

COUNCIL – 30 NOVEMBER 2023

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF PUBLIC

Executive Summary

The following question has been received from a Member of Public. The individual who raised the question has been invited to attend the meeting. A formal response has been provided by the Leader of the Council.

Question 1 – Wade Pollard

“At the meeting of the Woking Borough Council Executive on 24th March 2022 it was resolved the Old Woking Community Centre project be included in the Investment Programme of which £1.4m to be funded by the Council through S106 developer contributions.

The project has now been completed. I know this because the Council recently put out a statement on social media to announce it. The statement also included the comment that the project had received £1.4m funding from Woking Borough Council (Community Infrastructure Levy grant).

The latest Community Infrastructure (CIL) Funding by available area statement I have seen is dated October 2023. It showed funding available of £163,283.53 for Mount Hermon Ward. I believe Old Woking to be in this Ward. This sum is after deducting only £13,100 for spending and commitments.

The table is for amounts that can be authorised by Ward Councillors, i.e. 15% of the total CIL. Grossing it up to its total of £1.1m is still short of the amount spent. It is not strictly necessary to do that as the 85% does not have come from CIL within the Ward. However other Ward Councillors would not be happy to have the impact of developments without the corollary CIL spending within their Ward and to have it spent in other Wards.

This means that if the funding provided by the Council came from CIL, none was deducted from that accruing directly to Mount Hermon Ward.

My question;-

Was the Old Woking Community Centre project funded by S106 developer contributions or from a Community Infrastructure Levy grant?”

Reply from Councillor Ann-Marie Barker

“In March 2021 the Executive approved a proposal to develop the Old Woking Community Centre for use by Woking College. The extension of the College was considered a key benefit for the community. The works were to be funded partly by the College and were subject to developers contributions being identified as available to apply to this project.

The scheme was worked up in detail with Woking College and the College identified some additional funds which were allocated to the scheme. Whilst s106 developers contributions specifically to support education provision had been identified, it was not possible to allocate Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds to this scheme due to the competing pressures on these funds which support all infrastructure in the Borough. The project budget was therefore amended to a total of £2m (£2.9m previously) funded £600k (£400k previously) by the College

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and £1.4m by the Council through s106 developers contributions for education. No CIL monies were allocated to the project. The project included in the Council's Investment Programme reflected this amended funding. The project subsequently received additional external funding from the Old Woking Community Association and Surrey County Council's Your Fund Surrey (YFS) which increased the scope of works.

For clarification, the Old Woking Community Centre is in the Hoe Valley Ward.”

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