Agenda Item 6

Barrowford Financial Plan

2025-2028

Barrowford Parish Council Assets

Barrowford Parish Council currently provides services and facilities within Barrowford, Carr Hall and Higherford, these services include:

1. **Holmefield House Community Centre Infrastructure Repair and Maintenance, Furniture, Equipment Replacement**

Holmefield House is run by the Friends of Holmefield House but is owned and maintained by the Council. The facilities comprise of:

1) Holmefield House a mid-Victorian mill owner's residence used as Community Centre ground floor and Council Office first floor.
2) Annex building next to the main building is self-contained and currently leased to the Armed Forces Support Group on an annual rent.
3) A 26-space car park to the side with a TPO Lime Tree within a walled bed outside the door to Holmefield House lawned areas to the two sides including fruit trees and raised beds.
4) Field to the rear, including a recently planted mixed fruit orchard (Coronation Community Orchard).

2. **Barrowford Memorial Park and Lower Parkhill Farm (Heritage Centre).** The Memorial Park is for public use and consists of:

1) Two distinct sets of play equipment age appropriate with safety surfaces and fencing.
2) Three pieces of gym equipment adjacent to the play areas with safety surfaces.
3) Park Lake with wetland area to rear with a raised wooden walkway.
4) Lakeside shelter with two raised herb beds.
5) Bowling Green and pavilion currently used by Barrowford Bowling Club on a peppercorn rent.
6) Memorial Garden containing the War Memorial paths and pea gravel standing areas. (Refurbished with new stone flags 2024)
7) Viewing Platform overlooking the River Caul and Fish Pass.
8) River Walls extending throughout the length of the park.
9) Steep sloped bank running length of park with predominately mature beech trees.
10) Lower Parkhill Farm Courtyard and Outbuildings leased to Heritage Trust for the Northwest on a self-repairing peppercorn rent.

3. **Allotments & Garage Sites:** The Parish owns 5 Allotment Sites 7 and 2 Garage Sites:

1) Pasture Lane no 1 & no 2 these allotments comprise the largest site with internal access roads external boundary fencing and water supply. Pasture Lane No 1 has 62 plots. No 2 site has 36 plots 1 large Garage I container. At the entrance is a lawned area with a large Council storage hut, two Barrowford Horticultural huts.

Agenda Item 6

2) Lower Parkhill Allotments: with internal access roads external boundary fencing and water supply the site contains 40 plots and a strip of land rented to a local organisation for a container.
3) Lowerclough Street Allotments: Internal access roads external boundary fencing and water supply 33 Raised Beds 1 Allotment 3 communal polytunnels 1 communal hut. The Council has 1 hut and a 40ft container for storage and planting planters installing Christmas lights etc.
4) Back Nora Street 19 plots predominantly used for gardens and recreational use and 2 Garages plots
5) Back Church Street 8 plots predominantly used for gardens and recreational use and 2 Garage plots.
6) Back Pasture Lane 2 plots let to the adjacent houses as gardens.
7) Hill Top Garages: 3 concrete sectional garages for rent.
8) Lowerclough Street Garage Site: The Council owns 12 garage plots with tenants installing their own garage.

4. Other Council Land with Maintenance Implications:

1) Fleece Toilets. These toilets were handed over to the Parish Council several years ago and have not had any renovation or refurbishment since being built in the 1980's/90's. The toilets have needed massive major renovation in 2019 and have been closed since the first lockdown in 2020. The scale of works required to bring the facilities up to standard is beyond current funding. Consideration needs to be given to the future of these toilets.
2) Land at Broadway: The land is currently a mixture of grass shrubs and trees. Existing shrubbery was extensively pruned early in the year, the site has benefited from 21 fruit trees funded by the Coronation Community Orchard Fund and planted this spring by council staff.
3) Hill Top and The Rose Bed: These two areas are currently maintained by the Barrowford in Bloom and Environmental Group.
4) Dickey Nook: This site at Dickey Nook has one island in front of the bus turnround consisting of a raised bed retained by a wall containing a large conifer and plants, maintained by The Higherford Action Group to the rear of the bus stop is a large triangle of land which included several trees within a grassed area. The Parish Council mow the grass and pay for any tree works necessary.
5) Woodland Wildlife Area situated between Pasture Lane and the top of Halstead Lane.
6) Small piece of land on Riverway at entrance to carpark to rear of shops.

5. Bus Shelters & Public Benches: With the exception of the bus shelter at Broadway the Parish Council has ownership of the other bus shelters and many of the roadside benches.

6. Planters: The Council has 88 barrier/wall planters, the two Gaumless Troughs and provides plants for the In Bloom planters.

7. Christmas Lights: The Council currently erect around 40-45 trees on shops together with the large trees at Fountain Square and Holmefield House in addition to around 12 Column sets.

8. Works and Equipment: The Council has an extensive array of tools and equipment needed to operate its main day to day operations. The equipment is

stored in various sites which need maintaining with equipment needing servicing and periodic replacement.

Three Year Plan:

Currently only large one-off projects are budgeted over two to three years with funds carried forward from year to year with the budget being set using estimated needs for immediate smaller repairs/replacement.

The increased portfolio of both Council assets devolved from the local authority and existing assets mean that a more comprehensive program of budgeted repairs and renewal need to be funded efficiently within a rolling three-year cycle.

As each phase of the necessary works are achieved works highlighted for the following two years are progressed with additional repairs for future years being factored in each year prior to budget setting in October/November.

