

Brighton & Hove City Council

For general release

Meeting: Culture, Recreation & Tourism Committee

Date: 12 September 2007

Report of: Acting Director of Cultural Services

Subject: Libraries Fees and Charges

Ward(s) affected: All Wards

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To set out the proposed new fees and charges for Libraries for 2008-09, and to seek members approval.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to approve the proposed fees and charges for Libraries for 2008-09.
- 2.2 Members are asked to approve the allocation of the additional income generated to support the delivery of Library services in the city on, for example but not exclusively, the delivery of children's services and increasing the book stock.

3 Information

- 3.1 Under the Council's Financial Regulations and Standard Financial Procedures, this Service Committee must receive a report outlining any proposed price variations above or below the corporately applied rate of inflation.
- 3.2 As most Library Service charges are only a few pence, it is not possible to increase them annually by inflation. Instead, most prices are left unchanged for a number of years until an increase in real prices can be adopted. Such a revision is now due. There have been very limited rises in our fees and charges over the last six years with none at all last year. The price of music hire for example has not been increased since 2002.
- 3.3 The aims of the proposed package of fees and charges are to:
 - Remove the charging of fines to children

- Introduce a new audio visual discount subscription card for older people (people 60 years and over)
- Simplify and rationalise concessions on charges
- Maximise the use of our assets such as the Jubilee Library conference rooms
- Raise some prices in the light of the current market
- Maximise income generation opportunities to support the delivery of library services
- Use some of the additional income raised to supplement grant-funded services such as Bookstart, Homework clubs and Baby Boogie
- Use some of the additional income to increase spending on books to improve our performance against public library standards

3.4 A full list of Libraries fees and charges can be found in appendix 2. If the Committee approval is granted, the new prices would be implemented from 1 April 2008. Some of these charges could remain static until such time as the cumulative effect of inflationary increased makes it necessary to make further changes, but Members may wish to look at them again next year in the light of the impact of the many changes made for this year.

4 Details of the Proposals

4.1 Charges to Children

4.1.1 The new proposals are to

- Stop charging fines to children for the late return of children's books
- Stop charging fines for the late return of toys
- No increase in charges for loans or late return of DVDs and videos to children
- No increase in charges for loans or late return of Play Station games to children
- Children's books borrowed on adult tickets will still be subject to overdue fines

4.1.2 Removing fines on books borrowed by children will bring us into line with the neighbouring library authorities in East and West Sussex who currently do not charge any fines to children. Around half of the authorities in the southeast region do not charge fines to children.

4.2 Discount card for people 60 years and over

4.2.1 The new proposal is to introduce a new discount subscription card for people 60 years and over. This would enable cardholders to borrow music CDs at no cost, and DVDs at half price, up to four items at any one time. This discount subscription card will be available for an annual charge of £15 (half the standard price) or £5 per quarter (half the standard price).

4.2.2 Currently there are no discounts or concessions available for older people based simply on age. Older people are able to obtain an exempt ticket if they are visually impaired, and they are able to obtain a concessionary ticket if they are on low income or have a disability.

4.2.3 Most of the 19 library authorities in the region do not give any discount rates to those 60 years and over. Reading and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead give a 10% discount with their council discount card, and only Wokingham offer 50% discount on all charges to the over 60s.

4.3 **Concessions and exemptions:**

4.3.1 The new proposals are to

- Maintain exempt status ie free loan of books on CD or cassette for people who cannot use standard print. These borrowers would also not pay any fines for late return of print books or books on CD or cassette.
- Other than for people who cannot use standard print, delete the exempt status and introduce one simple concessionary rate on loan charges and fines to be available to disabled people and people on low income
- Concessionary rates would give half price on all loan charges and reservations

4.3.2 Currently there are a wide range of categories within exempt and concessionary status and it is complex and confusing for the public and for staff implementing these services. Exempt status was originally based on print disability (e.g. blind people, or people with visual impairment, or identified learning difficulties) which exempts the holder from all charges. People suffering from some other forms of disability currently receive exempt status, following appropriate verification. Concessionary status is currently based on low income and entitles the holder to half price on charges.

