

Planning Policy Advisory Panel

Minutes

9 January 2023

Present:

Chair: Councillor Marilyn Ashton

Councillors: Christopher Baxter Nitin Parekh
Stephen Greek David Perry
Asif Hussain Zak Wagman

**In attendance
(Councillors):** Paul Osborn

24. Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy Review

The Panel received a report and presentation which detailed the outcomes of the review of Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure (NCIL) processes. Members noted that the review covered the reallocation of CIL balances to new Ward Boundaries, future allocations, project identification, project delivery, project approval, NCIL project criteria, unspent sums, and council process management. The Panel was invited to comment on the review and recommendations.

It was noted that NCIL was the allocation of 15% of CIL receipts raised in each Ward back to the respective Ward in which it was generated. For CIL received within the geographical definition of the Harrow and Wealdstone Opportunity Area, NCIL currently involved the allocation of 15% of CIL receipts into a combined fund to be spent on projects across the entire area. During the review the processing of new applications for funding had been on hold as the review could potentially result in changes impacting upon those applications.

The Leader of the Council outlined the reasons for the proposals and responded to questions on the processes.

In response to a question, the officer explained that the annotation for Kenton West in the table in paragraph 5.3 referred to a deficit as the project costed marginally more than was available within the Ward.

During discussion the following views were expressed:

- The proposed cap of £100k on any Ward balance would adversely affect Greenhill, Marlborough, Pinner South and Roxbourne. The proposals should be implemented after the cap was spent;
- Wards within the Opportunity Area benefited from the 85% CIL. Those wards on the edge of the Opportunity Area that were impacted by the development would benefit from the ability to bid into a pooled pot under the new arrangements. The pooled pot would enable projects to proceed rather than balances building up;
- Newly elected Members would not have the opportunity to spend the NCIL in those areas with more than the £100k outstanding;
- Some Wards had built up large balances. The new system would encourage Wards to spend their allocations on projects;
- Not every Borough allocated all CIL to the Ward in which it was raised;
- Residents could be concerned in the budgetary context that individual Wards had in excess of £100k that was not being spent. The new Ward boundaries and the beginning of a four year administration provided the opportunity for revisions to the process;
- All Wards would have the opportunity to bid. Wards affected by the cap could bid into the new NCIL with Ward and community support;
- The new system would result in wards not stockpiling monies but they should be encouraged to use it or lose it before the implementation of the cap. The monies had been frozen since May so a ten month period would enable expenditure prior to implementation of the new system;
- A Member stated that the Leader of the Council could disagree with an application under the delegation for approvals. In response it was stated that the current system included decision making by two Portfolio Holders, having one decision maker would cease split decisions. If the scheme was within the Leader's ward the decision would be taken by the Deputy Leader. His involvement in the decision making as Leader of the Council would only require a declaration of interest if it affected the area in which he lived;
- A scheme of first come first served was not equitable. The introduction of bid rounds (two a year) was suggested to give bids weighting. The Panel agreed that this proposal would be beneficial.

Councillor David Perry moved that the Panel recommend to Cabinet that the proposals be implemented after ten months to enable the cap to be spent. This was seconded by Councillor Parekh. The motion was put to the vote and lost.

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND (to Cabinet):

That the proposed recommendation of the Neighbourhood Infrastructure Levy be endorsed with the addition of the introduction of bid rounds during which proposals for funding could be scored against each other.