

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY STEERING GROUP

12 November 2021

Minutes of the Community Infrastructure Levy Steering Group meeting held remotely on Friday 12 November 2021 at 10:00am.

Committee Members present: Councillors J. Vine-Hall (Chairman), C.A. Bayliss, K.P. Dixon, D.B. Oliver and S.M. Prochak, MBE.

Other Members present: Councillor P.C. Courtel.

Advisory Officers in attendance: Assistant Director Resources, Director – Place and Climate Change, Planning Policy Manager, Planning Assistant and Democratic Services Officer.

Also Present: 6 members of the public, via the YouTube live broadcast.

CIL21/1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

CIL21/2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

CIL21/3 **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING - 8 FEBRUARY 2021 - MATTERS ARISING**

It was clarified there were no further matters arising.

CIL21/4 **NEW COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY GOVERNANCE AND THE PROPOSAL FOR APPORTIONMENT OF STRATEGIC COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY FUNDS**

Consideration was given to the report of the Director – Place and Climate Change which proposed the new Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Governance arrangements and proposals for apportionment Strategic CIL funds. A Community Infrastructure Levy Steering Group (CILSG) had been established to consider the allocation and spending of the Strategic CIL funding. The CILSG had met four times and the report detailed what had been considered / discussed at each meeting.

Appendix 1 to the report identified the updated CIL Governance and Funding Decisions Protocol for consideration and allocation of Strategic CIL funding and included the application form, assessment criteria and validation checklist. The Protocol outlined how the Council, as the Charging Authority allocated the Strategic CIL and ensured governance arrangements were consistent and transparent. There

were two main funds, namely the Rother Infrastructure Fund (RIF) (55% apportion) and the Infrastructure Matched Fund (25% apportion). Both would be sub-divided into Bexhill and Rural sub-funds. Funds would be allocated to projects identified on the annual Infrastructure Funding Statement and prioritised by the Strategic CIL Allocations Panel. A Climate Emergency Bonus Fund (20% apportion) would be established to assist schemes that were considered 'green premium' e.g. reduced carbon emissions.

As a result of the Council's restructure, it was recommended that the composition of the Strategic CIL Allocations Panel be the Cabinet Portfolio Holders for Strategic Planning, Finance and Performance Management, Economic Development and Regeneration, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Chairman of the Council, and supported by the Director – Place and Climate Change, Planning Policy Manager, Chief Finance Officer and Principal CIL Officer.

In October 2020, the CILSG agreed that no amendments be made to the Council's Instalment Policy, however the Policy would be kept under review.

It was recommended that a review of the Council's CIL Charging Scheme be delayed subject to the outcome of the Government's paused White Paper "Planning for the Future" and further investigation of future infrastructure needs as part of the Local Plan Review.

During the debate the following key issues were noted:

- Clarity was sought on whether the CIL covered feasibility studies; this would be clarified after the meeting and Members advised.
- Infrastructure priority requirements were being sought from the parish and town councils, as well as infrastructure providers e.g. East Sussex County Council etc.
- Strategic CIL retained by the Council could be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure such as transport, flood defences, schools, hospitals and other health and social care facilities etc.
- CIL must have been generated in order that match funding (commitment from parish or town council or provider) be allocated.
- CIL could / would incentivise parish councils (rural areas) to progress housing development which required infrastructure improvements.
- CIL could be used to improve the public realm if it met the CIL legislation tests and supported development.
- It was requested that the list in Appendix D be broadened to include Sussex Wildlife Trust, Sussex Local Nature Partnerships and Natural England.
- Joint working on specific infrastructure projects would be essential, particularly where projects overlapped with neighbouring authorities.

As the CILSG had now completed its Terms of Reference as detailed at Appendix 2 to the report, it was proposed that the Group be dissolved. The good work of the Group along with its Minutes would be brought to the attention of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at

their meeting on 22 November 2021 and Cabinet on 13 December 2021, for onward recommendation to full Council on 20 December 2021. The CILSG thanked all the Members and officers who had supported and contributed to the work of the Group.

After consideration, the CILSG was supportive of the new Strategic CIL funding apportionment arrangements.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet recommend to full Council that:

- 1) the Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy Allocations Panel be established and comprised of Cabinet Portfolio Holders for Strategic Planning, Finance and Performance Management, Economic Development and Regeneration, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Chairman of the Council and supported by the Director – Place and Climate Change, Planning Policy Manager, Chief Finance Officer and Principal CIL Officer.
- 2) strategic Community Infrastructure Levy funds be distributed by the Panel in accordance with the proposed Community Infrastructure Levy Governance and Funding Protocol;
- 3) the Council’s Community Infrastructure Levy Instalment Policy be maintained (the Council’s Community Infrastructure Levy Instalment Policy was considered and compared with those of neighbouring authorities);
- 4) a review of the Council’s Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Scheme be delayed subject to the outcome of the Government’s paused White Paper “Planning for the Future” and further investigation of future infrastructure needs as part of the Local Plan Review; and
- 5) the Community Infrastructure Levy Steering Group be disbanded.

CIL21/5 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

To improve knowledge and transparency, it was suggested that parish and town councils be provided with ‘best practice guidance’ on Community Infrastructure Levy arrangements. Councillor Dixon agreed to create a protocol document, in consultation with Battle Town Council, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning and Planning Policy Manager.

RESOLVED: That Councillor Dixon create ‘best practice guidance’ on Community Infrastructure Levy arrangements in consultation with Battle Town Council, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning and Planning Policy Manager.

CHAIRMAN

The meeting closed at 10:40am