

Board Portfolio Holder Decision

REPORT BY: Chris Jones – Head of Leisure & Recreation

SUBJECT: Library Service:
Review of Fines, Fees and Charges 2011 - 12

REPORT FOR: Decision

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1** The purpose of the report is to review the current scale of charges and to recommend changes where appropriate.

2.0 Background

- 2.1** The schedule of charges was last revised in 2009. It is timely to review it in line with current budget targets and changing patterns of use.
- 2.2** The Public Library Service is a statutory service; free at the point of use. The scope for charging is prescribed. There is, however, scope to impose charges for certain services. Whilst income is relatively small in relation to expenditure (accounting for 3% only), nonetheless it is increasingly important because of budget pressures. It is especially important where the service has to be sustained through income receipts, as is the case with DVD's and 'Talking Books'.

3.0 Summary of Proposed Changes

a) Fines

Fines, unlike other forms of 'income', are avoidable. The purpose of fines is to encourage prompt return of borrowed items, rather than income generation. There is evidence that borrowers, as a response to the 'credit crunch', are more likely to return items promptly and thereby avoid unnecessary cost. There is, therefore, no basis at this time for an increase to the level of fines.

b) 'Talking Books'

It is timely to increase the charge, in line with inflation.

c) Reservation Charges

It is proposed to increase the charges to better reflect costs and in line with neighbouring authorities.

d) Room Hire

The policy on room hire has recently been reviewed. It is proposed to revise the charge, in line with the policy. In particular, it is necessary to ensure that the charge allows for full recovery of any caretaking costs.

- 4.0** A schedule of the revised charges is attached as an appendix to the report. Subject to approval, it is proposed that the new charges take effect on Tuesday 3rd May, after the Spring Bank Holiday.

Recommendation:	Reason for Recommendation:
It is recommended that the revised schedule of fines, fees & charges be adopted, to take effect from Tuesday 3 rd May 2011.	To increase income in line with budget target.

Relevant (ies):	Policy		
Within Policy:	Yes	Within Budget:	Yes

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