4.3.3 The new proposals are intended to simplify the system, and make it easier to understand in order to increase the take up of this entitlement. Unless current exempt cardholders are unable to use standard print, they will be moved to concessionary status to reflect the original intention of the introduction of exemptions and concessions. Libraries are required by law to lend books free of charge, so those who need access to books in another format should not have to pay for this service.

4.3.4 Most other authorities in the southeast region do not offer concessions or exemptions to anyone other than those who cannot use standard print. Only three others offer concessionary rates to disabled people and people on low incomes (Wokingham, Reading and Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead).

4.4 **Audio-visual materials**

4.4.1 The new proposals are to

- Maintain the price to children of hiring children's DVDs at £1.50
- Increase the price of a one week music CD hire from 80p to £1.00
- Increase the price of a one week DVD hire from £2.50 to £3.00
- Increase the price of annual subscriptions from £25 to £30
- Increase the price of quarterly subscriptions from £8 to £10

- Charges for the late return of audio-visual materials will also increase in line with the increase in hire charges
- All exempt and concessionary members, will pay a reduced rate of half price for audio-visual materials

4.4.2 There have been no increases in price since 2002, and the proposed prices still offer good value when compared with other high street outlets, where prices are around £3.50 - £4.00 for a loan period of only a day or two, as opposed to the cheaper priced one week loan on offer by libraries. Music CD hire is a unique service offered by public libraries, as there are no other places where people can hire music CDs. Income from audio-visual loans has always been seen by public libraries as a way of supplementing the costs of books and other library services, and this authority performs well in comparison with others in terms of value for money achieved through this source of income.

4.4.3 Other library authorities in the region charge between £2.20 and £3.60 per week loan for DVDs with some charging these prices for a one or two day loan. Charges for music CDs varies greatly between authorities, from 75p to £2 per loan, but loan periods varied from one to four weeks.

4.5 **Overdue charges**

4.5.1 The new proposals are to:

- Remove fines for the late return of books by children
- Reduce the charge made to adults for the late return of library books from 16p to 15p per day
- Increase the charge made for late return of music CDs from 16p to 20p per day
- Increase the charge made for late return of DVDs from 50p to 60p per day
- Exempt cardholders will pay no fines for late return of print books or talking books, but will pay full price fines on all other items
- Concessionary cardholders will pay full price overdue charges

4.5.2 Overdue charges in Brighton & Hove were last raised in 2006 when the charge was increased from 15p to 16p per day. One reason for reducing the charge for next year is so that we can attach coin-ops to the self-service machines in Jubilee and Hove libraries. The coin-ops will work most effectively if they are limited to silver coins. At the moment, people have to queue at a desk if they owe any money and so they cannot take advantage of the speed and convenience of the self-service stations.

4.5.3 Other authorities in the region charge between 5p and 18p per day overdue for books, with most charging 15p or 16p. Research indicates that if the overdue charge is too high it deters lower income borrowers from returning their books and deters them from using the library.

4.6 **Reservations**

4.6.1 The new proposals are to:

- Maintain free reservations for children
- Maintain free reservations on print and talking books for exempt card holders
- Introduce a charge of 50p for the reservation of items held in stock in Brighton & Hove Libraries
- Standardise the charge for the reservation of items held in other library authorities at £2.50
- Concessionary members will pay a reduced rate of half price

4.6.2 Currently Brighton & Hove Libraries received more than one and a half times the number of reservations of other library authority in our comparator group, with 83,000 reservations p.a., the next highest number received by a unitary authority is Leicester with just under 50,000. The cost of dealing with these reservations is an estimated 70p per internal reservation and £14 for loans from outside of this authority. The new rates for reservations will contribute towards the costs, and may help keep the numbers of reservations down to a more manageable level. This will help us to meet one of the Public Library Service Standards, which is to provide all reservations within a limited number of days.

4.6.3 All but four other authorities in the region make a charge for reserving their own stock, with charges ranging from 30p to £1.00. All authorities charge for external interlibrary loans, ranging from 40p to £3.00 with most around £2.00.

