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Barrowford Library

Barrowford Parish Council submitted an expression of interest on the 7th July following the decision at the GP Meeting held on the 6th July. Within the hour the Clerk received the details and running costs for the building which included a Property Asset Management Condition Survey. The Clerk further requested the current staffing costs for the library and received the information on the 14th July.

Initial Building Costs for 2015-16:

The information pack gave the initial building costs including a breakdown for the previous three years and showed that for the 2015-16 financial year the initial cost was £11,103 but on top of that were additional costs for servicing and safety checks of £2,787.04 a total of £13,890.04.

Building Condition Survey:

The fairly comprehensive Building Condition Survey although dated 20th May 2013 showed that the Library was built in a traditional style in 1956; it highlighted problems with the fabric of the property and graded them as follows:

Condition Category:		Condition Rating:		Condition Priorities	
F	Fabric	A	Good	P1	Urgent
H	Health & Safety	B	Satisfactory	P2	Essential
L	Legislation	C	Poor	P3	Desirable
		D	Bad	P4	Long Term

The condition survey is broken down into individual service areas e.g.: grounds, main building etc. These figures have not been broken down into the individual items but for the whole service area giving priority and estimated costs (presumably 2013 estimates).

Service Area	P1	P2	P3	P4	Total
Grounds/paths/fencing		5,087	13,234		£18,321
Main Building/services	2,875	5,131	6,493	26,843	£41,342
Room 1			470	523	£993
Room 2		89	14,856	563	£15,508
Room 3			7,048		£7,048
Room 4		78	4,326		£4,404
Room 5		1,126	245		£1,371
Room 6		1,837	230	93	£2,160
Room 8		363	328	313	£1,004
Room 9		1,580	2,253		£3,833
Total	£2,875	£15,291	£49,483	£28,335	£95,984

As can be seen from the above LCC figures there are Urgent or Essential works of £18,166 needed and that there are Desirable and Long Term Works totalling

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£77,818. Desirable and Long Term Works will become more Urgent or Essential with the passage of time especially roof refurbishment and carpeting as these become dilapidated.

If these costs could be spread over 10 years it would represent around £9,600 per year at 2013 prices and would probably reach in excess of £11-12,000 in the final years. There would also be a need for the Council to hold a contingency amount large enough to cover any shortfall in annual budget for any potential need of a major repair.

Staffing Costs and Usage Figures:

The staffing costs supplied presumably cover the present opening times and cover employer's on-costs such as National Insurance and Pension Contributions. The total for the year 2015-16 was £21,110. These figures would need verifying for inclusion of on-costs.

The Profile of Barrowford Library for 2015-16:

Lancashire County Council provided the following profile of Barrowford Library:

Library Branch Name	District	Total Registered library members (i.e. current valid library accounts)	Total Active library members (i.e. With at least 1 transaction in last 12 months)	Population in library's catchment area (2011 census figs)
Barrowford	Pendle	1,159	502	6,843

Average Monthly New Library Users (Taken from 2015/16 full year)	PNET Computers available	Average Monthly PNET sessions (Taken from 2015/16 full year)	PNET Usage - % Available Hours Used per Library per Month (Taken from 2015/16 full year)
9	6	166	19%

Library Visits (2015/16 full year)	Average Weekly Footfall (2015/16 full year excluding Bank Hols)	Library "Real" Issues (Public issues/renewals for 2015/16 full year)
20,378	408	21,479

As can be seen from the above table the Library has 1,159 members which equates to around 17% membership from its catchment area. But less than half at only 502 or 7.5% have been active in the last twelve months, new membership is currently around 9 per month.

During 2015-16 Barrowford Library issued/renewed 21,479 books etc. with the number of visits are around 20,378. Computer sessions are running at around 166 per month which equates to 19% usage of the resource time available.

These figures show that the Library is underused by the population as a whole both as a library and as a source of internet connection. Although the Library is loved and well used by the 502 members who regularly attend, its value to the other 659 members who have not used Barrowford Library for over a year and the 5684

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identified within the catchment area, who are either using other libraries such as Nelson or Colne or do not use the library service at all, *is doubtful*.

Estimated Total Annual Costs:

The total costs for running the Library on an annual basis can be broken down into the following costings based on the information supplied by LCC:

Cost Centre	Annual Cost
Day to Day Building Costs	11,103.00
Additional Annual Costs, servicing, safety etc.	2,787.04
Year on Year refurbishment as per Condition Survey	9,600.00
Staffing based on LCC Figures	21,110.00
First Year Contingency Based on a Ten Year Refurbishment Plan	10,000.00
Total Funding Requirement for 2017-18 based on LCC Figures	£54,600.04

These figures are based on the figures and reports supplied by LCC except for the First Year Contingency which it would be fiscally prudent to apply as a precaution against any extraordinary expenditure occurring in any particular year. The Cost for subsequent years would around £45,000 adjusted for increases in on-costs.

Implications to the Council:

Financial: If the Council chose to take on the financial responsibility for the Library the necessary increase to the precept based on 2016-17 figures would be:

Tax Band	Current Precept Level	Increase in £s	Potential Precept Level	% Increase on 2016-17 Levels
A	32.57	17.26	49.83	35.59%
B	38.00	20.13	58.13	35.59%
C	43.43	23.01	66.44	35.59%
D	48.86	25.89	74.75	35.59%
E	59.72	31.64	91.36	35.59%
F	70.57	37.39	107.96	35.59%
G	81.43	43.15	124.58	35.59%
H	97.72	51.73	149.45	35.59%

As can be seen the increase will be around 35.59% on this year's precept figure if the council does not increase its current budget or take on other devolved services.

Given that membership is not solely residents of Barrowford and that there are two larger libraries within 1 or 2 miles the individual costs for 2015-16 relating to Barrowford Library equates to the following costs based on the figures supplied:

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Per Member	Per User Member	Per Book Issued	Per Visit
£47.11	£108.76	£2.54	£2.70

Given the figures in the last table, the actual costs of running the library as highlighted by usage type, and the fact that less than 7.5% of the total catchment area use the library more than once a year, the argument for retaining the status quo at the expense of all precept payers should be considered very carefully.

Representations from Councillors who are members of the two higher tiers of local government or from small groups of protesters who possibly represent other key local government services such as education should be considered but weighed against the fact that none have decided to fund the Library.

This is primarily a decision for Barrowford Parish Councillors who will have to consider the benefits to the community of retaining the Library for its limited membership against the additional burden of extra Parish Council costs which will need to be met by the whole village.