Several urgent essential larger scale works have already been approved for 2025-26 with others needing including as urgent repairs, the Clerk recommends virement of some of the surplus in 2024-25 budget headings into new headings which will be needed to address problems that need addressing in the first year.

Priority Projects:

1. **Holmefield House:**

Year One:

1) **Kitchen Refurbishment:** Complete refurbishment of work surfaces and cabinets are required £8,000 set aside from the 2024-25 budget but additional funding will be sought from other sources.
2) **Roof Repairs:** Initial investigations can be funded from maintenance budget to assess the scale of the repairs required.

Year Two: To be decided

Year Three: To be decided

2. **Barrowford Memorial Park:**
   Year One

1) **River Wall Repairs**: the Parish Council has set aside £70,000 over the last 4 years for this work with a further £15,000 in the 2025-26 budget and an outstanding grant available from the BWPAC.
2) **Wetland Area:** Raised wooden walkway is rotten and needs to be removed as a matter of safety with a new path being constructing around the back of the lake to link the existing footpaths once the walkway is removed. £7,500 has been identified from the 2024-25 budget.
3) **Safety Surface:** The existing safety surface at toddlers play area needs increasing annual repairs to meet standard. The Council budgeted for the whole surface to be carpeted and work is planned to be carried out after the May Bank Holiday. £12,000 budgeted.

Year One/Two

4) **Coronation Walk:** The footpath is becoming dangerous in places through uneven broken paving flags the path needs further assessment as to the scale

and scope of the repairs and materials to be used. Some funding is in the 2025-26 budget but this may need a two-year project completed in two sections.

5) **Tree Survey:** All trees on Council owned land need a condition survey to be carried out this will help assess tree work required over the following three years.

3. Allotments & Garage Sites:

Year One:

1) **Pasture Lane No. 1** plots 32,33,36,37 removal of detritus from past usage, £500 set aside for this work.
2) **Pasture Lane No. 2 and Lower Parkhill:** Repairs to the access roads £4000 has been identified in the 2024-25 budget but the cost will probably exceed that figure but remedial work can be started to improve the worst areas with budgeting in future years to rectify all the problems.
3) **Lowerclough Street:** Replacement of gatepost budget set aside £500. A new galvanised gatepost has been ordered and will be installed when received.
4) **Hill Top:** Garage needs clearing ready for re-letting £300 has been identified for this work due to lack of space at Hill Top a skip will be best dropped at Holmefield House and the rubbish brought to the skip.
5) **Skips:** £1000 has been identified for skips, the provision of skips should be targeted at specific problems in conjunction with plot holders. Ad hoc provision of skips through holiday weekends results in fly tipping use for non-allotment generated waste.
6) **Vacant Plots:** Several plots need clearing this will have to be assessed and budgeted for over the next few years.

Year Two/Three:

1) **Pasture Lane No. 2 and Lower Parkhill:** Funding should be budgeted for further upgrades of the roads.
2) **Vacant Plots:** Clearing additional plots.
3) **Lowerclough Street:** Following on from the refurbishment of one of the communal polytunnels refurbishment of another should be included in the budget for 2026-27 with the 3rd in the 2027-28 budget.

4. Other Council Land with Maintenance Implications:

1) **Fleece Toilets:** The Council need to decide the long-term future of this building and the potential costs of upgrading the building.
2) **Land at Broadway:** Beyond routine mowing the only other expenses are extended pruning every 4-5 years this has recently been completed along with the planting of 21 fruit trees. The only area of concern is the damage done to the grass verge at the bottom of Back Rushton Street which is being damaged by PBC bin waggons.
3) **Dickey Nook:** Some work needs to be carried out to the walls behind the bus shelter and adjacent to the former telephone box and the raised bed.
4) **Woodland Wildlife Area:** This area has become the forgotten spot with little maintenance other than a few essential tree works. This is an area the Council need to consider its future use and maintenance as easy access to the site was removed with the building of a single dwelling on the former garage site and the

diversion of the access path. An overall strategy for the use and maintenance should be adopted with any maintenance costs being added to year2/3 funding.

5. **Bus Shelters & Public Benches:**

1) **Bus Shelters:** The Council replaces broken glass but two have been lost through car crashes. LCC do not inform the parish when this happens but recoup their repair costs from the vehicle insurers. The cost of new bus shelters make replacement prohibitive.
2) **Public Benches:** The Council repair benches when reported but there is no long-term strategy for replacement. The cost of a bench similar to the one outside Holmefield House is around £1400 +vat.

6. **Planters:** The annual cost of plants last year was around £3800 so the financial resources to increase the scheme are limited by the cost of new planters, the cost of additional time and increased man hours in planting and watering.
7. **Christmas Lights:**

1) **Shop mounted:** The Council erected around 45 trees last year with around 20% of lights being renewed each year. New brackets have been ordered for 2025-26 and the cost will be met from the existing budget.
2) **Column Mounted:** Some of these stored and maintained column sets are 20 years old. The Council could replace some of the oldest sets with new sets funded from carrying forward the remaining budget for last year.
3) **Statement Trees at Fountain Square and Holmefield House:** Both site's saw maintenance work last year so with the exception of needing to replace some strings of bulbs maintenance costs should be low.

8. **Works and Equipment:**

1) **Works Vehicle:** The Council needs to either purchase or lease a van/flatbed as soon as possible.
2) **Machinery and Tools:** Most machinery is replaced as necessary from existing budget centres the two exceptions would be the works vehicle and the ride on mower. The Council has £20,000 in this budget heading with the vehicle being the priority.
3) **Storage Facilities:** Some maintenance of buildings is required and perhaps another container at Holmefield House.