

The Parish Council takes over the running of the Library building

The proposal: The Parish Council lease the library building and take over the running of things such as the cleaning and maintenance of the building. It would also allow the Parish Council to make the library available for other functions such as small meetings.

Details: West Berkshire Council (WBC) would still run the library service and they would employ the library staff and organise the library volunteers. However, the Parish Council would be in a better position to influence how that service was provided. For instance, should the opening hours be altered? Clearly extending the hours would cost more but perhaps a rearrangement of the existing hours would be beneficial and might be almost cost-neutral.



The Parish Council would also be able to alter the library building, for example, adding a dedicated reading/meeting room on the front of the building. Clearly there would be a cost to this, which is not included in the present proposal, but it is an example of the added flexibility that would exist.



Other libraries that have gone down this route have shown that the most sensible and cost-efficient way to proceed is to set up a trust to run the library building and be responsible for any bookings and other fund-raising for the library. This will require a set of trustees to be appointed and if no one is willing to be such a trustee the project cannot proceed

Costs: The initial costs are relatively small and are basically legal fees for organising the lease, service agreement with WBC and setting up the trust. It is estimated they would be some £2,500

The yearly costs will depend on the amount of money that can be raised via lettings and general fund raising. If there were no lettings and no fund raising there would be a cost of about £1000 per year. That equates to the following annual increase in council tax for each property band:-

Band A	39p	Band E	72p
Band B	46p	Band F	84p
Band C	52p	Band G	98p
Band D	59p	Band H	£1.18

Your views: Any views you give are important but we would particularly like to know:-

- Is it a good idea for the Parish Council to take over the running of the library building?
- Is the increase in council tax a reasonable price to pay?
- Can you think of any uses for the library that might help fund it?
- Would you be willing to be a trustee for the library?
- What can be done to encourage use of the library?

