

**Sevenoaks District Council  
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)  
Spending Board**

**Guidance for applicants wishing to  
submit a CIL funding application**



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## 1. What is CIL?

- 1.1 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) allows local authorities to secure funding for infrastructure to support development in their area.
- 1.2 This is done by requiring developers to pay a standard charge per square metre (m<sup>2</sup>) on qualifying new development. The charge that we expect for development across the District is set out in our [CIL Charging Schedule](#).
- 1.3 CIL is intended to help pay for things such as schools, health facilities and transport improvements – all infrastructure projects that are necessary to support new development.
- 1.4 In line with CIL legislation the Council's CIL income is spent on the following:
  - 25% is allocated to Town and Parish Councils to spend on infrastructure. Part of this money can also be spent on '*anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area*' (CIL Regulations 2010 as amended);
  - 5% is allocated to the District Council (as the CIL charging authority) to cover the administration of CIL; and
  - 70% is allocated to the District Council to spend on infrastructure projects, of which:
    - 85% is allocated to the CIL Spending Board to spend on infrastructure projects; and
    - 15% is set aside to spending outside of the timescales of the CIL Spending Board, up to £200,000, with any money over and above this amount returned to the CIL Spending Board for allocation.

## 2. What is the CIL Spending Board?

- 2.1 The CIL Spending Board was set up to consider applications for CIL funding. The Board comprises of 15 elected members of the District Council, who are chosen according to political proportionality rules.
- 2.2 The role of the Board is to consider each application put before them, before making a recommendation to Cabinet as to which projects should be awarded CIL funding.
- 2.3 The governance arrangements for spending CIL and for the CIL Spending Board can be found in the Appendix X1 of the [Council's Constitution](#).
- 2.4 Please note that in many circumstances the amount of CIL funding available to the CIL Spending Board will not be enough to fund all projects applied for, and so it is not always possible to fund every project put forward. This guidance note helps you to

understand the process all applications go through and the criteria that the District Council uses to assess applications, to help you prepare a strong application.

### **3. What projects can the CIL Spending Board award funding to?**

- 3.1 In line with CIL legislation, CIL charging authorities must use CIL to fund the '*provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure to support the development of its area*' (CIL Regulations 2010 as amended, para 59). CIL can also be used to fund infrastructure outside its area, where to do so would support the development within its area.
- 3.2 The legislation also allows CIL charging authorities to pass CIL to any other person or body to fund the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure to support the development of its area.
- 3.3 This means that the CIL Spending Board can award CIL funding to infrastructure projects in the District. It can also award funding to projects outside of the District provided they support development within the District, for example, flood defences or a new road or junction. Any outside organisations can apply for funding for any infrastructure project that supports development in the District.
- 3.4 Please note that any CIL funding awarded by the CIL Spending Board should only be used to 'top up' an existing project. Applications that request 100% funding and where applicants have not sought to maximise other sources of funding are not likely to be considered favourably.
- 3.5 Funding will not be awarded for any ongoing revenue spend, for example, consultancy fees, viability/feasibility studies, staff costs etc.

### **4. What is infrastructure?**

- 4.1 The CIL Spending Board can only fund infrastructure projects.
- 4.2 The term 'infrastructure' is the basic systems, facilities and services that support development in an area. These can include highways and other transport facilities, flood defences, energy, educational facilities, health and social care facilities, community facilities, green and blue infrastructure etc.
- 4.3 Examples of applications that have been awarded funding by the CIL Spending Board include:
  - Community facilities

- Playground facilities
- Train station improvements
- Health hub development
- Footpath improvements
- Landscape improvements (green infrastructure)
- Car parking projects
- A day nursery
- Improvements to public toilets

4.4 The agendas, reports and minutes of previous CIL Spending Board meetings are available [here](#).

4.5 The following table summarises themes and projects that fall within the definition of infrastructure. This is just a guide for the types of projects that can be submitted, provided the projects are for infrastructure. Please note that funding will not be restricted to these themes.

