

**LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT**

**EXECUTIVE MEETING**

**23.06.03**

NAME OF WARD(S)  
ALL

**REPORT TITLE: Library service Fees & Charges 2003-4**

**1.0 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report sets out officers' proposals for the schedule of Library Service fees and charges for the financial year 2003/4. The proposed introduction of the new charges is timed to coincide with an increase in library opening hours.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That Members agree the proposed schedule of charges set out in Appendix 1.

**3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The proposals are aimed at optimising the income generated by fees and charges. Failure to agree the proposals will result in a loss of projected income to the Library Service and may mean that compensatory reductions will have to be found elsewhere within the Library Service budget.

**4.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 No staffing implications arise from the recommendations contained within this report.

**5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 No legal implications arise from the recommendations contained within this report. The proposals are made pursuant to the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 and the Library Charges (England and Wales) Regulations 1991 which authorise library authorities to impose charges for certain library facilities.

## **6.0 DETAIL**

### **6.1 Background**

- 6.1.1 The Library Service did not make any increase in fees and charges in 2002/3.
- 6.1.2 In 2001/2, the Library Service generated £552,623 in fees and charges. In 2002/3, this total reduced to £489,815 due to a change in hall hire policy as a result of customer complaints. Income from fees and charges constitutes approximately 11% of overall expenditure and is therefore a significant element within the Library Service budget.
- 6.1.3 The income projection for 2003/4 is £507,150, incorporating the increase in charges proposed in this report. Income is derived from the following categories: Video/DVD hire and overdues; tenants/lessees/halls hire; book overdue charges. It is intended to implement the increase in fees and charges for the library service to coincide with a proposed increase in opening hours across the borough in September 2003. The income projection is based on trends from previous years and anticipates the proposed increases.
- 6.1.4 Income may be affected by the following two factors:
- i) Film companies are imposing significant increases in the costs of purchasing of videos and DVDs to hire and this will impact on the number of videos and DVDs that the Library Service can purchase for customers to select from.
  - ii) DVDs are currently more expensive to purchase than videos and therefore the Library Service is able to buy a greater quantity of videos, which are still generating income. However, as videos will become less popular to hire, the Library Service will move to supplying DVDs and customers may be faced with less choice as a consequence of the cost of DVDs.
- Without a small increase in the rates of hire charges to compensate for the above factors, there may well be a decline in the quality of service offered and therefore a decline in income.

### **6.2 Charging principles and policy**

- 6.2.1 The proposals contained within this report are intended to optimise the income streams available in order to meet this year's income target of £507,150.
- 6.2.2 At the same time, officers have been mindful of the need to consider Council and Government objectives on social inclusion in relation to charging policies.
- 6.2.3 In keeping with the Council's Corporate Strategy key themes of promoting the quality of life, (with the action for the Library Service to increase the opening hours of local libraries and provide additional resources for new stock) and achieving service excellence, the Library Service's broad policy is to make its services easily accessible to all residents as well as achieving value for money. Clearly, access to library services, particularly by disadvantaged members of the community, is potentially limited by high fees and charges. The ability of users to pay and the desirability of ensuring that facilities are accessible to the community have therefore been key factors in determining officers' recommendations.

- 6.2.4 In developing their proposals, officers have also taken into account:
- i) Comparative charges made, for example, by neighbouring Boroughs or, where appropriate, by commercial competitors;
  - ii) The potential impact of increasing charges on use, income recovery rates, and stock retrieval rates;
  - iii) Public Library Standards (regulated under the Local Government Act 2000). The Library Service has specified targets to meet on the numbers of visitors to libraries by 2004. Fees and charges need to be in line with encouraging both physical visitors to the library and virtual visitors (e.g. to library website)
  - iv) The need to have consistent and standardised charges across the Service as a whole;
  - v) Clarity and ease of comprehension by customers and staff.

### **6.3 Proposed revisions**

6.3.1 The proposed fees and charges are set out in Appendix 1 and this includes a comparison with existing fees and charges. There is also a clarification on the age limits for concessionary charges, where they apply. Children under 12 are not charged at all. Children between the ages of 12 years old and 15 years old (inclusive) and senior citizens are charged at a concessionary rate. All other age bands are charged at the standard rate. The chart in Appendix 1 clearly identifies where concessionary rates apply.  
The key changes to existing fees & charges are explained in the following paragraphs:

#### **6.3.2 *Overdue charges***

Officers propose no increase in the charge levied on overdue books. Current charges are in line with other London boroughs.  
It is proposed to replace the pro rata daily overdue charge currently in operation for the hire of videos, DVDs and music, to a standard second week's charge. This change will bring the Library Service into line with some other London boroughs, and with commercial competitors, as well as clarifying and simplifying the charging system for customers and staff.

