

KEY DECISION TAKEN BY AN OFFICER UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

See over for instructions on how to use this form – all parts of this form must be completed. Type all information in the boxes. The boxes will expand to accommodate extra lines where needed.

1. Title of report

Library & Heritage Service Fees & Charges Review 2019/20

2. Reason for exemption (if any)

Not applicable

3. Decision maker

Hannah Doody – Director of Community & Housing

4. Date of Decision

7 June 2019

5. Date report made available to decision maker

30 May 2019

6. Decision

Approved

7. Reason for decision

Approved in order to ensure that the service continues to maintain a balanced budget whilst maintaining charges at comparable levels to other boroughs.

8. Alternative options considered and why rejected

Alternative options detailed in the report. Fee increases benchmarked with neighbouring boroughs and relevant organisations.

9. Documents relied on in addition to officer report

Appendix 1 – Comparison of charges from previous year

10. Declarations of Interest

None identified

11. Signature

Signature

Date 7 June 2019



12. Publication of this decision and call in provision

Send this form and the officer report to democratic.services@merton.gov.uk for publication. Publication will take place within two days. The call-in deadline will be at Noon on the third working day following publication.

IMPORTANT – this decision should not be implemented until the call-in period has elapsed.

Committee: Chief Officer (key decision)

Date: 7 June 2019

Wards: All

Subject: Library & Heritage Service Fees & Charges Review 2019/20

Lead officer: Anthony Hopkins, Head of Library, Heritage & Adult Education Service

Lead member: Councillor Caroline Cooper-Marbiah, Cabinet Member for Commerce, Leisure and Culture

Contact officer: Anthony Hopkins, Head of Library, Heritage & Adult Education Service

Recommendations:

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1. That the proposed changes as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report are accepted.
 2. That the changes are implemented from 24 June 2019.
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1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. An annual review of Merton libraries fees and charges is undertaken in order to ensure the charges are in line with inflation and are benchmarked against neighbouring authorities.
- 1.2. It is the recommendation of this paper and detailed in Appendix 1 that some fees and charges are increased in 2019/20 and some services are withdrawn. Where charges are recommended to be increased these are to reflect increased supply costs or as a result of benchmarking analysis. Where services are to be withdrawn this is to reflect the changing technological environment we work in and subsequent lack of demand (e.g. withdrawal of fax services).

2 DETAILS

- 2.1. The local authority's power to raise charges relating to library services is laid out in the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964. It is stipulated that the lending of books and access to information must be offered free at the point of delivery to people living, working and/or studying within the borough. For other or extended services fees and charges may be imposed.
- 2.2. The purpose of imposing fees and charges is not solely related to income generation – they can act as an encouragement to ensure borrowed items are returned on time to be available to other users, and they can help to offset the cost of new services particularly where these have been introduced within existing funding. Maximising the service's funding falls within the remit of providing value for money.
- 2.3. As outlined in Appendix 1 some fees and charges are proposed to be increased in 2019/20 and some services withdrawn.

- 2.4. Adult fines have not been increased in 3 years. In this time many neighbouring authorities have increased their charges and the proposal to increase adult library fines by 2p per day would bring Merton's charges into the median average with neighbouring boroughs.
- 2.5. No changes are proposed for children's fines. Fines are not applied to Merton school pupils who are signed-up to the Merton Schools and Libraries Membership Scheme, which all schools in the borough participate in.
- 2.6. The Merton Arts Spaces were launched in 2016. These spaces provide professional facilities for a range of cultural activities at community prices. The pricing for these spaces is proposed to increase to reflect pricing of similar spaces in the local area and increased operating costs. Room hire available at other libraries is also proposed to be increased in line with the Merton Arts Space pricing.
- 2.7. Charging for the People's Network has been considered but is not proposed. Considerable capital outlay would be required to undertake this and it is likely to deter those in most need of accessing information digitally through libraries. The service is in the process of rolling out cashless payment systems for all People's Network transactions to make it easier for customers to pay.
- 2.8. The launch of the new library system platform (LSP) including a new library website is supporting customers to avoid paying overdue charges. Customer notifications both prior to and after items have become overdue have increased and a new customer app will give customers more choice to renew items and complete other transactions.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1. **Maintain or reduce fees and charges.** This would be beneficial to customers who either borrow chargeable items or return stock late and incur fines or hire space but would have a detrimental impact on the libraries budget due to increased operating costs. The service relies on income from fees and charges collected and any reduction in income would lead to savings being required elsewhere.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 4.1. Satisfaction with library services is measured via the Annual Residents Survey. A detailed user survey is conducted every 3 years to gain customers views on the Library & Heritage Service. Any significant changes to service delivery are consulted on via a range of communication channels.
- 4.2. Comments, complaints and compliments from customers relating to fees and charges were considered when preparing this report.