4.7 Room hire charges

4.7.1 The new proposals are to increase the commercial hire rates significantly in line with what the market will take in order to maximise income. Rates for community and council hire are also being increased. The increase in the rates for the double room is higher than the other rooms, as the previous rates were pitched at too low a level. The double room is when the larger and smaller rooms are used as one, and the rate charged should reflect that a double room hire takes away the option to hire the rooms separately. The rates were originally set before Jubilee opened and we had no idea how popular these facilities would be, and so they were set at a cautious level. It is now time to set the charges in line with market rates. We are also seeking to introduce a small charge for the use of other spaces in Jubilee library, such as the children's activity area, by external organisations. See appendix 2 for full list.

4.7.2 Room hire rates in libraries other than Jubilee are at a much lower level, and have been increased to standardise the rate for each session:

- Commercial hire increased to £60 per session
- Community/council hire increased to £25 per session

4.7.3 Comparisons with other room hire: Most other library authorities only have rooms similar to those in our community libraries, and their hire rates are similar to those we are proposing, with commercial/community rates ranging from £220/£80 to £140/£10 per day, often with additional charges for use of equipment. Comparison with other local facilities is more useful, though other venues often charge on a per delegate basis. Estimating equivalent costs would indicate that commercial

providers (hotels, racecourse, universities) costs for similar capacity rooms are around £675 per day. Jubilee Library is more expensive than some other council run premises, but our facilities are often a higher standard, or larger, and our charges include use of equipment. (Comparisons made with Hove Town Hall, and Moulsecomb Learning Development Centre)

4.8 Exhibitions

4.8.1 The new proposals are to introduce a charge for providing exhibition space in Jubilee Library, the rates being £100 per week for commercial hire and £50 per week for community/council use.

4.8.2 Since opening, we have received significant interest in using Jubilee Library for exhibitions, with 25 held last year. It can cost between £18 and £370 in staffing costs alone to support the setting up of these exhibitions, with the average cost being around £82.

5 Miscellaneous charges

5.1 Public Libraries often run free events and activities for library users, but occasionally we have to make a small charge to cover costs, such as at some of our highly successful WORD events over the last two years. The range of events that we have to consider making a charge for may expand, and we are introducing two new areas for next year:

- Tours of Jubilee Library (excluding tours for local residents, other library authorities and some professional colleagues) - £25 per tour to cover staff costs
- Charge per buggy at Baby Boogie sessions - £1 per buggy regardless of number of children

5.2 We have been fortunate in attracting grant funding for Baby Boogie for the last five years, but we are unlikely to achieve continued grant funding for this activity beyond March 2008. Our provision is much more than the simple rhyme sessions run in other library authorities. Baby Boogie delivers regular structured pre-school music singing and rhyme sessions in 10 libraries and a range of pre-school settings by an experienced project worker. In addition, there is a free pre-school loan service of instruments available to individuals, families and groups, backed up by related CDs and books for loan as well as updated written support material on a range of skills from singing with your baby to how to run a music and rhyme session. As well as delivering and managing these services, the project worker also promotes the services widely at community festivals and play-days in the park, and does training for pre-school settings workers in singing with babies and guidance in how music and rhyme assists early literacy and numeracy and social skills.

