



Chelmsford City Council Cabinet

27th January 2026

Community Infrastructure Levy – Spend of Neighbourhood CIL

Report by:

Cabinet Member for Active Chelmsford

Officer Contact:

Stuart Graham, Economic Development and Implementation Manager, 01245 606364,
stuart.graham@chelmsford.gov.uk

Purpose

To consider the proposed spend of neighbourhood CIL as set out in the report.

Options

1. Agree the proposed spend of the neighbourhood CIL.
2. Agree the proposed spend of the neighbourhood CIL, with amendments.
3. Do not agree the proposed spend of the neighbourhood CIL.

Preferred option and reasons

The preferred option is Option 1.

Recommendations

It is recommended that

1. Cabinet agrees that the proposed spend of the neighbourhood CIL is approved alongside the Capital Programme.
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1. Background

- 1.1. Since Cabinet agreed to retain 85% of neighbourhood CIL in the nine unparished wards for CCC capital projects (November 2023), a process for collecting bids and allocating this funding has been undertaken.
- 1.2. In the Summer, Service Managers were asked to submit bids through the existing Capital Programme process, but to also answer some additional questions if applying for neighbourhood CIL funding, to align the project with the purposes of CIL and the Council's Corporate Plan priorities. These were prepared in consultation with the relevant Cabinet members.
- 1.3. 11 bids were received, of which one cannot be considered for CIL funding as the project does not benefit the community. The ten eligible bids have a total funding request of £730,000, including identified contingency costs. The bids are summarised in Appendix 1, including comments on whether the project sits within the eligible area for use of the CIL Cap pot, and how the projects link with the Corporate Plan.
- 1.4. There is a current balance of £573,667.18 available for neighbourhood CIL for CCC projects in the nine unparished wards.
- 1.5. £189,788.31 of s106 funding has also been identified, which can be split across four of the projects (all of which meet the purposes defined in the s106 agreements). Owing to the use of this s106 funding, all projects can be funded, with no shortfall in the neighbourhood CIL balance.
- 1.6. If it is agreed that in the region of £110,000 of CIL Cap funding can be used against some of these projects (as outlined in an earlier report, agenda item 9.1), then there would be a remaining balance in the neighbourhood CIL pot for the unparished area of £143,455.49. It is suggested that the CIL Cap funding be put towards the Melbourne Outdoor Sport Grounds Maintenance Area Improvement project, and the Melbourne Park Make Space for Girls project.
- 1.7. It is likely that the use of the Disabled Facilities Grant (£50,000) would be approved for the Riverside Pool Pod for the Learner Pool. This would negate the need for neighbourhood CIL funding for this project, and the remaining neighbourhood CIL balance would then be £193,455.49. However, in the unlikely event that this is not approved by ECC, neighbourhood CIL funding could be used.
- 1.8. Taking into account all of these funding streams, the table below shows the remainder that is to be considered for neighbourhood CIL funding.

Table 1: Proposed distribution of funds towards capital projects

Project name	Description	Request for CIL funding	Other funding identified	Balance to consider for CIL funding
Riverside Pool Pod Learner Pool	Purchase of Pool Pod for Learner Pool to make it accessible	£50,000	Disabled Facilities Grant – likely to be approved	£50,000 to approve in the event the DFG is not approved
CSAC Air Conditioning Studio 1	Upgrade and improve Studio 1 air conditioning	£17,000		£17,000
Purchase Allotments Princes Road	Purchase the land to safeguard the allotments. Will receive rent.	£64,000		£64,000
Purchase Lake Central Park	Purchase freehold interest to remove rent liability.	£133,000		£133,000
Safer Spaces for Girls	Roll out Make Space for Girls project in Savernake Park, John Shennan Playing Field, Lionmede Recreation Ground and Melbourne Park.	£120,000 (£60,000 2026/27 and £60,000 2027/28)	CIL Cap allocation of £10,000 towards Melbourne Park scheme	£110,000
Melbourne Outdoor Sport Grounds Maintenance Area Improvements	Repurposing of disused public toilet block to provide staff welfare accommodation, storage, and garaging to support the grounds maintenance operation.	£127,500	S106 funding of £21,288.31 identified CIL Cap allocation of £100,000	£6,211.69
City Centre Parks Strategic cycle rack provision	Provide 2 areas of new cycle rack provision – Central Park, Tower Gardens	£8,000	S106 funding of £8,000 identified	£0
Central Park Chess Garden	Tables, seats, picnic tables, cupboards for community space focused on chess.	£34,500	S106 funding of £34,500 identified	£0
Restoration Works Central Park Bridge	Grade II listed Seymour Street Bridge requires extensive repairs.	£126,000	S106 funding of £126,000 identified	£0

