

Policy Committee

16 March 2026



Reading
Borough Council
Working better with you

Title	Consultation on priorities for funding under 15% local Community Infrastructure Levy
Purpose of the report	To note the report for information
Report status	Public report
Executive Director/ Statutory Officer Commissioning Report	Emma Gee, Executive Director Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services
Report author	Mark Worringham, Planning Policy Manager
Lead Councillor	Councillor Micky Leng, Lead Councillor for Planning and Assets
Council priority	Thriving Communities
Recommendations	1. That Committee note the results of consultation on priorities for funding under 15% local Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report deals with the 15% of collected Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which should be allocated to the local area in which development takes place. The report reports on a consultation on priorities for spending which was undertaken during January and February 2026.

2. Policy Context

- 2.1 Since 1st April 2015, the Council has operated the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) within Reading. This is a levy that is applied to new development, and which is to be used to fund infrastructure to support growth. The collection and spend of CIL is governed by the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended).
- 2.2 Under the CIL Regulations, where there is no neighbourhood development plan in place and where development was not granted permission by a neighbourhood development order, 15% of CIL money arising must be spent in the 'relevant local area' in which development takes place (this is referred to hereafter as '15% local CIL'). In many authorities, this means passing the relevant proportion of collected CIL to the parish councils or town councils in whose area development takes place, but Reading requires different arrangements.
- 2.3 A CIL Spend Protocol, originally approved at Policy Committee on 16th July 2018 (Minute 26 refers) and amended at Policy Committee on 15th February 2021 (Minute 97 refers) sets out a focus for the use of 15% local CIL as below and subject to the project according with a number of principles:
- Open space improvements/small scale leisure;
 - Local highway improvement projects;
 - Air quality;
 - Community improvements;

- Renewable energy infrastructure;
 - Economic Support;
 - Other measures which help to mitigate the impact the development has on the area.
- 2.4 The protocol further states that allocations of 15% local CIL must accord with the following:
- Support:
 - (a) the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of local facilities and/or infrastructure; or
 - (b) anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on a local area.
 - May be included in the IDP and/or Approved Capital Programme.
 - May enable other funds that would not otherwise be available or offer a financial return on investment, e.g. needed to match or draw grant funding;
 - Address a specific impact of new development beyond that which has been secured through a S106 obligation or S278 agreement;
 - Contribute to the delivery of key development sites in the district to realise the Local Plan proposals.
- 2.5 The process for allocating 15% local CIL is set out in full in the amended CIL Spend Protocol. In summary, the steps are as follows:
- Projects nominated by officers, members, community groups or members of the public, to be made by the end of the calendar year to feed into final allocations in the following Spring;
 - Initial proposals will be discussed with lead councillors;
 - Given that funds are limited the use of 15% local CIL funds will be normally allocated to small scale projects or around £100k or less;
 - Public consultation on the general spending priorities under the local community 15% spend will take place every 3-4 years, at the beginning of the calendar year;
 - The final allocation of funds will be made annually by the Policy Committee, based on the following considerations:
 - Deliverability (timescales, risks, resources required, dependence on external partners)
 - Financial considerations (value for money, additional capital funding required, revenue considerations)
 - Accordance with spending priorities identified in consultation
 - Relationship with identified strategic priorities
 - Degree to which projects meet infrastructure needs arising from or enabling development.
 - Annual progress report to Policy Committee.

3. The Proposal

Current position

- 3.1 Allocations of 15% local CIL totalling £6.017m have already been made towards 61 projects. Allocations were made as follows:

- A first allocation of £1.204m to 23 projects was agreed at Policy Committee on 26th November 2018 (Minute 49 refers).
- Additional funds were allocated towards two of the selected projects by Decision Book in August 2020, bringing the total allocated to £1.339m (Decision Book reference 608).
- A further allocation of £1.557m was made by Policy Committee on 14th June 2021 towards a further 20 projects. Committee also decided to make some minor amendments to some of the existing allocations that did not change the overall amount of 15% local CIL funds allocated (Minute 7 refers).
- A reallocation of £0.035m between two of the projects allocated funds in June 2021 was made by Decision Book in January 2022, which did not change the overall amount of 15% local CIL funds allocated (Decision Book reference 647).
- A further allocation of £1.623m was made by Policy Committee on 7th March 2022 towards a further 18 projects (Minute 80 refers).
- A further allocation of £1.498m was made by Policy Committee on 8th July 2024 towards a further 31 projects (Minute 14 refers)