5 TIMETABLE

- 5.1. New fees and charges as recommended in this paper are to be implemented on 24 June 2019.

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. Appendix 1 sets out the new charges for 2019/20. The proposals will ensure that the service achieves a balanced budget whilst maintaining fees and charges at a comparable level to other boroughs.

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. The relevant legislation to the imposition of charges is the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 (The Act) and the Library Charges (England and Wales) Regulations 1991/2712 (The Regulations).
- 7.2. Section 7(1) of the Act imposes a duty on a library authority to make facilities for the borrowing of books and other materials available to those who live or whose place of work is within the library area of the authority or who are undergoing full-time education within that area.
- 7.3. Under Section 8(2) of the Act, the Secretary of State may by regulations specify charges libraries can make.
- 7.4. However, Section 8 (3) of the Act prohibits charging for lending any written material - (S8(7) of the Act defines written material as book, journal, pamphlet or other similar article) where the authority is lending written material to any person:
- (i) who is owed a duty by the authority under S7(1);
 - (ii) where the material is lent in the course of providing such facilities to that person on any library premises;
 - (iii) where the material is lent in a form in which it can be read without the use of any electronic or other apparatus; and
 - (iv) where that person is not a person who has required such apparatus to be used or made available to them for putting the material into such a form in order that they can borrow it.

S8(4) of the Act prohibits charging for the use of written reference material which is readable without the use of any electronic or other apparatus or in microform. Charges can also not be made for consulting catalogues, indexes or similar articles as are maintained, in whatever form they are kept, exclusively for the purpose of the authority's public library service.

- 7.5. The Secretary of State has specified in paragraph 3 in the Library Charges (England and Wales) Regulations 1991/2712 what can be charged for. The proposed fees and charges in Appendix 1 to this report are charges permitted by the Regulations.
- 7.6. Paragraph 4(1) of the Regulations relate to the amount and incidence of the charges. Under Paragraph 4 (1) of the Regulations, the amount that can be charged is at the discretion of the authority. Paragraph 4(2) of the Regulations also enables an authority to:

- (i) make different provisions for different cases including different provision in relation to different persons, circumstances or localities; and
- (ii) make charges in respect of each use of the library facilities made available by it, or charge an annual subscription or a deposit in respect of all or some of such facilities.

7.7 Paragraph 5 of the Regulations states that the authority shall display in a conspicuous place within each library premises a notice which has the charges displayed on it.

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

8.1. No issues identified as part of this report.

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

9.1. No issues identified as part of this report.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

10.1. Risks relate to the user's willingness to pay the charge and their decision on whether to use the service. Raising the charges too high will lead to a decline in use, which is counterproductive. However, a subsidised service (e.g. for British Library items) could lead to high expenditure commitments on the part of the service and costs are imposed to reflect the cost incurred by providing each service.

10.2. A risk management plan is maintained by the Library & Heritage Service. No health and safety implications have been identified in this report.

11 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

J Appendix 1 – Proposed Fees and Charges 2019/20

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1. None included.

