

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide a narrative to accompany the County Council's Annual Infrastructure Funding Statement (AIFS) 2022/23; to breakdown the numbers into real projects and show how the County Council is mitigating the impacts of development on local infrastructure via Section 106 (S106) agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). This report is to be read in conjunction with the AIFS 2022/23, the headings below correspond with the tables included in the Statement.

The AIFS sets out the financial contributions that the County Council has secured in new S106 agreements and what S106 contributions were received, held, allocated to projects, and spent in 2022/23.

The infrastructure categories used in the AIFS are in line with national guidance, below is a breakdown of the types of infrastructure and projects they include:

- **Community Facilities** - libraries – additional stock and promotional material for local libraries
- **Education** – new schools, school expansions, land for schools
- **Green Infrastructure** – biodiversity offsetting
- **Highways** – highway works, traffic control and information systems, cycleways, road safety
- **Transport and Travel** – public transport services, bus stops, travel packs and road safety education, school transport
- **Monitoring** – payments towards the cost of monitoring of County Council obligations in S106 agreements

The AIFS is not required to report on Section 278 developer agreements which require the developer to carry out infrastructure works, often highways projects. Our preference is to secure highways works via S278 so that the developer takes on the associated risks such as delay to the project. S106 highways contributions differ in that they are usually financial contributions to enable the County Council to carry out the required works.

Whilst our approach to S106 is consistent across District and Boroughs, the amounts secured are directly proportional to the amount of new housing which creates variances across different areas and over time.

Below is a breakdown of all the tables included in the AIFS.

Table 1 - Total amount of money to be provided under any planning obligation which was entered into during 2022/23

Table 1 shows the financial contributions to the County Council secured in new S106 agreements signed in 2022/23. The majority of income came in the form of education and highways contributions. Below are examples of the education and highways contributions secured during 2022/23:

Education:

As a result of a 210 dwelling development at Cawston Lane, Rugby, we secured £2,450,881 towards additional education provision in the local area to include additional Early Years, Primary and SEND school places for children from the development.

At Hospital Lane, Bedworth, for a development of 455 dwellings we secured £1,700,182 to provide additional Secondary, Post 16 and SEND school places in the local areas.

These contributions arise as developers are required to pay for additional school places where there are no available local places. We assess available local school places in relation to each applicable development at application stage. We apply a formula with costs per school place provided by the DfE in order to calculate the contribution required. This is necessary to make our request acceptable in planning terms. This accounts for the variance in education requests across developments.

Highways:

For development of industrial, storage and distribution (Class B1c, B2 and B8) assets at Land North East of Castle Mound Way, Rugby, we secured £881,267 towards cycleway and highway improvements which will link Coton Park East employment sites; primary and secondary schools serving the Coton Park East area; Rugby railway station and Rugby town centre.

Following approval of a planning application at Hospital Lane, Bedworth for the development of up to 455 dwellings, a 1.4ha District Centre, up to 55 senior living units and approximately 2,000 sqm of commercial floorspace, we secured £1,066,788 towards cycleway and highway improvements. These improvements include design of the proposed cycle route towards Bedworth Town Centre via Smarts Road, a cycleway linking Hospital Lane to Ash Green Secondary School, improvement works to the Longford Road Corridor and for the interim improvement scheme at Junction 3 of the M6 Motorway.

As set out in table 1 we also secured contributions towards the infrastructure types set out above.

Table 2 - Summary details of non-monetary contributions secured during 2022/23

Additional to financial contributions we also secure non-monetary contributions via S106 such as land for schools or biodiversity offsetting.

Table 2 shows the non-monetary contribution secured in 2022/23. This includes securing a commitment from a developer to offset any biodiversity loss as a result of their development following an assessment by WCC. Often biodiversity loss is mitigated with a financial contribution to fund off-site County Council offsetting projects.

Table 3 - Money received from any s106 during 2022/23

Table 3 sets out the S106 contributions that were received in 2022/23 via S106 agreements signed in any year.

Education and Highways were the highest in terms of monetary value. These contributions will ensure there are education places available for residents of new developments and that highways work required by new development will be provided.

Table 4 - Total amount of money received before 2022/23 which has not been allocated

Table 4 sets out the amounts of S106 funding held, which have not yet been allocated to a project.

The Council endeavours to secure funds as soon as possible. This can, given the nature of development and planning, be well ahead of the point of allocation to a specific infrastructure project. The delivery of some infrastructure can rely, for example on the completion of certain infrastructure by a developer or the need to accumulate S106 funding from a number of developments in order for a specific scheme to be designed and built to mitigate the impact of development. Funds under S106 are collected for a specific purpose and must only be spent on those purposes in line with the legislation. However, until those purposes become a defined project in the capital programme, the money cannot be spent and is held pending allocation.

