

Paper to Councillors re MSDC grant funding consultation

In the January 2024 Newsletter, Elmswell Parish Council, in conjunction with Mid Suffolk District Council published a consultation giving Elmswell residents the opportunity to choose what the village might best invest in from a potential fund of £761,000 which has accumulated from developer contributions as the village has grown.

The invitation was published on many of the village Facebook pages. There was a QR code link and responses were invited on line, by email, via the EPC website or in hard copy.

Residents were invited to choose a maximum of 3 schemes from a list of 9, but further comment and suggestions were invited. Separate approaches were made by Mid Suffolk to qualifying village clubs and organisations.

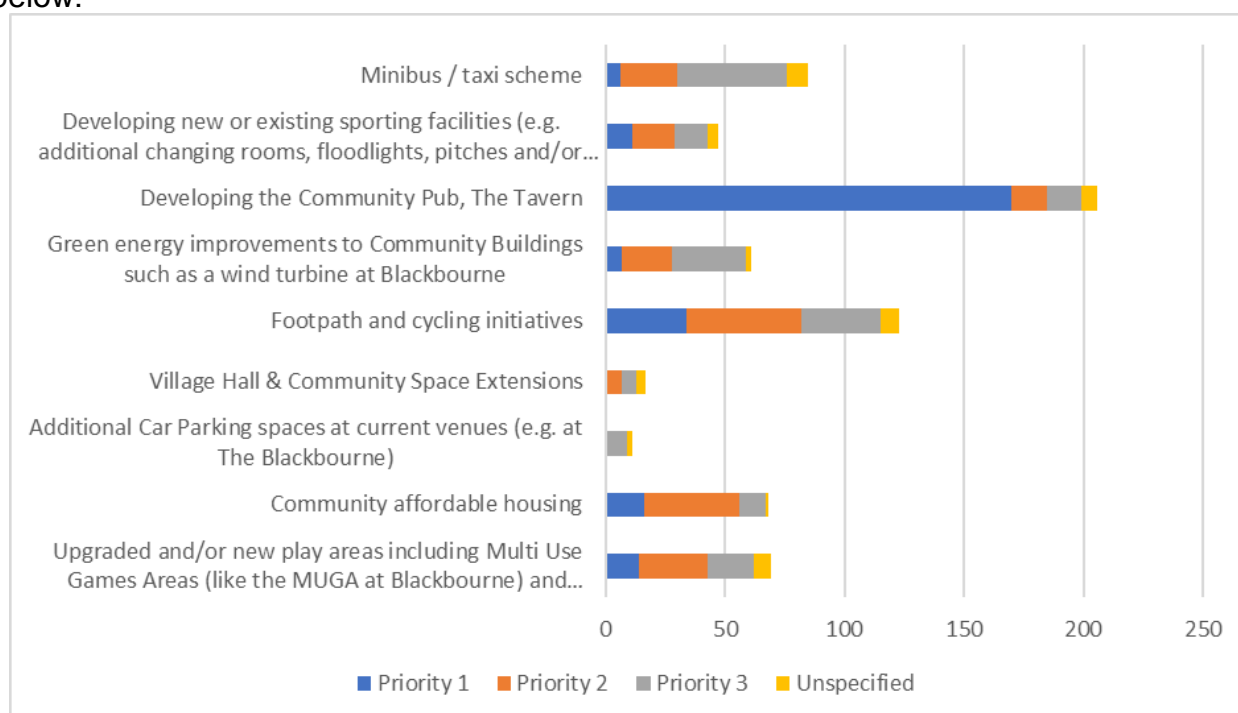
The raw results are shown here and some of the ways forward, as discussed with Mid Suffolk officers are outlined.