City Centre Public Art Project	Public art project for the City Centre, at either Cornhill or the Meadows Retail Car Park stair tower.	£50,000		£50,000
TOTAL		£730,000.00		£430,211.69

1.9. It is anticipated that CIL neighbourhood funding for CCC capital projects of at least £459,247.74 of neighbourhood CIL receipts in the unparished area over the next three financial years. This is based on CIL Demand Notices issued for developments that has commenced. Any projects that are not considered the best use of funding in this cycle could be reconsidered next year alongside any new bids.

1.10 Cabinet is asked to approve the spend of Neighbourhood CIL and CIL Cap funds up to the possible maximum required as detailed in the report (£430,211.69 of neighbourhood CIL, £110,000 of Cap funds) and that these projects are added to the Capital Programme accordingly.

List of appendices:

Appendix 1 – CIL Capital Bids Summary

Background papers:

CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended)

Corporate Implications

Legal/Constitutional: These proposed CIL funding allocations are considered to be lawful: they are in accordance with the statutory framework (Planning Act 2008 and CIL Regs 2010) and government guidance which regulate the operation of the CIL regime.

Financial: These funds come from developer contributions and are ringfenced for certain purposes. These projects would be funded from existing held funds. The purchase of Central Park Lake will remove rent liability for the Council. The Council will receive rent through the purchase of the allotments.

Potential impact on climate change and the environment: Cycle rack provision will encourage sustainable transport.

Contribution toward achieving a net zero carbon position by 2030: Cycle rack provision will encourage sustainable transport.

Personnel: None

Risk Management: None

Equality and Diversity: The Pool Pod project would increase accessibility for the Riverside Learner Pool. Make Space for Girls projects would increase the diversity of park users.

Health and Safety: None

Digital: None

Other: None

Consultees:

Community Funding Panel.

Relevant Policies and Strategies:

Our Chelmsford Our Plan

Chelmsford Local Plan (May 2020)

Agenda Item 10.1 Appendix 1 CIL Capital Bids Summary

Active Chelmsford

Riverside Pool Pod Learner Pool

Project cost - £50,000 (including 10% contingency)

Project description: Purchase of Pool Pod for the Learner Pool at Riverside in order to make it accessible. Pod has an estimated life span of 5 years before requiring replacement.

Does it meet the definition of infrastructure under the CIL regulations? Yes

Is there a wider community benefit? Yes

In the Chignal Cap area? No

Corporate Plan link – action G46: Explore new health and wellbeing opportunities within leisure centres and recreational facilities, building on the successful ‘Active Health’ programme delivering innovative solutions to address community health needs.

CSAC Air Conditioning Studio 1

Project cost - £17,000 (including contingency)

Project description: Studio 1 air conditioning needs to be upgraded and improved upon with a system that can cool to UKactive guidance of 16-19 degrees. Will have a positive impact on staff and members of the community who use the space for classes. Estimated life span of 15 years prior to replacement.