Infrastructure category	Type of infrastructure project
Highways and transport	Road / rail / bus / other public transport Walking and cycling routes Public rights of way (PRoWs) Car parking including EV charging
Flooding	Flood defences Flood mitigation (blue/green infrastructure)
Utilities	Water supply / waste Water quality Waste management and recycling
Communications	Telecommunications equipment High speed broadband
Community facilities	Sport venues Leisure centres Playing pitches Leisure and play equipment Places of worship Meeting places Cultural buildings or infrastructure Libraries
Education	Pre-school and nursery schools (EYFS) Primary schools Secondary schools Post 18 / higher education Adult education Special educational needs

Infrastructure category	Type of infrastructure project
Health and social care	GP surgeries Dental services Hospitals Mental health services Adult social care services Children's social services
Emergency services	Projects involving physical infrastructure for the Police, Ambulance and Fire and Rescue services
Green / blue infrastructure	Biodiversity Open space Maintenance or improvements of bodies of water Parks / country parks Local wildlife sites Local nature reserves National landscapes (AONB)
Other	Minerals Energy

## 5. **How do I make an application to the CIL Spending Board?**

- 5.1 To make an application for CIL funding you can fill in the [online application form](#).
- 5.2 Alternatively, you can download the application form and email it to [cil@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:cil@sevenoaks.gov.uk).
- 5.3 The deadline for applications will be made clear on the District Council's website and in any notifications and correspondence.
- 5.4 Please be aware that you must submit all of the information and evidence in your application, as we are unable to accept supplementary information after the deadline has passed. This is to ensure that all applications are treated the same and that the process is fair.

## 6. **Will every application be considered by the CIL Spending Board?**

- 6.1 No, not all applications will be considered by the CIL Spending Board.
- 6.2 Once the deadline for applications has passed, all applications go through a two-stage validation process. Applications can be rejected at either stage depending on whether

a valid submission is made and how well the application is considered to meet the assessment criteria.

- 6.3 We will inform you in writing as to the outcome of your application as soon as is practically possible.
- 6.4 More information on how applications for CIL funding are assessed is set out below. All applications are assessed together and using the same criteria. Only the strongest applications that meet the assessment criteria will be presented to the CIL Spending Board.

## **7. How is my application assessed?**

- 7.1 As stated above, all applications go through a two-stage validation process.

### Stage one:

- 7.2 The first stage is to ensure that the application form has been completed correctly and fully and that the application is for infrastructure. Applications will be considered invalid at this stage if one or more of the following occurs:

- The application form is incomplete;
- The applicant does not have the legal right to carry out the project or does not have support from the statutory provider of that service;
- The project is not clearly defined as 'infrastructure to support development'.

- 7.3 If your application is found to be invalid you will be informed in writing as to the reasons why and your application will not progress to the CIL Spending Board.

- 7.4 If your application is rejected at stage one you have an opportunity to request a review of this decision by the District Council. How to do this is set out in Appendix A of this guidance note.

### Stage two:

- 7.5 The second stage, for those applications that pass the first stage, seeks to establish whether the application closely meets the following criteria:

- There is a need for the scheme;
- The scheme supports local or key infrastructure projects;
- The applicant is working in partnership to implement the scheme;
- The scheme is part of an existing Strategy or Plan;

- The scheme will result in significant social, economic and environmental benefits to the wider community;
- The scheme contributes to tackling the challenge of climate change;
- The applicant has sought to maximise funding from other sources;
- The scheme is deliverable;
- The scheme has local support;
- Whether the scheme has already benefitted from CIL funding;
- The scheme provides an overall benefit to the community.

- 7.6 Each application will be assessed by officers and scored against each of the above criteria.
- 7.7 The lead officer's initial assessment and recommendation will be shared with the Chair and Vice Chair of the CIL Spending Board in advance of reports being drafted and published for the Spending Board meeting.
- 7.8 The applications that most closely meet the above criteria will be summarised in a report and officers will make a recommendation to the CIL Spending Board that funding should be awarded to these applications. The report will include a summary of each application, including where they score strongly and/or weakly against the assessment criteria. The officer recommendation is not binding and the CIL Spending Board will decide during the meeting, based on the evidence provided to them, which applications should be awarded CIL funding.
- 7.9 The applications that are not recommended to the CIL Spending Board, as they do not closely meet the assessment criteria, will be refused. You will be notified in writing if this occurs and we will clearly set out the reasons as to why your application was not successful on this occasion.
- 7.10 There is no right of appeal for applications that are refused at this stage. This is because you are welcome to resubmit your application to a future CIL Spending Board providing you have addressed the reasons why your application was not successful the previous time. There is no limit to the number of applications you can make nor the number of times you can amend and resubmit your application.