3.2 At 31st December 2025, there was £0.752m still available to allocate to projects.

3.3 Under the CIL Spend Protocol, the Council is expected to undertake a consultation on priorities for use of 15% local CIL. The Protocol states that:

“Public consultation on the general spending priorities under the local community 15% spend will take place every 3-4 years, at the beginning of the calendar year. These will not be based on specific projects, but on overall type of infrastructure.”

3.4 A consultation had most recently been carried out early in 2021 and was therefore overdue. Therefore, a new consultation was undertaken between 7 January and 18 February 2026 on priorities. This asked respondents to rank the following priorities in order of preference for use of 15% local CIL:

- A. Climate change and renewable energy projects
- B. Community centres and hubs
- C. Education provision
- D. General environmental enhancements
- E. Healthcare provision
- F. Heritage and cultural provision
- G. Highways, transport and travel measures
- H. Natural environment, e.g. trees and biodiversity
- I. Play areas and public open spaces

Option proposed

3.5 It is recommended that Committee note the results of the consultation on priorities for the use of 15% local CIL.

3.6 There were 334 responses to the consultation, which significantly exceeds the number of responses to the 2021 consultation (171).

3.7 Respondents ranked the priorities in the following order on average, with 1 being the highest priority:

1. Highways, transport and travel measures
2. Healthcare provision

3. Community centres and hubs
 4. Education provision
 5. Natural environment, e.g. trees and biodiversity
 6. Climate change and renewable energy projects
 7. Play areas and public open spaces
 8. General environmental enhancements
 9. Heritage and cultural provision
- 3.8 This differs significantly from the previous consultation carried out in 2021, where the priorities were play areas and public open spaces (1), climate change and renewable energy (2) and natural environment (3).
- 3.9 Appendix 2 contains a full report of the consultation results.
- 3.9 The results of this consultation will be used to inform decisions on how 15% local CIL is used in balance with other criteria. When proposed allocations are considered (see for instance the July 2024 allocations made by this Committee) they are assessed against the following criteria:
- Compliance with CIL Regulations
 - Deliverability (timescales, risks, resources required, dependence on external partners)
 - Financial considerations (value for money, additional capital funding required, revenue considerations)
 - Accordance with spending priorities identified in consultation
 - Relationship with identified strategic priorities
 - Degree to which projects meet infrastructure needs arising from or enabling development.
- 3.10 New allocations of funds are expected during 2026 but at the current time there is no confirmed timescale. At 31st December 2025 there was £752k available to allocate, which is substantially lower than the total of allocations that have previously been made by this Committee.

Other options considered

- 3.11 No alternative options are identified.

4. Contribution to Strategic Aims

- 4.1 The projects funded by 15% local CIL contribute to achieving a number of the priorities in the Council Plan 2025-28, as follows:
- ***Secure Reading's economic and cultural success:*** 15% local CIL continues to be used to fund projects that contribute to Reading's cultural success including the High Street Heritage Action Zone project and war memorials and monuments.
 - ***Deliver a sustainable and healthy environment and reduce Reading's carbon footprint:*** 15% local CIL funded projects such as pedestrian crossings, active travel, improvements to bridges and underpasses and water safety help to promote a healthier and safer environment for all where travel on foot or by cycle is improved. Tree planting and greening of the urban environment through CIL projects helps both to mitigate climate change and to adapt to its effects.

- **Safeguard and support the health and wellbeing of Reading’s adults and children:** Improvements to parks and open spaces, including children’s play areas, will help to support the health and wellbeing of the population, including children.

5. Environmental and Climate Implications

- 5.1 The allocation of 15% local CIL is towards the improvement of infrastructure such as open spaces and play areas in areas where residents live, as well as improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure, which should help to reduce the need to travel by car. There would be no implications of any decision in this report.