Does it meet the definition of infrastructure under the CIL regulations? Yes

Is there a wider community benefit? Yes

In the Chignal Cap area? Yes

Corporate Plan link – action G46: Explore new health and wellbeing opportunities within leisure centres and recreational facilities, building on the successful ‘Active Health’ programme delivering innovative solutions to address community health needs.

CSAC Air Conditioning Offices – *ineligible project*

Project cost - £7,000 (including contingency)

Project description: Offices have reached in excess of 35 degrees this summer. Reflective vinyl and blackout blinds were installed, but temperatures still above 28 degrees. Need a solution to resolve these issues.

Does it meet the definition of infrastructure under the CIL regulations? Yes

Is there a wider community benefit? No

In the Chignal Cap area? Yes

Fairer Chelmsford

Purchase Allotments Princes Road

Project cost - £64,000

Project description: The purchase of land fronting Princes Road and adjoining John Shennan Playing Fields totalling approx. 2.9 acres. The land will continue to be leased to the Princes Road Allotment Association, but at an enhanced rent receivable of £1,000 per annum subject to annual RPI increases. The purchase will safeguard the allotments – another buyer could consider development and bring the tenancy to an end.

Does it meet the definition of infrastructure under the CIL regulations? Yes

Is there a wider community benefit? Yes

In the Chignal Cap area? No

Corporate Plan link – action E36: Promote, encourage and provide opportunities for people to access and connect with the natural environment through the active use of parks, green space and waterways, enjoying positive experiences whilst using them.

Purchase Lake Central Park

Project cost - £125,000 cost of land, £8,000 external fees – total £133,000

Project description: Currently CCC continue to occupy land in Central Park from Network Rail originally let by way of a lease for a term of 20 years from 13th Sep 1997. The original rent was £3,000 per annum, now £5,506. The land comprises the lake adjacent to the viaduct and land directly beneath and adjoining the viaduct arches. Approx. 5.5 acres. The opportunity arose to negotiate the purchase of the freehold interest which is preferred, thus allowing CCC complete control of the land with no rent liability. A price of £125,000 is agreed although the land directly beneath the viaduct will be held by way of a long lease as Network Rail may require occasional access for operational reasons.

Does it meet the definition of infrastructure under the CIL regulations? Yes

Is there a wider community benefit? Yes

In the Chignal Cap area? No

Corporate Plan link – action E36: Promote, encourage and provide opportunities for people to access and connect with the natural environment through the active use of parks, green space and waterways, enjoying positive experiences whilst using them.

Greener Chelmsford

Safer Spaces for Girls

Project cost - £60,000 2026/27 and £60,000 2027/28 (including contingency) – this is for 4 sites – funding could be approved for fewer sites

Project description: To roll out the Make Space for Girls project in Savernake Park (Waterhouse Farm), John Shennan Playing Field (Moulsham Lodge), Lionmede Recreation Ground (Trinity) and Melbourne Park (St Andrews). These locations are based on analysis of crime statistics, antisocial behaviour and local need. The project provides safe and inclusive locations within our green spaces for girls and gender diverse young people that are designed through consultation with our local students and young people. The Partnership has chosen to work with Hylands School (based on need and deprivation, and with the school catchment covering both Savernake and Melbourne Park) for the full consultation, with light-touch consultation in the other areas. Allocation of £25,000 requested per site to deliver a project such as seating, swings, lighting and associated planting.

Does it meet the definition of infrastructure under the CIL regulations? Yes

Is there a wider community benefit? Yes

In the Chignal Cap area? Melbourne Park scheme is, the others are not.

Corporate Plan link – action G47: Implement the Community Safety Partnership Action Plan, driven by the priorities identified by the Essex Police Strategic Assessment and Essex Crime Prevention Plan.

Melbourne Outdoor Sport Grounds Maintenance Area Improvements

Project cost - £127,500 including contingency. Could be lower if work is not outsourced.

