

Public Questions – Cabinet 29 July 2025

Question from Karen Tippins, resident of Shaftesbury

On 15 October 2024, Cabinet awarded £876,278 in s106 funding to Shaftesbury Town Council, based on an August 2024 application that included plans later found to be non-compliant with Building Regulations and cost estimates underestimated by hundreds of thousands of pounds.

Since that decision, the project has been redesigned by a new architect, will require a fresh planning application, and is now over £500,000 above the original budget.

The Section 106 agreement was for community use, yet the first floor is now proposed to be rented to Dorset Council for a Family Hub and to the NHS - both statutory, employment based uses. This change was never consulted on with residents, and the land at Mampitts Green, East of Shaftesbury is designated for recreational, not employment use.

Will the Cabinet and/or Scrutiny Committee initiate a review into the October 2024 Cabinet decision, in light of these material changes and concerns over planning compliance, cost, and use of public funds?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Planning and Emergency Planning

The S106 award approved by Cabinet on 15 October 2024 included eight conditions that Shaftesbury Town Council have to comply with before any funding or land will be released by Dorset Council.

Five of these conditions require Shaftesbury Town Council to provide various pieces of documentary evidence. These include a detailed operating plan, project costing & delivery plan, ringfenced bank account, external funding grant applications and engagement with community groups.

Shaftesbury Town Council submitted these evidence documents on 18 July 2025, and they are currently being reviewed for their compliance with the conditions.