6 Implications / risk management

- 6.1 Removal of fines to children, and reduction of fines to adults: We are expecting to receive positive reaction from the public. Loss of income estimated at £14,000, which can be covered by the other increases indicated in this package.
- 6.2 Discount subscription card for people 60 and over: We would hope to receive positive reaction from the public. Impact on income is difficult to estimate as it depends on take up but if even only a small percentage of older people take up the discount the new income would be higher than the current single issues of audio-visual items. There would be a potential increase in issues of audio-visual items to older people, which would benefit our performance targets and provide additional listening pleasure to older people at no extra cost.
- 6.3 Simplification of concessions and exemptions, and introduction of half price charge for CDs and DVDs to exempt borrowers (excluding talking books which will remain free): There are currently 871 members with exempt status, all of whom borrow AV material and 236 borrowed more than 10 items last year, all at no cost. Those who borrow high numbers of AV items will be encouraged to take up the subscription card offers, and as exempt cardholders they will get these cards at half price (£15 p.a. or £5 p.q.) The subscription cards enable people to get free CD loans and half price DVD loans, thus still being offered a good deal in comparison with standard members.
- 6.4 Audio-visual loans: Potential increase in income is estimated at £65,000 based on current borrowing levels. Although music downloading has made inroads into the singles market, album sales have stayed strong, and public libraries are the only place people can borrow music CDs as an alternative to buying music. DVD hire remains popular, and public libraries are able to compete with high street outlets by offering cheaper loans for longer periods.
- 6.5 Reservations: Many people are currently surprised to find that we currently do not charge for this service, unlike most other library authorities where charges are standard. Most reservations are for Jubilee stock made by Jubilee customers, and if people want to avoid paying a reservation charge, they are free to find the book they want for themselves. Now that the majority of stock is on open access, borrowers can help themselves to the books they want to borrow. Even if the numbers of reservations are reduced by half, this new charge will bring in an estimated £20,000
- 6.6 Room hire charges: At the moment we are able to hire out Jubilee rooms successfully with no marketing being done, and last year we had over 500 room bookings (including reduced price and free events). We are confident that with some effective marketing we can at least maintain our current levels of bookings even with this price increase. With the rates at this higher level, if necessary we can always negotiate with potential customers in order to secure a booking. On the basis of current bookings we estimate to increase income by an estimated £12,000 p.a.

- 6.7 Important children's services such as Bookstart and Homework Clubs have been funded for the last five or six years through mainly grant funding. It is becoming increasingly difficult to continue to attract grant funding for the continuation of these services, so it is necessary for us to raise income to deliver them, or stop them altogether. Raising income in the package of measures outlined in this report is one way of securing these vital services for the medium term. Where other funding is attracted from external sources for children's services, the additional income raised from our revenue streams will be directed into the purchase of more books for our libraries.
- 6.8 Charges for Baby Boogie: We are usually over-subscribed for this activity, with some parents taking their children to different venues on a regular basis. If we are able to identify another source of funding we will not introduce this charge, and we hope to keep provision in community libraries free. If it is introduced, attendees will be alerted to the new charge well in advance so they can choose not to attend if they prefer not to pay.
- 6.9 In all cases, we take a flexible approach to our fees and charges, ensuring that people are not unfairly charged, and encouraging the development of special offers to help market our added-value services.

Appendix 1

Meeting/Date	Culture, Recreation & Tourism Committee 12 September 2007	
Report of	Acting Director of Cultural Services	
Subject	Libraries Fees and Charges	
Wards affected	All Wards	
Financial implications	<p>The 2007/08 budget target for libraries customer income is £365k, and the service is on course to make a small shortfall, of approximately £10k. Inflationary increases in income budgets expected in 2008/09 would raise the target a further 2.5% to £374k, £383k in 2009/10 and £393k in 2010/11. Thus the total shortfall over the next three years given current fees and charges levels would equate to £19k in 2008/09, £28k in 2009/10 and £38k in 2010/11.</p> <p>The proposed price rises in this report would expect to deliver an increase in income of approximately £84k each year, broken down as follows: Reservations £20k, Audio Visual £60k, Room Hire £12k, Exhibitions £2k, Baby Boogie £4k, Reduced Fines £-14k</p> <p>Accountant consulted: Patrick Rice Date: 14 August 2007</p>	
Legal implications	<p>There are no direct legal implications nor are there are any adverse Human Rights Act implications arising from this report.</p> <p>Lawyer consulted: Dianne Bates Date: 8th August 2007</p>	
Corporate/Citywide implications	<p>Proposals deliver corporate priorities of support for children and young people and care for vulnerable people through the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • removal of children's fines for overdue books and toys • implementation of concessions and exemptions that focus on people with disabilities and low income • new discount card for older people • investment of additional income in children's services and more books 	Risk assessment
Sustainability implications	<p>There are no sustainability implications.</p>	<p>Equalities implications</p> <p>Proposals are in line with equalities policies, reducing charges to children, and focussing exemptions and concessions on people with disabilities and low income. Introduction of new discount card for older people improves support for this targeted group.</p>
Implications for the prevention of crime and disorder: None		
Background papers <i>[Part 1 reports only]</i>		
Contact Officers		
<p>Scott Marshall, Acting Director Cultural Services, ext 1100</p> <p>Sally McMahon, Head of Libraries and Information Services, ext 6963</p>		

