

## Community Survey 2026 – What next?

We cannot feasibly implement any of the recommendations immediately because Parish Councils operate under strict legal, financial, and democratic constraints that deliberately prevent rapid overspending.

A parish council can only spend money on things it has the explicit legal power to do. It must first verify that every recommendation is legally permitted under local government law. Spending large sums without a documented business case, proper quotes, and a formal Council vote violates financial regulations and can invalidate the accounts.

Although we have S106, CIL and other grant funding available we wouldn't be able to resource numerous projects simultaneously as we only have one part time Clerk. Attempting to do so would instantly overwhelm our administrative capacity, so working groups or committees are required in support.

The survey represents the community's wishes, but the council must balance those wishes against capital expenditure and mandatory costs like insurance, staff salaries, and ongoing maintenance.

### What do we need to do?

To transform any of the recommendations into an actionable, legally compliant budget, we should follow a structured sequence divided into analysis, integration, and execution.

**Categorise costs:** Separate the 10 recommendations into capital expenditure (one-off costs like building repairs) and operational expenditure (ongoing costs like maintenance).

**Rank by urgency:** Score each recommendation based on factors such as community demand, safety needs, and legal obligations.

**Assess feasibility:** Determine which recommendations are quick wins versus long-term projects requiring multi-year funding.

**Review existing reserves:** Check our current reserves and earmarked reserves to see exactly what funding is available now and in the near future.

**Explore alternative funding:** Identify other grants or public-private partnerships that may be used to offset costs.

**Finance working group:** Draft the line-by-line financial requirements.

**Draft a 5-year plan:** Plot the feasible and viable recommendations onto a Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) so the financial burden is spread out sustainably.

**Present for approval:** Bring the drafted 5-year plan and budget to a full parish council meeting for formal debate, public consultation, and final vote.

**Set key milestones:** Assign specific councillors or committees to oversee the implementation of each approved recommendation. This may include some professional or resident support.

**Track monthly variances:** Compare actual spending against the new budget during regular Council meetings to prevent overspends.

**Report back annually:** Share an update with the parish during the Annual Parish Meeting's to show exactly how their survey feedback shaped local spending. The 'you said, we did' events.