## **8. What makes a strong application?**

- 8.1 Firstly, all applications should be clear about the purpose of any CIL funding. Whilst it may be clear what the overall project is, it is crucial that we understand exactly what any CIL funding would be spent on.
- 8.2 A successful application is one that closely meets the criteria set out in paragraph 7.5. For example, where it has been demonstrated that there is a clear local need for a scheme or it is a key infrastructure project. Applications will also be looked upon more



favourably if it has been demonstrated that they have local support, support from the infrastructure provider(s), and have sought to maximise funding from other sources.

8.3 To help you prepare a strong application, we have set out each of the criteria below and provided a brief explanation of the information we are looking for.

Criteria no.	Criteria description	Information to be provided in an application for CIL funding
1	There is a need for the scheme	Explain why the project is needed and how it will help address the need for that particular type of infrastructure in the local area.
2	The scheme supports local or key infrastructure projects	<p>Schemes that will help deliver key infrastructure or projects identified in the Council's Infrastructure Funding Statement as a priority are likely to have a greater impact and as such, will be scored more highly.</p> <p>Evidence can be provided to demonstrate a strong link between new development and the project.</p> <p>Projects that clearly support the local community and evidence community benefit will also be looked upon favourably.</p>
3	The applicant is working in partnership to deliver the scheme	<p>Have you provided evidence that you are working in partnership with one or more organisations to deliver the project? We will consider the type of partners involved, how formal the partnership is and the amount of involvement from all partners.</p> <p>Partnership working does not just have to be financial – it can be working with another organisation to provide services for example.</p> <p>Please note that we will take into consideration those infrastructure/statutory providers that do not need to work in partnership.</p> <p>If you cannot work in partnership, then please explain why.</p>
4	The scheme is part of an existing Strategy or Plan	<p>We expect applications to link to existing strategies or plans, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neighbourhood / Parish Plans</li> <li>• A business plan</li> <li>• The Council's Infrastructure Funding Statement</li> <li>• A community strategy</li> <li>• A regional strategy</li> <li>• An economic strategy</li> </ul>

Criteria no.	Criteria description	Information to be provided in an application for CIL funding
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work programmes of statutory bodies</li> <li>• Where it has been identified as a key or much needed project by the community</li> </ul> <p>Please note that any strategy or plan that has undergone public consultation will carry more weight.</p>
5	The scheme will result in significant social, economic and environmental benefits to the wider community	<p>Explain the benefits of the scheme, to the residents of Sevenoaks District, specifically in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social – what are the benefits to the local and/or wider community? This can include identifying the community groups that would benefit from the project and explaining how, or providing evidence that the project is needed to meet the needs of residents.</li> <li>• Economic – what are the benefits to the local economy? This can include the provision of employment, cost savings, supporting local businesses or attracting visitors to the area.</li> <li>• Environmental – what are the benefits to the environment? Whilst the project may improve the immediate environment, applications will be looked upon more favourably if they include a wider environmental benefit e.g. landscaping improvements, wildlife and habitat enhancements.</li> </ul> <p>Please note that consideration will be given to social value in the assessment of the above benefits. Depending on the project put forward, officers may contact you following your submission for further information pertaining to this.</p>
6	The scheme contributes to tackling the challenge of climate change	<p>We expect applications to clearly set out how the project will help reduce carbon emissions in Sevenoaks District.</p> <p>Applications will be looked upon more favourably if they provide evidence to show how the project contributes to tackling the challenge of climate change.</p> <p>Applications that do not contribute at all will be looked upon less favourably.</p>

Criteria no.	Criteria description	Information to be provided in an application for CIL funding
7	The applicant has sought to maximise funding from other sources	<p>The majority of money to fund a project should not come from CIL, and instead should be sought from other funding sources.</p> <p>Some examples of other sources of funding to be investigated are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raising money from the community</li> <li>• National Lottery Community Fund</li> <li>• Sport England</li> <li>• KCC village hall scheme</li> <li>• KCC community grants</li> <li>• Local charities</li> <li>• Town/Parish CIL</li> <li>• From the applicant</li> </ul> <p>Applications that have not sought to maximise other sources of funding and those that seek 100% CIL funding will be looked upon less favourably.</p> <p>Applications that already have the majority of funding in place will be looked upon more favourably. The security of the funding should also be considered and made clear.</p> <p>It is helpful to know, as part of your application, if you have sought funding from a variety of sources, even if you have not been successful.</p>
8	The scheme is deliverable	<p>We expect applications to evidence that the project is well managed. Please provide the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear dates for start and finish of the project</li> <li>• Details of the management of the project and anticipated timescales</li> <li>• Commitment to providing quarterly updates to the Council</li> <li>• Clear working plan and costings.</li> </ul> <p>We also expect the project to already benefit from planning permission (if needed) along with any other consents that may be required.</p> <p>Applications that benefit from planning permission (if required) will be looked upon more favourably than those that do not. Please make it clear if the project requires planning permission or is permitted development.</p> <p>It is considered that large scale projects that are supported by a number of neighbourhood, local and/or business plans are unlikely to have all</p>