£43.44m of Education funds were held and unallocated at the end of 2022/23. This reflects the majority of S106 funds held. As with all S106, these funds are held for specific projects and cannot be spent on anything other than what they were collected for. There is a robust process in place to allocate and spend S106 education contributions appropriately and in line with the legislation and relevant agreements. This includes approval by the Capital Access Working Group, Capital Access Board and Cabinet. These funds are held for projects at various stages in that process.

Table 5 - Total amount of money which was allocated but not spent during 2022/23

Table 5 sets out S106 contributions which were allocated to a project in 2022/23. For capital projects this is when the funds have been moved to the appropriate capital code and are available to spend. For revenue, this is when the funds have been moved to the appropriate cost centre from which they are spent. Projects are often carried out over multiple years.

Table 6 - Total amount of money retained at the end 2022/23

Table 6 sets out the total amount of S106 currently held. These funds are often awaiting a capital code or other enabling works to be completed for them to be spent or are held for projects with a longer timescale; for example, around £5m is held for biodiversity offsetting projects which can be delivered over 30 years. The majority of retained funds are for highways and education capital projects which are at various stages, from initial approval to multi year delivery programmes. The Council aims to collect contributions as soon as is feasible to allow us flexibility and ensure the infrastructure is delivered in time to meet demand from development. This can mean retaining sums for some time.

As noted above, while the tables show that some funds are not yet allocated, they cannot be repurposed. They are collected for a specific purpose and must be spent for that purpose as per the S106 agreement. S106 funds are held separately to other council balances. These funds are a mixture of revenue and both capital funds collected to be allocated in the capital programme and funds being allocated to a project established in the capital programme which is a cabinet decision.

Table 7 - Contributions spent in 2022/23 by infrastructure type and project

Table 7 shows the S106 contributions which were spent in 2022/23. Below are some examples of the infrastructure projects funded fully or partly by S106 in 2022/23:

Education

The Griffin Primary School is a new one-form entry primary school for children aged 4-11 years, managed by the Lawrence Sheriff School Academy Trust.





The brand-new building consists of seven classrooms with state-of-the-art facilities, a multi-function hall, central atrium and offices and is flanked by a playing field and habitat areas for wildlife.

A ceremony took place on Monday 11th September where the school was officially opened by the Mayor of Rugby.

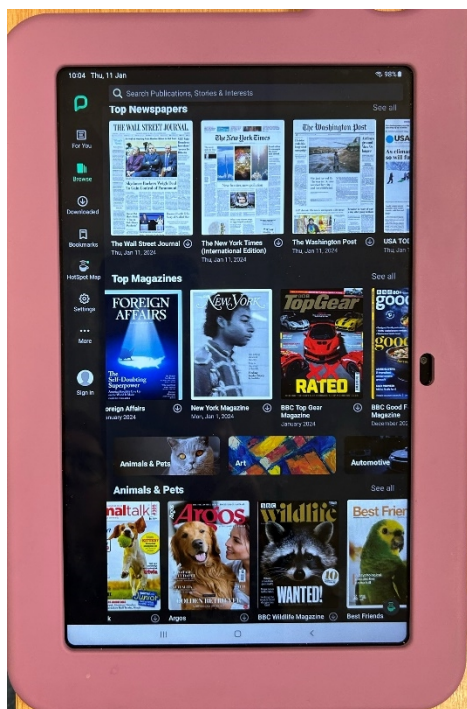
The school opened in September 2023 to serve residents of the Gateway development which continues to build out.



Libraries

In 2022/23, Warwickshire Libraries worked on the introduction of Hublets to libraries. Hublets are tablets which can be borrowed by library customers for a period of two hours and allow access to many applications, including the library catalogue, as well as our eLibrary and eInformation resources. Hublets are now available in nine of our eighteen libraries, with Section 106 funds having paid for four of these. Rugby and Nuneaton Libraries' six Hublets each were purchased using S106 contributions in the 2022/23 year and were installed in April 2023.





Hublets are mitigating the impact of local development by allowing us to increase the accessibility of our resources within the library and accommodate a greater number of people. Previously, these resources could only be accessed in libraries via our computers or with customers' own devices. Hublets provide a more space efficient way of increasing the number of devices available to customers and also promote digital inclusion by accommodating customers who are more confident in using a tablet than a computer. This has been of particular benefit since we have been able to respond to feedback and make standard Internet browsing available on the Hublets.

A primary incentive for introducing Hublets has been to increase the accessibility of our eNewspaper and eMagazine services. Digital magazine and newspaper services allow access to a far wider and more diverse range than libraries have historically been able to provide with

physical publications. Customers are able to read newspapers and magazines from all over the world and in over 50 languages, to suit a wide range of interests. The apps are also able to provide accessibility features, such as increasing font size, to those that require them. The Hublet offer has made it possible for more customers to access this service while in the library and provides a more user-friendly reading experience than library computers, as customers can read from anywhere in the library.