#### **6.3.3 *Lost Library Cards***

The proposal is to increase the charges for lost library cards from £1 to £1.50 for adults and from 50 pence to 75 pence for concessions. This increase reflects the increased costs of purchasing library cards.

#### **6.3.4 *Reservations***

It is proposed to increase the charge for reserving a book from 70p to 80p for adults with the concessionary rate increased from 30p to 40p. This increase brings us in line with our neighbouring boroughs and reflects the improved rate of supply of reserved materials since the establishment of a central stock supply unit and the stock consortium arrangements that are now in place in the Library Service.

### 6.3.5 *Videos/DVDs/music hire charges*

It is proposed to increase the hire charges for audiovisual materials in line with increases in purchase costs, whilst still comparing favourably with the charges made by commercial competitors. The proposals are as follows:

#### *Videos*

- To increase the charge for single films from the range £1-£ 1.50 to the range £1-£2.
- To increase the charges for double and current films from the range £1.50-£2 to the range £2-£2.50.
- To increase the charge for educational, children's and reduced rate videos from £0.50 to £0.75

#### *Music*

To remove the charge for cassettes as there are now very few in stock in the Library Service, since CDs have replaced cassettes in the market place. To increase the charge for CDs from 80 pence to 90 pence.

#### *DVDs*

DVDs are now available for hire from five Brent libraries and it is intended to extend the collections to other libraries in 2003/4. The proposal is to increase the charges form the range £2-£2.50 to the range £2-£3.

### 6.3.6 *Internet access and other ICT services*

The Library Service cannot make a charge for the use of any of the People's Network ICT provision in libraries, as a condition of receiving funding from the New Opportunities Fund to install the equipment in all libraries. The Library Service can charge for photocopying or printing. It is not proposed to make any change to charges for these services.

### 6.3.7 *Library Hire Charges*

No changes are proposed to the charges for hire of library halls/premises.

## **7.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The following papers were used in the compilation of this report:-

- i) Report 0165R to the Education, Arts & Libraries Deciding Committee 17<sup>th</sup> April 2002
- ii) Report 0032R to the Education, Arts & Libraries Deciding Committee 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2001

Any person wishing to inspect the above papers should contact, Head of Library Service, Marianne Locke, 8 937 3144. Fax 0208 937 3008. Chesterfield House, Wembley HA9 7RW

EXEC-23.06.03/0001R/ML//Lead Officer J. CHRISTIE

**LIBRARY SERVICE  
PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES 2003-4**

	<i>Existing fees &amp; charges</i>	<i>Proposed fees &amp; charges 03/04</i>
<b>Overdue books</b>	Adults – 15p Concs*. – 8p	<b>Adults - 15p Concs** – 8p</b>
<b>Overdue Videos/DVDs/Music</b>	Daily pro rata charge	<b>Standard second week's charge</b>
<b>Lost Library Card</b>	Adults – £1 Concs*. – 50p	<b>Adults - £1.50 Concs** – 75p</b>
<b>Lost/Damaged stock</b>	£4.00 min.	<b>£4.00 min.</b>
<b>Reservations</b>	Adults – 70p Concs*. – 30p	<b>Adults – 80p Concs** – 40p</b>
<b>Videos</b>	Single £1-£1.50 Double & current films £1.50 - £2 Educational, Children's & reduced rate 50p	<b>Single £ 1 - £2 Double &amp; current films £2 - £2.50 Educational, Children's &amp; reduced rate 75p</b>
<b>Music</b>	Cassette – 30p CD – 80p	<b>Cassette – free CD – 90p</b>
<b>DVDs</b>	£2-£2.50	<b>£2 – £3</b>
<b>WP/Internet/e-mail</b>	Free access. Floppy disks – 75p PC printing B/W – 10p Col. – 50p	<b>Free access. Floppy disks – 75p PC printing B/W – 10p Col. – 50p</b>
<b>Photocopying</b>	B/W A4 – 10p B/W A3 – 20p Col. A4 - £1.00 Col. A3 - £1.50	<b>B/W A4 – 10p B/W A3 – 20p Col. A4 - £1.00 Col. A3 - £1.50</b>

\* 02/03 Concessions: 12–14 yrs old and senior citizens, (under 12s no charge)

\*\* 03/04 Concessions: 12–15yrs old and senior citizens, (under 12s no charge)