Criteria no.	Criteria description	Information to be provided in an application for CIL funding
		paperwork and funding in place at the time of application. Therefore, we will also consider the benefits of a larger scheme against the fact that they do not have all their permissions in place at that point in time.
9	The scheme has local support	<p>We expect applications to have the support of a local member, a local organisation or business, and/or the local Town or Parish Council.</p> <p>Applications that benefit from local support will be looked upon more favourably than those that do not, but will not be refused if local support is absent.</p>
10	Whether the scheme has already benefitted from CIL funding	<p>Applications and projects that have already benefitted from CIL funding via the CIL Spending Board or a CIL exemption will be looked upon less favourably, unless a sound justification is provided as to why further funding is required.</p> <p>Applications that demonstrate partnership working and include Town or Parish Council CIL funding will be looked upon more favourably.</p> <p>If the local Town or Parish Council has not made a contribution to the application using their own CIL, please explain why.</p>
11	The scheme provides an overall benefit to the community	Applications that clearly evidence a range of social, economic and environmental benefits to the residents of Sevenoaks District, and have maximised funding opportunities, will be looked upon more favourably.

## 9. What happens at the CIL Spending Board?

- 9.1 If your application passes both stages of validation and is presented to the CIL Spending Board, you will be informed in writing.
- 9.2 The CIL Spending Board is a formal meeting that is chaired by the named Chair of the Board.
- 9.3 At the beginning of the meeting, the Chair will move the officer recommendation and indicate which applications local members, the relevant Town or Parish Council, the applicant or members of the public have requested to speak on.

- 9.4 Officers will then be invited to introduce a summary of CIL, which may include an update on the latest CIL legislation, the amount of funding available to the Board, and the key development sites that CIL has been collected from.
- 9.5 Taking each application in turn, the Chair will read out the name of the project and officers will be invited to introduce the application, which may include a summary of what is being applied for and how the application meets the criteria.
- 9.6 Please note that you will be expected to have a representative present at the meeting to provide a short introduction of your application to the Board. You/they will also be expected to answer any questions that Board members may have regarding the application. You/they will need to register to attend before the meeting – please contact the District Council by 5pm on the day of the CIL Spending Board at the latest. Email [democratic.services@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@sevenoaks.gov.uk) or call 01732 227199.
- 9.7 Speakers who have registered to speak will be invited to do so by the Chair in the following order, for a maximum of 3 minutes (local members will have 4 minutes):
- Company/person/body responsible for the application
  - A member of the public wishing to speak for the application
  - A member of the public wishing to speak against the application
  - A Town or Parish Council representative
  - The local member
- 9.8 Notwithstanding the above, the Chair retains the discretion to allow additional speakers as they see fit.
- 9.9 Speakers are permitted visual aids of up to five Powerpoint slides.
- 9.10 Once you have spoken, members of the Board will have the opportunity to ask questions of clarification. This process will be managed by the Chair of the Board.
- 9.11 Members of the Board will then have the opportunity to ask questions of officers.
- 9.12 A discussion regarding each application will then take place.
- 9.13 A decision on each application will then be made, but only after all applications have been introduced, spoken on, questions asked and discussions held (i.e. after paragraphs 9.5-9.12 have taken place for each application). This ensures that every application is fully considered and discussed before any decision on the award of CIL funding is made.
- 9.14 The Board can only consider the applications put before them and the details provided in the application forms. This means that the Board cannot change any of the

application details or the amount of funding to be awarded at the meeting. The Board can only agree, refuse, or defer, if it is considered that more information is needed or that further investigation is required in relation to the costs of the project.