Biodiversity Offsetting

A Section 106 contribution received to compensate habitat losses by the development at Land south of Offchurch Lane, Radford Semele (W/16/0196) is being used to fund a 30-year biodiversity net gain (BNG) scheme at Cherry Orchard, a small former landfill site in Kenilworth.

The aim of the scheme is to enhance the existing species-poor grassland to a more botanically diverse grassland by the introduction of wildflower seed and managing the grassland as a hay meadow for a minimum of 30 years.

There has been a steady increase in the numbers of wildflowers at the site over the six years the project has been running. The most notable is bee orchid. This plant had previously been recorded at the site but had not been seen for several years. Its re-appearance is very probably due to grassland management carried out by the project creating the right conditions for it to germinate and flower. In 2023, 60+ plants were recorded at the site.

Bee orchid is one of the most widespread orchids in Warwickshire but is still rather local and its discovery can be a special event, and residents near the site have taken a special pride in 'their' local bee orchids.



Bus Stop Infrastructure

We carried out Enhancement of the pair of bus stops on Camp Hill Road near to the junction of Mancetter Road in Nuneaton to improve accessibility and the waiting environment for bus passengers.

Following completion of detailed design, a works order was originally issued in 2021-22 by WCC Engineering Design Services. However, Balfour Beatty were unable to complete the works due to gas works along Camp Hill Road preventing issue of a WCC Street Works permit. The bus stop enhancement works has now been completed.



School Transport

Oakley School in Leamington opened its doors to students in September 2023. Unfortunately, the site was not ready for students, so they are being housed temporarily at Myton School for one Academic Year. Section 106 developer funding has helped to support additional school services from the local area to the temporary site as Myton is further away than if they were walking to Oakley School. Once the school opens in September 2024, this additional service should no longer be needed as pupils will be able to walk comfortably to the new site.

From September 2024, the same will be in place for a local primary school where the building is unlikely to be complete. Myton Green Primary will be housed at Oakley School for one year and developer funding will again be used to support school transport to the temporary site.

Road Safety Education

Children in Rugby have had Balance bike training delivered in previous years. The course they delivered was dictated by the type of bikes they had available. Their bikes did not meet the specifications to deliver the course content for the Bikeability Balance course as they did not have brakes. This meant they could not seek Bikeability grant funding for delivery, and schools had to pay for the training out of their own funds. This obviously limited how many schools could access this type of training.





The bikes the children are using in these photos do meet the specification for the Bikeability balance course. Section 106 funding was used to pay for a set of 12 bikes, with brakes and pedal conversion kits. These bikes will now be used to deliver Bikeability Balance Plus training in schools and the community in the Rugby area.

The course for these children is being provided free of charge to the school. Now that bikes with the correct specification are available the course

content for the Bikeability Balance Plus course can be delivered. This means some of the courses can be funded by our Bikeability Grant. (We are allowed to use 10% of our grant to provide Balance Plus and Learn to ride courses - this is £20,565. A balance course costs £28 per child. Learn to ride is £24 per child)

Now the courses can be provided to schools free of charge, demand for courses has increased. This means more children will be trained, but demand will outstrip the Bikeability grant allocation for Balance Plus courses. To ensure training can be provided, free of charge, to as many children as possible we have organised 210 places to be funded by section 106 funding.

This training course give children the early skills they require to access and succeed at future cycle training courses. We know Active Travel England have a target of 50% of journeys walked or cycled by 2030. Courses like this one are giving our young people the skills they need to become the next generation of active travellers and meet this target.



Table 8 – S106 Monitoring Fees received in 2022/23

The County Council secures contributions for the monitoring and administration of S106 contributions and obligations, usually payable on completion of the S106 agreement. Table 8 shows that £14,480 was received for monitoring in 2022/23 this was used to provide additional business support for monitoring and administration which helps us deal with fluctuations in the volume of work.

Tables 9 & 10 - CIL Received and Spent in 2022/23

The County Council is not a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) collecting authority but can receive contributions from Warwick District Council and Stratford District Council who charge CIL on development in their areas. None was received in 2022/23 however in previous years we have received CIL towards the Bath Street improvement scheme and the Leamington Spa Station forecourt, for example.

Conclusion

WCC Annual Infrastructure Statement 2022/23 Narrative Report

This report expands upon the AIFS 2022/23 and gives snapshot of the breadth and range reflects the growth in particular areas and the projects required as a result. It shows the huge amount of ongoing work to enable development in Warwickshire and ensure that the subsequent impacts to County Council services and infrastructure are mitigated.