APPENDIX 1: PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES 2019/20

	Current Charges	Proposed 19/20	Comments
OVERDUE CHARGES			
Adult books	25p per day	27p per day	Proposed change to reflect benchmarking with neighbouring authorities
Magazines	25p per day	27p per day	Proposed change to reflect benchmarking with neighbouring authorities
CDs, 3-week loan DVDs, videos	25p per day	27p per day	Proposed change to reflect benchmarking with neighbouring authorities
Talking books (spoken word)	25p per day	27p per day	Proposed change to reflect benchmarking with neighbouring authorities
Children's and teenage books / tapes (0-17)	7p per day	7p per day	No change
DVDs	Full rental charge (50p - £2.50)	Full rental charge (50p - £2.50)	No change
LOST ITEMS			
Lost ticket replacement	£3	£3	No change
Stock (in print)	Replacement cost (plus 10% admin charge)	Replacement cost (plus 10% admin charge)	No change
Stock (out of print)	Replacement cost (plus 10% admin charge)	Replacement cost (plus 10% admin charge)	No change
RESERVATIONS			
Standard reservation (adults)	£1.30 for postal notification , 60p for web reservation, no postage	£1.30 for postal notification , 60p for web reservation, no postage	No change
Standard reservation (children and young people under the age of 18)	No charge (limited to 2 free reservations placed at one time)	No charge (limited to 2 free reservations placed at one time)	No change
Items supplied by libraries outside Merton via Interloans System	£6.00 plus standard reservation charge	£6.00 plus standard reservation charge	No Change
Items and articles supplied via British Library	£14.30 per item plus standard reservation charge	£14.30 per item plus standard reservation charge	No change
PEOPLE'S NETWORK			
Use of computers	No charge	No charge	No change
Computer Printouts (b/w A4)	15p	15p	No change
Computer Printouts (colour A4)	50p	50p	No change
Computer printouts (b/w A3)	30p	30p	No change
Computer printouts (colour b/w A3)	£1	£1	No change
A4 b/w	10p	10p	No change
A3 b/w	20p	20p	
A4 colour	50p	50p	
A3 colour	£1	£1	
FAX			
Local	£1.10 for the first sheet, 60p for each extra sheet	N/A	Withdraw fax services as this is no longer required by customers
Rest of UK	£1.50 for the first sheet, 75p for each	N/A	Withdraw fax services as this is no longer

	extra sheet		required by customers
Western Europe	£2.50 for the first sheet, £1.25 for each extra sheet	N/A	Withdraw fax services as this is no longer required by customers
USA	£3 for the first sheet, £1.50 for each extra sheet	N/A	Withdraw fax services as this is no longer required by customers
Rest of world	£3.50 for the first sheet, £2 for each extra sheet	N/A	Withdraw fax services as this is no longer required by customers
Receiving faxes	£2 flat charge	N/A	Withdraw fax services as this is no longer required by customers
ADVERTISING			
Via internal boards	£3 per week	£3 per week	No change
SPACE HIRE			
All libraries (where hall space is available)	£22 per hour (£32 out of hours, minimum 2 hour booking) Sunday £42 per hour <i>20% concession for voluntary groups, residents' associations and statutory bodies.</i>	£23 per hour (£33 out of hours, minimum 2 hour booking) Sunday £43 per hour <i>20% concession for voluntary groups, residents' associations and statutory bodies.</i>	Increase hourly charges by £1 per hour to reflect rates by other providers along with increased operating costs
Merton Arts Spaces	Main space Wimbledon Library (only available out of library opening hours): £70 per hour Exhibition Room 1: £22 per hour (£32 out of hours, minimum 2 hour booking); Sunday £42 per hour Exhibition Room 2: £22 per hour (£32 out of hours, minimum 2 hour booking); Sunday £42 per hour Arts Space at Mitcham Library £22 per hour (£32 out of hours, minimum 2 hour booking); Sunday £42 per hour <i>20% concession for voluntary groups, residents' associations and statutory bodies.</i>	Main space Wimbledon library (only available out of library opening hours): £75 per hour Exhibition Room 1: £23 per hour (£33 out of hours, minimum 2 hour booking); Sunday £43 per hour Exhibition Room 2: £23 per hour (£33 out of hours, minimum 2 hour booking); Sunday £43 per hour Arts Space at Mitcham Library £23 per hour (£33 out of hours, minimum 2 hour booking); Sunday £43 per hour <i>20% concession for voluntary groups, residents' associations and statutory bodies.</i>	Increased charges to reflect rates offered by other providers along with increased operating costs
LOAN CHARGES			
Projector hire	£15 per session	£15 per session	No change
Microphone / PA hire	£15 per session	£15 per session	No change
CDs	£1.50	£1.50	No change
CD sets	£2.50	£2.50	No change
Talking books (spoken word)	£1.50	£1.50	No change
Language courses	£1.50	£1.50	No change
Language courses (12 week loan)	£10	£10	No change
DVDs	50p - £2.50	50p - £2.50	No change

