

## HWE ICBs short statement on the Council's Section 106 processes

North Herts Council consults the HWE ICB on planning applications for housing development. The HWE ICB will assess the health impact on primary, community and mental healthcare services resulting from an increase in patient numbers. The HWE ICB calculates the size of the health financial contribution needed to mitigate the health impact of the development. This calculation is based on the capital cost of providing additional healthcare space across identified health sectors to meet the needs of new residents/patients generated by the proposed development. This calculation takes into consideration nationally recognised space standards and up to date construction costs.

Capital projects can range from small works, for example, reconfiguring existing health service premises to increase patient capacity, to new builds. Additional or improved floorspace will result in a higher value building when compared to older buildings and because new space standards are bigger than older assets. In turn newer, bigger assets create increased financial pressures on the NHS. Of particular note, the NHS reimburses rents and rates on all GP premises from a delegated budget from NHSE.

Historically the NHS would describe the Council's support of health Section 106 requests as risk adverse, with processes overly onerous when compared to practices undertaken by other Hertfordshire Local Planning Authorities. Examples include requesting the NHS is a signatory to Section 106 Agreements, to burdensome requests for evidence of spend, including a request for a visit in person to see reconfigured clinical rooms at a GP surgery, as proof of spend.

The NHS' more recent engagement in Section 106 processes with the Council has markedly improved due to a closer working relationship between the Council and the HWE ICB. Twice yearly planning and engagement meetings are organised by the HWE ICB where Section 106 matters can be aired. These meetings are a valuable forum for both parties to discuss 'live' planning casework and for the NHS to share our internal processes to track Section106 spend, once monies have been drawn down, together with project timelines. The HWE ICB is more than happy to provide more detailed feedback, if needed, including at our next planning and engagement meeting arranged for 1<sup>st</sup> December 2025.