also publish regular communications and updates to increase transparency.

Cheshire East, a newer adopter of CIL, integrates CIL spending decisions into their Medium Term Financial Strategy, focusing on well-known strategic projects with limited local input.

Cornwall's approach includes neighbourhood priority statements and strong member engagement, which the group considered potentially adaptable to Shropshire's context.

Differences in funding priorities were noted, with Shropshire focusing more on highways and education, Cornwall on smaller community projects, and Cheshire East on large strategic projects.

On speaking with representatives from Town and Parish Councils it was clear that there was a mixed understanding of CIL processes and eligibility. Communication gaps exist, leading to confusion about funding availability and application procedures. The Task and Finish Group noted the importance of improved communication and guidance to Town and Parish Councils and residents to enhance transparency and awareness of CIL benefits.

Task and Finish Group Members believe that this comprehensive review provides a foundation for Shropshire Council to refine its CIL governance, enhance member and community engagement, and meet both local and strategic needs effectively.

The full report detailing phase one of the work of the Task and Finish Group regarding CIL allocations, its findings and recommendations is attached at Appendix One. The Task and Finish Group will next look to examine CIL Charging as part of phase two and will provide a report to the committee on this aspect at the appropriate time.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

The CIL Charging Schedule, [CIL charging schedule | Shropshire Council](#)

The Shropshire Council 2025 Annual Infrastructure Funding Statement

<https://next.shropshire.gov.uk/media/lpoo4zqb/annual-infrastructure-funding-statement-2025.pdf>

Internal Infrastructure Group meeting agendas and notes – 03.07.2025 and 30.09.2025

Previous related Committee Reports as follows –

Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Group report on Developer Contributions to Cabinet in Oct 2024

[https://shropshire.gov.uk/committee-](https://shropshire.gov.uk/committee-services/documents/s38983/Developer%20Contributions%20Cover%20report%20for%20Cabinet%201.pdf)

[services/documents/s38983/Developer%20Contributions%20Cover%20report%20for%20Cabinet%201.pdf](https://shropshire.gov.uk/committee-services/documents/s38983/Developer%20Contributions%20Cover%20report%20for%20Cabinet%201.pdf)

<https://shropshire.gov.uk/committee-services/documents/s38984/APPENDIX%20ONE%20-%20Developer%20Contributions%20Report%201.pdf>

July 2019 - Report of the Community Infrastructure Levy task and finish group

[Shropshire Council Healthy Communities Scrutiny Committee – Diabetes task and Finish Group](#)

Oct 2018 - See Item 35 – verbal update

[Agenda for Performance Management Scrutiny Committee on Wednesday, 24th October, 2018, 2.00 pm — Shropshire Council](#)

April 2018 -

[Shropshire Council Healthy Communities Scrutiny Committee – Diabetes task and Finish Group](#)

Sept 2017 -

[Final Report - PM Scrutiny 21-9-17.pdf](#)

Feb 2017 -

[9 Section 106 NHB CIL TF Scoping v3.pdf](#)

Local Member: All

Appendices:

APPENDIX ONE – Part One Report of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Task and Finish Group