ON LINE RESPONSES

263 people made their views known. The preferences voiced, in descending order were:

RANKING	SCHEME	VOTES (tickboxes only)	VOTES (tickboxes + text)	SHARE
1	Developing The Tavern as our Community Pub	199	206	75.7% 78.3%
2	Footpath & cycling initiatives	119	123	45.2% 46.8%
3	Minibus / Taxi scheme	85	85	32.3% 32.3%
4	Upgrade / provide new play areas	66	69	25.1% 26.2%
5	Community affordable housing	66	68	25.1% 25.9%
6	Green energy, eg wind turbine	57	61	21.7% 23.2%
7	Developing sports facilities	45	47	17.1% 17.9%
8	Village hall / community space extensions	17	17	6.5% 6.5%
9	Additional car parking	9	11	3.4% 4.2%

A breakdown of how highly people prioritised each option they voted for is represented below:



HARD COPY RESPONSES

53 paper responses were received:

RANKING	SCHEME	VOTES	SHARE
1	Developing The Tavern as our Community Pub	45	84.9%
2	Footpath & cycling initiatives	17	32.1%
3=	Community affordable housing	15	28.3%
3=	Green energy, eg wind turbine	15	28.3%
3=	Minibus / Taxi scheme	15	28.3%
6	Developing sports facilities	8	15.1%
7	Upgrade / provide new play areas	5	9.4%
8	Village hall / community space extensions	2	3.7%
9	Additional car parking	0	0

COMBINED TOTALS

316 responses in total:

RANKING	SCHEME	VOTES	SHARE
1	Developing The Tavern as our Community Pub	244	77.2%
2	Footpath & cycling initiatives	136	43.0%
3	Minibus / Taxi scheme	100	31.6%
4	Community affordable housing	81	25.6%
5	Green energy, eg wind turbine	72	22.8%
6	Upgrade / provide new play areas	71	22.5%
7	Developing sports facilities	53	16.8%
8	Village hall / community space extensions	19	6.0%
9	Additional car parking	9	2.8%

Residents were invited to make additional comments and to suggest other possible schemes which might deserve support.

These were as follows:

- 12 people reinforced their support for the Tavern project
- 9 suggested a footbridge over or underpass under the railway crossing
- 8 want a GP surgery in the village or Health Centre outreach at Blackbourne
- 5 want improvements to and/or better maintenance of the village pavements
- 4 want a floodlit football pitch
- 4 think the water mains need upgrading to prevent leaks
- 3 want a relief road / by-pass
- 3 want the land at Pightle Close / School Road to be purchased as a wildlife area
- 3 think money should go to support the pedestrian / cycle path to Woolpit
- 3 want an all weather football pitch
- 3 want better facilities for older children
- 2 think we need more shops
- 2 want a gymnasium in the village
- 2 think we need a better play area
- 2 want a youth club established
- 2 want improved sports facilities
- 2 think the footpath (Rights of Way) network needs better maintenance
- 2 want money to go to supporting the Memorial Library
- 2 think the Food Bank deserves support
- 2 want pavements improved – shop corner & New Road

There were single mentions of:

Supporting the Primary school / traffic calming / a splash park / removing the kebab van / potholes / poor road infrastructure / a more accessible post Office / a social club at Blackbourne / more double yellow lines (Blacksmith's Way) / more street lights / more

parking at Co-op / cycle path over Lord's Bridge / spread the money over many things / more regular grass cutting / a dental practice for the village / blinds on windows in Jubilee Hall / tennis courts / facilities to reduce loneliness and anxiety / soft play facility / coffee shop at Blackbourne / more children's facilities / deter littering & fly tipping (eg bunkers Hill) / bungalows in any affordable housing scheme / better bus services / one big, long-lasting, far-reaching project / Footpath linking Lukeswood & Kiln Meadow / spread the money to benefit all sectors / BMX track / discourage car journeys.

3 people said that the money should not be spent on affordable housing, 2 that it should not go to support our Community Pub

The Chairman and I met with Mid Suffolk officers on 30th January to trawl through the results and assess feedback from the consultation.

Following discussion it would seem that the way forward may be to:

- Put in a formal application for s106 grant of £500k towards the Elmswell Tavern project once Planning permission is secured
- Take account of input from organisations individually consulted by MSDC
- Identify what EPC sees as a way forward in nominating other areas to prioritise for grant aid and refer back to Mid Suffolk for further discussion
- Consider what frameworks / structures might be put in place to address other issues raised through the consultation process.

Peter Dow 30.01.2024