Appendices

Appendix 2: Full list of Libraries Fees and Charges

Appendix 2

LIBRARY SERVICE PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES 2008-2009

SUMMARY OF CHARGES FOR LIBRARY SERVICES:			
	Current	Last changed	Proposed
RESERVATION CHARGES			
Items in stock in Brighton & Hove	free	2004 (reduced)	50p
Items in stock in East Sussex, West Sussex and Surrey	70p	2000	£2.50
Inter-library loans outside East Sussex, West Sussex and Surrey	£2.50	2006	£2.50
Exempt Card Holders - print and talking books	Free	Pre 1997	Free
Exempt Card Holders - all other materials	Free	Pre 1997	Half price
Concessionary Card Holders	Half price	Pre 1997	Half price
LOST ITEMS - CHARGES			
Books and other resources (all members)	Replacement cost	Pre 1997	Replacement cost
Computer ticket replacement (all members)	£1.00	Pre 2000	£1.00
TALKING BOOKS CHARGES			
Spoken word recordings (abridged editions) Single Issue Fee per 3 week loan	80p	Pre 2000	80p
Spoken word recordings (unabridged editions) Single Issue Fee per 3 week loan	£1.50	2002	£1.50
Spoken word loans to exempt card holders	Free	Pre 1997	Free
Spoken word loans to concessionary card holders	Half price	Pre 1997	Half price
Language courses per 3 weeks (all members)	£2.00	Pre 2000	£2.00
AUDIO VISUAL AND MUSIC CHARGES			
Annual Subscription (enabling free CD loan and half price DVDs)	£25.00	2001	£30.00
Quarterly subscription (enabling free CD loan and half price DVDs)	£8.00	2001	£10.00
Music recordings Single Issue Fee for one week loan	80p	2002	£1.00
Scores per set - per month	£5.00	2002	£5.00
Video loans to adults per week	£2.00	Pre 2000	£1.00
DVD loans to adults - Hire charge per week	£2.50	Pre 2000	£3.00
DVD loans to children - Hire charge per week	£1.50	2005 (reduced)	£1.50
All audio-visual loans to concessionary card holders	Half price	Pre 1997	Half price
All audio-visual loans to exempt card holders	Free	Pre 1997	Half price

Appendix 2

GAMES CHARGES			
Play Station 2 Games - Hire charge per week (all members)	£3.00	2005 new service	£3.00
OVERDUE CHARGES			
	Current		Proposed
Books on loan to adults - overdue charge per book per day with maximum charge of £6 per loan	16p	2006	15p
Books on loan to children - overdue charge per day	3p	Pre 2000	No charge
Videos on loan to adults - overdue charge per video per day	20p	2001	20p
Music CDs on loan to adults - overdue charge per CD per day - (all members)	16p	2002	20p
Toys - overdue charge per day	3p	Pre 2000	No charge
DVDs on loan to adults - overdue charge per day - (all members)	50p	Pre 2000	60p
DVDs on loan to children - overdue charge per day	30p	2005 (reduced)	30p
Books and talking books on loan to Exempt card holders - overdue charges	Free	Pre 1997	Free
PlayStation Games - overdue charges per day (all members)	60p	New2005	60p
PRINTING, COPYING AND SENDING FAXES			
All charges apply to all library users:			
Printing from IT equipment (charge per sheet)-black	10p	2002 (reduced)	10p
Printing from IT equipment (charge per sheet)-colour	50p	2000	50p
Photocopier charges A4 black and white	10p	Pre 2000	10p
A3 black and white	15p	Pre 2000	15p
A4 colour	£1.00	Pre 2000	£1.00
A3 colour	£1.50	Pre 2000	£1.50
Reader printer (Jubilee and Hove Libraries) per A4 sheet	25p	Pre 2000	50p
Reader printer (Brighton History Centre) per A4 sheet	80p	2006	80p
Fax - sending - per page	£1.00	2001 (reduced)	£1.00
Fax - receiving - per page	£1.00 in total plus postage	Pre 2000	10p plus £2 handling charge