Project description: Repurposing of the disused public toilet block to provide staff welfare accommodation, storage, and garaging to support the grounds maintenance operation. Part of the existing changing room and toilet building is unsafe and is closed for future use, the garaging and grounds maintenance part of the building is non-compliant with water regulations. The repurposing of the existing building will also avoid future demolition cost estimated at £35-£40k. The estimated cost to keep part of the Melbourne Pavilion currently used for the grounds maintenance operation is estimated to be £38k – this would not be required in the short term if the project to repurpose the disused public toilets goes ahead.

Does it meet the definition of infrastructure under the CIL regulations? Yes

Is there a wider community benefit? Yes. Will ensure the outdoor sports provision and wider grounds maintenance operation will be appropriately supported.

In the Chignal Cap area? Yes

Corporate Plan link - action E36: Promote, encourage and provide opportunities for people to access and connect with the natural environment through the active use of parks, green space and waterways, enjoying positive experiences whilst using them.

City Centre Parks Strategic cycle rack provision

Project cost - £8,000 including contingency

Project description: To provide 2 areas of new cycle rack provision within two parks - at Central Park adjacent to the café, and at Tower Gardens adjacent to the new cycling proficiency track area. To assist with encouraging cycle use and to provide safe/secure location for cycle storage commensurate with park use requirements.

Does it meet the definition of infrastructure under the CIL regulations? Yes

Is there a wider community benefit? Yes. Increasing cycle provision.

In the Chignal Cap area? Tower Gardens site is, Central Park is not.

Corporate Plan link – action A6: Promote more active forms of travel such as walking and cycling and encourage greater connectivity between different modes of transport and public transport providers.

Central Park Chess Garden

Project cost - £34,500 including contingency. (Chess tables £20,000, Seats, picnic tables, cupboard - £8,000)

Project description: To provide a community space that is focused on chess as an activity for all ages and abilities, that can be used at all times of the year. The space will create opportunities for social inclusion and assist in improving the environment.

Does it meet the definition of infrastructure under the CIL regulations? Yes

Is there a wider community benefit? Yes. Increased population and park visitors have increased pressure for use of green space and public requests for alternative use and facilities have been received.

In the Chignal Cap area? No

Corporate Plan link - action E36: Promote, encourage and provide opportunities for people to access and connect with the natural environment through the active use of parks, green space and waterways, enjoying positive experiences whilst using them.

Restoration Works Central Park Bridge

Project cost - £126,000 including contingency

Project description: Seymour Street Bridge is of architectural and historic interest, recognised from a national perspective by being grade II listed. It requires extensive repairs, which would ensure its long-term future. This would maintain the busy pedestrian crossing and would avoid long term health and safety issues and more costly repairs in the future.

Does it meet the definition of infrastructure under the CIL regulations? Yes

Is there a wider community benefit? Yes

In the Chignal Cap area? No

Corporate plan link – action A6: Promote more active forms of travel such as walking and cycling and encourage greater connectivity between different modes of transport and public transport providers, and action E36: Promote, encourage and provide

opportunities for people to access and connect with the natural environment through the active use of parks, green space and waterways, enjoying positive experiences whilst using them.

Growing Chelmsford

City Centre Public Art Project

Project cost - £111k, but £50,000 requested from CIL

Project description: The proposal is to boost the budget for a public art project for the City Centre, at the location of either Cornhill (adjacent Market Square and High Chelmer) or the Meadows Retail Car Park stair tower. The City Centre environment is in constant need for new investments for physical interventions in the public realm to keep the public interested and stimulated to ensure people return and for new visits. S106 funding of £61,250 already assigned to this project – further funding is required to create a budget significant enough to deliver a meaningful and quality artwork.

Does it meet the definition of infrastructure under the CIL regulations? Yes

Is there a wider community benefit? Yes

In the Chignal Cap area? No

Corporate Plan – action I57: Develop a strategy for the integration of art and craftwork in public places, recognising the value that it has in creating a sense of place and identity, and establishing a co-ordinated cross-sector programme of public art commissions in partnership with local developers.