Strategic priorities for CIL funds

1 Background

As a result of new housing developments in the village, Bishops Lydeard and Cothelstone Parish Council has received Community Infrastructure Levy ('CIL') funds. The last receipt was in the year ended 31 March 2021.

CIL projects have been supported over the last few years, and the following amounts have been spent in each of the last four financial years:

Year ended 31 March 2024	£57,327
Year ended 31 March 2023	£58,258
Year ended 31 March 2022	£95,398
Year ended 31 March 2021	£53,342

Full details of the expenditure incurred to date can be found on the Parish Council's website (www.bishopslydeardparishcouncil.gov.uk)

As at 31 March 2024, £529,870 remained to be spent by the Parish Council.

2 Process

The Parish Council is solely responsible for the distribution of CIL funds.

The distribution of CIL funds is governed by The Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) Regulations 2013 – specifically regulation 59 which states that:

"Local authorities must spend the levy on infrastructure needed to support the development of their area, and they will decide what infrastructure is needed".

The definition of infrastructure is wide and further details can be found in the Regulations.

The Parish Council has consulted widely on the way CIL funds should be distributed and the initial priorities were agreed following consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan in 2019.

Since then, a number of consultations have taken place to identify priorities for the CIL funds including a leaflet which was distributed to every household in the village earlier this year.

In addition, informal consultations take place by the elected members of the Parish Council.

Residents in the village have consistently prioritised safety on the roads including speeding and traffic calming measures.

3 Results of responses to the recent consultation

Responses to the leaflet drop were varied but there was overwhelming support for the roads and traffic project because of concerns about safety and speeding in the village.

The results can be analysed as follows:

Roads and Traffic (including safety)	57.2%
Library	2.8%
War memorial	2.9%
Streamside path	2.8%
EV charging	2.9%
Trees, green spaces and biodiversity	8.6%
School nursery	2.8%
Football club equipment	2.8%
Village Hall roof repairs	2.8%
Skatepark/half pipe	2.9%
Play park (next to the MUGA)	2.9%
West Somerset Railway	2.9%
Village Hall lighting upgrade	2.9%
Total	100.0%

Some of the suggestions were supported by more than one person but it is not possible to determine how many people support each individual suggestion.

4 Financial position of the CIL fund

As noted above, the CIL fund had a balance of £530k at the end of the last financial year.

Funds of £375k were earmarked for the roads and traffic project at the Parish Council in May 2023 and the Council approved the Streamside path project earlier this year subject to getting a quote for the work. Since then, a quote for £33,739 has been received for that work. As the quote is in excess of £25,000, at least two more quotes will be sought for the work in accordance with the Financial Regulations.

Available funds as of July 2024 therefore amount to:

Balance at 31/3/24	£530k
Less:	
Roads and Traffic project earmarked funds	£375k
Streamside path project	£34k
Balance remaining	£121k

The majority of people who support the roads and traffic project have not provided any costings as they are aware that the project is underway and should start later this year or early in 2025.

Where known, the other projects have indicated costs as follows:

Skatepark £50-£120k (see paper CIL6)
Play Park £18k (see paper CIL8)
West Somerset Railway £50-100k (see paper CIL9)
Lighting for the Village Hall £16k (see paper CIL15)
Football Club equipment £13k (see paper CIL27)
Nursery at the school (50% contribution) £125k (see paper CIL28)
Roof repair to Village Hall £5k (see paper CIL29)
SIDs £3k each
Biodiversity project £4k (see paper CIL26)

5 Action

The working group is invited to discuss which projects could be supported and whether it is appropriate to make a smaller contribution to the larger projects to ensure that as many projects as possible can be supported.

Any recommendations made will be presented to the full Parish Council for a decision.