Appendix 2

SUMMARY OF FEES FOR ADDITIONAL SERVICES:			
RESEARCH FEES			
Research carried out by Library staff for private individual - flat rate fee per hour, plus any online fees, copying or printing costs.	£10	Pre 2000	£10
Research carried out by Library staff for business/commercial user - flat rate fee per hour, plus any online fees, copying or printing costs.	£20	2006	£20
Reader printers - extended use for researchers (per ½ day)	£5.00	2001(new)	No charge
EXHIBITIONS	Current		Proposed
Jubilee Library - commercial hire - fee per week	N/A	New	£100
Jubilee Library - community/council hire - fee per week	N/A	New	£50
Hove Library - fee per week	N/A	New	£20
Hove Library - Hire of display cabinets - fee per week per cabinet	£7.50	Pre 2000	£10
Above costs are within core library opening hours. Additional Facilities Management costs apply if access required outside these hours.			
HIRE OF LIBRARY PREMISES			
- Charge per Session (other than Jubilee Library)			
Commercial hire Morning	£50	2001	£60
Afternoon	£50	2001	£60
Evening	£50	2004	£60
Community/council use Morning	£20	2001	£25
Afternoon	£20	2001	£25
Evening	£15	2001	£25
Suitable premises are Hangleton training room, Patcham ICT training room and Libraries on closed days. Hire charges (exclusive of V.A.T.) includes use of all facilities including IT at no extra cost. Library reserves right to pass on any additional costs incurred as a result of use, e.g. cleaning.			
HIRE OF JUBILEE LIBRARY CONFERENCE ROOMS AND LEARNING CENTRE			
Commercial hire - double room - full day	£250	2006	£575
Commercial hire - double room - half day	£165	2006	£380
Commercial hire - large room - full day	£200	2006	£320
Commercial hire - large room - half day	£135	2006	£220
Commercial hire - small room and learning centre - full day	£180	2006	£290
Commercial hire - small room and learning centre - half day	£110	2006	£180
Community/council use double room - full day	£175	2006	£400

Appendix 2

Community/council use double room - half day	£125	2006	£290
Community/council use large room - full day	£135	2006	£220
Community/council use large room - half day	£90	2006	£140
Community/council use small room and learning centre - full day	£110	2006	£180
Community/council use small room and learning centre - half day	£70	2006	£110
Evening supplement for all hires per hour	£10	2006	£20
Activity space in children's library - hire per hour	N/A	New	£25
<p>Hire costs (exclusive of V.A.T.) includes use of all facilities including presentation and IT equipment at no extra cost.</p> <p>Above costs are within core library opening hours. Additional Facilities Management costs apply outside these hours.</p>			
MISCELLANEOUS	Current		Proposed
Events and activities – while many are provided free to library users, sometimes a small charge is made to help cover costs.	Variable		Variable
Tours of Jubilee Library – (except for Brighton & Hove residents, other library authorities, and some professional colleagues, who will not be charged)	Free	New	£25
Baby Boogie – charge per buggy regardless of number of children	Free	New	£1
IMAGE REQUESTS – SERVICE FEES	See separate fee list	2006	See separate fee list
REPRODUCTION CHARGES	See separate fee list	2006	See separate fee list

SUMMARY OF CONCESSIONS AND EXEMPTIONS	
EXEMPT CARD HOLDERS	
Exempt cards are only available for people who cannot use standard print – e.g. people with visual impairment, or people with identified learning difficulties. Suitable proof of entitlement is required. (See list of accepted proofs)	
Card holder entitlement:	
Talking books – issues and overdue charges	Free
Reservations – print and talking books	Free
Reservations – all other materials	Half price
Audio-visual materials	Half price
Overdue charges on audio-visual materials	Full price
Language courses and Games – hire charges and overdue charges	Full price
All other fees and charges	Full price
CONCESSIONARY CARD HOLDERS	

Appendix 2

Concessionary cards are for people on low income or for people with disabilities. Suitable proof of entitlement is required. (See list of accepted proofs)	
Card holder entitlement:	
Audio-visual materials, talking books, - hire charges	Half price
Reservations - all materials	Half price
All overdue charges	Full price
Language courses and Games - hire charges and overdue charges	Full price
All other fees and charges	Full price