6. Community Engagement

- 6.1 Consultation on the priorities for spend of 15% local CIL was undertaken in January and February 2026 and the results are set out in section 3 of this report.

7. Equality Implications

- 7.1 The Scoping Assessment, included at Appendix 1 identifies no equality implications of the recommended action to note the progress of the projects.

8. Other Relevant Considerations

- 8.1 There are none.

9. Legal Implications

- 9.1 The collection and application of CIL is governed by the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended). Regulation 59F states that, where there are no parish councils, the portion of CIL that would otherwise have been passed to parishes (which, where no neighbourhood plan is in place, is 15%) should be used to support the development of the relevant area by funding:

“(a) the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure; or

(b) anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area.”

- 9.2 The ‘relevant area’ in this instance is the part of an authority’s area not covered by a parish council area, which in this case means the whole Borough.

- 9.3 Projects are checked to ensure they comply with Regulation 59F at the point that they are allocated, in line with the CIL Spend Protocol (see paras 2.4 and 2.5 above).

10. Financial Implications

- 10.1 There are no direct financial implications of the recommended action of this report.
- 10.2 As a general background, the summary position with regard to 15% local CIL since CIL was introduced in Reading in 2015 is set out in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of 15% local CIL position

15% local CIL collected up to 31/12/2025	£6.769m
Allocated in November 2018 by Policy Committee	£1.204m
Allocated in August 2020 by Decision Book	£0.135m
Allocated in June 2021 by Policy Committee	£1.557m
Allocated in March 2022 by Policy Committee	£1.623m
Allocated in July 2024 by Policy Committee	£1.498m
15% local CIL remaining unallocated	£0.752m

1. Revenue Implications

- 10.3 There are no revenue implications of this report.

2. Capital Implications

10.4 There are no capital implications of this report,

3. Value for Money (VFM)

10.5 Value for money was one of the considerations in allocating funds towards the individual projects. The relevant Committee report for each allocation contains more details.

4. Risk Assessment

10.6 There are no direct financial risks associated with the report.

11 Timetable for Implementation

11.1 The results of consultation on the priorities for spend will be taken into account in any allocations made until such time as a new consultation is undertaken.

12 Background Papers

12.1.1 There are none.

Appendices

1. Equality Impact Assessment
2. Consultation report

Appendix 1: Equality Impact Assessment

Provide basic details

Name of proposal/activity/policy to be assessed:

Consultation on priorities for funding under 15% local Community Infrastructure Levy

Directorate: DEGNS – Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Service: Planning, Transport and Public Protection

Name: Mark Worringham

Job Title: Planning Policy Manager

Date of assessment: 28/01/2026

Scope your proposal

What is the aim of your policy or new service?

To update on a consultation carried out on priorities for use of 15% local Community Infrastructure Levy

Who will benefit from this proposal and how?

The local community will benefit from allocations through a range of capital and other improvements – including highway enhancements, improved leisure/open space enhancements and community enhancements.

What outcomes will the change achieve and for whom?

No changes proposed.

Who are the main stakeholders and what do they want?

The local community, wider public and community groups. Stakeholders will want to ensure that infrastructure provision is made to support the levels of development taking place.

Assess whether an EIA is Relevant

How does your proposal relate to eliminating discrimination; promoting equality of opportunity; promoting good community relations?

Do you have evidence or reason to believe that some (racial, disability, gender, sexuality, age and religious belief) groups may be affected differently than others? (Think about your monitoring information, research, national data/reports etc)

Yes No

Is there already public concern about potentially discriminatory practices/impact or could there be? Think about your complaints, consultation, feedback.

Yes No

If the answer is **Yes** to any of the above you need to do an Equality Impact Assessment.

If No you **MUST** complete this statement

An equality impact assessment is not required because this report sets out the results of consultation on use of Community Infrastructure Levy and does not propose any changes to those projects or alternative uses of those funds.

Signed (completing officer)	Mark Worringham	Date: 28 th January 2026
Signed (Lead Officer)	Mark Worringham	Date: 28 th January 2026

Appendix 2: Consultation Report