OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
10 NOVEMBER 2026

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

TITLE OF INFORMATION NOTE: Section 106 (S106) Task & Finish Group

INFORMATION NOTE OF THE: Director - Place

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Executive Member - Place

COUNCIL PRIORITY: All Priorities;

1. SUMMARY

1.1 To provide a six-month update, following the initial presentation of the Task & Finish Group recommendations to Cabinet in April 2026.

2. STEPS TO DATE

2.1 The Section 106 Task and Finish Group reported its findings and recommendations to the meeting of Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 24 March 2026. The Committee resolved that the recommendations be considered by Cabinet.

2.2 The report and its recommendations were considered by Cabinet in April 2026. The recommendations were not adopted at that meeting. Cabinet identified that additional work was needed on specific matters before being re-presented.

2.3 The Scrutiny Officer has requested a six-month update be presented at this meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

3. INFORMATION TO NOTE

3.1 At this stage, the O&S recommendations from the s106 Task & Finish Group have not been approved by Cabinet for implementation. Cabinet resolved that further consideration of the recommendations was carried out before being re-presented for consideration.

3.2 In the approved minutes Cabinet noted, in particular

a. that the resource implications of the recommendations had not been fully considered or presented in time for consideration in the 2026/27 budget; and
b. That Chairs of the Community Forums should have been consulted.

3.3 This first observation is particularly relevant to Recommendation 2 of the Task & Finish report. This advocates using Community Partnership Officers to provide additional support to Parish Councils on planning and s106 matters.

3.4 The Task & Finish report includes service responses to Recommendation 2 from the Director: Place and Policy & Communities Manager. These both identify a specific lack of capacity and expertise in this area. This would need to be addressed for the recommendation to be successfully implemented.

3.5 Following Cabinet, further work has been ongoing between the Place and Governance directorates. A proposal for additional officer resource has been proposed for consideration in the new budget-setting cycle. The Executive Members for Place and Governance have been briefed and are supportive.

3.6 The second observation in Paragraph 3.2(b) relates primarily to Recommendations 1 & 3 of the Task & Finish group. These identify that Community Forums should assume responsibility for developing community infrastructure priorities in unparished areas.

3.7 The officer view is that this is best pursued once there is clarity on the proposed additional officer resource and the response to Recommendation 2. Firstly, to ensure any current or perceived asymmetry between parished and un-parished areas is not simply reversed in the opposite direction. Secondly, that the proposed officer resource would likely also provide the capacity to support in delivering these recommendations.

3.8 Although the O&S recommendations presently remain unapproved, its broader findings are being progressed where they coincide with planned activities and projects. For example, recent workshops have been held with Parish Councils as part of the current Local Plan consultation. These have discussed how neighbourhood priorities might be developed.

3.9 The table attached at Appendix 1 provides a summary of work that has taken place against the O&S recommendations (notwithstanding their current status).

3.10 A short update was also provided to the internal, cross-party Strategic Planning Project Board in September. This included representatives from the three main political groups represented on the Council.

3.11 At the Cabinet meeting in April, it was suggested in debate that elements of the recommendations requiring additional resource could be complicated by the prospect of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). At the time of that meeting, it was assumed that new unitary authorities could be in place from April 2028.

3.12 The delay to the LGR programme for Hertfordshire gives additional space to proactively consider the implications of the Task and Finish Group's recommendations through the current budget planning cycle. This is outlined above.

4. NEXT STEPS

4.1 Member budget workshops are due to take place in November. The outcomes of these will inform which proposals are taken forward through the committee process. This will culminate in Full Council being asked to approve the 2027/28 Budget in February 2027.

4.2 It may be possible to re-present the Task & Finish recommendations to Cabinet in early 2027 if officers have confidence in the relevant budget bid being supported. Alternately, it may be more appropriate to re-present the recommendations following Full Council's consideration of the budget to provide certainty.

4.3 Other projects and business as usual activities which may contribute – either directly or indirectly to the Task & Finish recommendations – will continue to progress.

5. APPENDICES

5.1 Appendix 1 – Update on Task & Finish Recommendations

6. CONTACT OFFICERS

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7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Section 106 Task and Finish Group, report to Overview & Scrutiny Committee, March 2026

7.2 Section 106 Task and Finish Group, report to Cabinet, April 2026