- 9.15 Each application is assessed against the criteria set out in Section 7 and 8 of this guidance note.
- 9.16 The following recommendations are available to the Board to make for each application considered. The Board's recommendations will then be ratified by Cabinet:
- Funding for the scheme is approved;
  - Funding for the scheme is approved subject to a legal agreement being entered into. If no legal agreement is entered into within six months, the application will be reported back to the CIL Spending Board to be reconsidered; or
  - Funding for the scheme is secured and set aside for this project. The funding will be released upon the completion of a legal agreement and when planning permission is granted for the project. If planning permission is not granted, the application will be reported back to the CIL Spending Board for reconsideration.
- 9.17 If your application is not successful in being awarded CIL funding, this will be made clear by the Board. Their recommendation will be provided in writing and will also indicate whether you should consider applying for the project again and what additional information, if any, should be provided with a resubmission.
- 9.18 If your application is successful, the recommendations of the CIL Spending Board will be presented to the soonest available Cabinet meeting after the CIL Spending Board has met. If agreed, you will be informed in writing.
- 9.19 It is likely that you will need to sign a legal agreement before any funding is passed over, and there may be other conditions that you will need to meet as well. The legal agreement seeks to ensure that the funding is spent in the way intended and in accordance with the application, and to ensure that the District Council is kept informed of project progress on a regular basis.
- 9.20 Cabinet cannot refuse an application, but can ask the CIL Spending Board to clarify or review their recommendation on one or more of the applications considered by the Board. If this occurs we will notify you.

## **10. What happens if I want to amend my application?**

- 10.1 An application cannot be amended once it has been submitted. If, however, there has been a change of circumstances, we ask that you contact us at [cil@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:cil@sevenoaks.gov.uk)

as soon as possible so that this can be addressed and any changes to the application can be reported to the CIL Spending Board in a timely manner.

- 10.2 If changes occur once the CIL Spending Board has already considered your application and it has been ratified by Cabinet, we ask that you contact us at [cil@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:cil@sevenoaks.gov.uk). The legal agreement requires any changes to be approved by the District Council in writing.
- 10.3 If changes occur after the funding has been awarded or spent, the Council's CIL governance states that some changes may be permitted to an application, but only in the following circumstances:
- Where the project (and the community benefits provided) is at least substantially similar to that approved; and
  - Where the risk to the CIL funding does not materially increase.
- 10.4 At present, under no circumstances would this allow for more funding from the Council or for CIL funding to pay a greater proportion of the project without a new application.
- 10.5 Therefore if you wish to amend your application after CIL funding has been awarded please submit the request to [cil@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:cil@sevenoaks.gov.uk) for consideration, and we will confirm in writing whether the change is in accordance with the advice given above.

## **11. When is the CIL Spending Board held?**

- 11.1 In line with the District Council's CIL governance, we will look to hold a CIL Spending Board approximately once or twice a year, but this does depend on how much CIL income is received within a given time period.
- 11.2 In general, CIL Spending Board meetings are held at the Chair's discretion taking into account the amount of CIL income received within a given time period.

## **12. How can I be notified when a Board is held?**

- 12.1 As soon as the Chair of the CIL Spending Board agrees that a Board meeting should be held, we will publicise the date of the meeting on the District Council's website [here](#).
- 12.2 We will also notify all persons on our mailing list. If you would like to be added to our mailing list please contact us at [cil@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:cil@sevenoaks.gov.uk).

**13. Conclusion**

13.1 We trust this guidance note is useful in helping you prepare a strong application and understanding the process that your application will go through, once submitted.

13.2 If you have any further questions please contact us at [cil@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:cil@sevenoaks.gov.uk).



## APPENDIX A

### **Request for a review of an application considered by Sevenoaks District Council not to succeed under Stage One of the CIL application validation process**

1. A request for a review must be made within six months of the correspondence from Sevenoaks District Council informing the applicant of one or more of the following:
  - The application form is incomplete;
  - The applicant does not have the legal right to carry out the project or does not have support from the statutory provider of that service;
  - The project is not clearly defined as 'infrastructure to support development'.
2. The request for a review must contain additional evidence/information in addition to the original application as to why the applicant considers their application to comply with the first stage of validation.
3. Sevenoaks District Council will review the information submitted, liaise with Legal Services, and make a decision on the information submitted within six weeks. If a decision cannot be reached within this timeframe, the District Council will contact the applicant to explain why and provide a new decision date.
4. The application will be reviewed by a senior manager before the decision is shared with the applicant.