HERITAGE AND LOCAL STUDIES CHARGES			
Enquiries under 15 minutes	Free	Free	No change
Research	£20 per half hour	£20 per half hour	No change
Photocopies	A4 10p A3 20p A4 25p (from microfilm / fiche printer) A3 50p (from microfilm / fiche printer)	A4 10p A3 20p A4 25p (from microfilm / fiche printer) A3 50p (from microfilm / fiche printer)	No change
LSC photo scanning (sent as e-mail attachment)	£6 - £15 (depending on amount and size)	£6 - £15 (depending on amount and size)	No change
Merton Memories website prints	£11.50 for 4"x6" print (plus £3.50 P&P) £14.50 for a 10"x8" print (plus £3.50 P&P) Each additional print in an order will incur a £1 postage and packaging charge.	£11.50 for 4"x6" print (plus £3.50 P&P) £14.50 for a 10"x8" print (plus £3.50 P&P) Each additional print in an order will incur a £1 postage and packaging charge.	No change
OTHER			
Pencil	10p	10p	No change
Biro (blue / black)	15p	15p	No change
A4 brown envelopes	40p	40p	No change
A4 plain paper	5p (or 20p for 5 sheets)	5p (or 20p for 5 sheets)	No change
A4 plastic sleeve	20p	20p	No change
A4 plastic sleeve with punched pocket	20p	20p	No change
COMMERCIAL SERVICES			
Promotional space	£20 per hour or £50 to £60 per day (depending upon library).	£20 per hour or £50 to £60 per day (depending upon library).	No change
Advertising on Merton Library Plasma screens	All libraries £10 per week per Powerpoint slide.	All libraries £10 per week per Powerpoint slide.	No change
Poster board and leaflet displays	£10 per week for displaying A3 posters and £7 per week for displaying A4/5 leaflets	£10 per week for displaying A3 posters and £7 per week for displaying A4/5 leaflets	No change

Concessions in charging

Visually impaired adults and over 60's: free borrowing of talking books but fines apply.

Visually impaired teens: free borrowing of talking books but fines apply.

Visually impaired children: free borrowing of children's talking books but fines apply.

Visually impaired adults: free borrowing of CD's.

Merton Council - call-in request form

1. Decision to be called in: (required)

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2. Which of the principles of decision making in Article 13 of the constitution has not been applied? (required)

Required by part 4E Section 16(c)(a)(ii) of the constitution - tick all that apply:

(a) proportionality (i.e. the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome);	
(b) due consultation and the taking of professional advice from officers;	
(c) respect for human rights and equalities;	
(d) a presumption in favour of openness;	
(e) clarity of aims and desired outcomes;	
(f) consideration and evaluation of alternatives;	
(g) irrelevant matters must be ignored.	

3. Desired outcome

Part 4E Section 16(f) of the constitution- select one:

(a) The Panel/Commission to refer the decision back to the decision making person or body for reconsideration, setting out in writing the nature of its concerns.	
(b) To refer the matter to full Council where the Commission/Panel determines that the decision is contrary to the Policy and/or Budget Framework	
(c) The Panel/Commission to decide not to refer the matter back to the decision making person or body *	
* If you select (c) please explain the purpose of calling in the decision.	

4. Evidence which demonstrates the alleged breach(es) indicated in 2 above (required)

Required by part 4E Section 16(c)(a)(ii) of the constitution:

5. Documents requested

6. Witnesses requested

7. Signed (not required if sent by email):

8. Notes – see part 4E section 16 of the constitution

Call-ins must be supported by at least three members of the Council.

The call in form and supporting requests must be received by 12 Noon on the third working day following the publication of the decision.

The form and/or supporting requests must be sent:

-) **EITHER** by email from a Councillor’s email account (no signature required) to democratic.services@merton.gov.uk
-) **OR** as a signed paper copy to the Head of Democracy Services, 7th floor, Civic Centre, London Road, Morden SM4 5DX.

For further information or advice contact the Head of Democracy Services on
020 8545 3864