

Section 4

Equality

Analysis Toolkit

Cultural Services fees and charges review

For Decision Making Items

November 2011

What is the Purpose of the Equality Decision-Making Analysis?

The Analysis is designed to be used where a decision is being made at Cabinet Member or Overview and Scrutiny level or if a decision is being made primarily for budget reasons. The Analysis should be referred to on the decision making template (e.g. E6 form).

When fully followed this process will assist in ensuring that the decision-makers meet the requirement of section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need: to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other unlawful conduct under the Act; to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Having due regard means analysing, at each step of formulating, deciding upon and implementing policy, what the effect of that policy is or may be upon groups who share these protected characteristics defined by the Equality Act. The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, race, sex, religion or belief, sexual orientation or pregnancy and maternity – and in some circumstances marriage and civil partnership status.

It is important to bear in mind that "due regard" means the level of scrutiny and evaluation that is reasonable and proportionate in the particular context. That means that different proposals, and different stages of policy development, may require more or less intense analysis. Discretion and common sense are required in the use of this tool.

It is also important to remember that what the law requires is that the duty is fulfilled in substance – not that a particular form is completed in a particular way. It is important to use common sense and to pay attention to the context in using and adapting these tools.

This process should be completed with reference to the most recent, updated version of the Equality Analysis Step by Step Guidance (to be distributed) or EHRC guidance - [EHRC - New public sector equality duty guidance](#)

Document 2 "Equality Analysis and the Equality Duty: Guidance for Public Authorities" may also be used for reference as necessary.

This toolkit is designed to ensure that the section 149 analysis is properly carried out, and that there is a clear record to this effect. The Analysis should be completed in a timely, thorough way and should inform the whole of the decision-making process. It must be considered by the person making the final decision and must be made available with other documents relating to the decision.

The documents should also be retained following any decision as they may be requested as part of enquiries from the Equality and Human Rights Commission or Freedom of Information requests.

Support and training on the Equality Duty and its implications is available from the County Equality and Cohesion Team by contacting

AskEquality@lancashire.gov.uk

Specific advice on completing the Equality Analysis is available from your Directorate contact in the Equality and Cohesion Team or from Jeanette Binns

Jeanette.binns@lancashire.gov.uk

Name/Nature of the Decision

Cultural Services fees and charges review – removal of exemptions from fines for people who are 65 and those who have or consider themselves to have a disability.

All members will pay the appropriate fee for audio visual items with the exception of:

- Visually impaired members
- Members with dyslexia or who have a disability which significantly impairs their ability to read standard print materials
- Members who are deaf and/or hard of hearing

What in summary is the proposal being considered?

To introduce a change to overdue charges so that they are applicable to all customers aged 18 and over. The only exceptions will be home library service and mobile library service users. These services are offered to users for less than the minimum of 11 hours because they are not static services and therefore we do not charge.

The requirement for all members to pay the appropriate fee for audio visual items with the exception of those groups detailed above is thought to be a reasonable one after giving due regard to all groups of people with protected characteristics who may be disadvantaged by this decision. The proposal therefore continues to exempt a number of groups who will or may have difficulty reading standard printed materials.

Is the decision likely to affect people across the county in a similar way or are specific areas likely to be affected – e.g. are a set number of branches/sites to be affected? If so you will need to consider whether there are equality related issues associated with the locations selected – e.g. greater percentage of BME residents in a particular area where a closure is proposed as opposed to an area where a facility is remaining open.

The mobile library and home library services can be disrupted, due to staffing issues or problems with volunteers. This is not under the control of the customer so we do not make a charge for the late return of items. The decision will affect all customers apart from those previously mentioned equally across the County.

Could the decision have a particular impact on any group of individuals sharing protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, namely:

- Age
- Disability including Deaf people
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race/ethnicity/nationality
- Religion or belief
- Sex/gender
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage or Civil Partnership Status

In considering this question you should identify and record any particular impact on people in a sub-group of any of the above – e.g. people with a particular disability or from a particular religious or ethnic group.

It is particularly important to consider whether any decision is likely to impact adversely on any group of people sharing protected characteristics to a disproportionate extent. Any such disproportionate impact will need to be objectively justified.

Yes- This decision will affect people over 65 and also those who are long term sick or disabled who have previously been exempt from all charges.

If you have answered "Yes" to this question in relation to any of the above characteristics, – please go to Question 1.

There will be an impact on customers who are over 65 years old and also for customers who are presently exempt from overdue fines.

If you have answered "No" in relation to all the protected characteristics, please briefly document your reasons below and attach this to the decision-making papers. (It goes without saying that if the lack of impact is obvious, it need only be very briefly noted.)

Question 1 – Background Evidence

What information do you have about the different groups of people who may be affected by this decision – e.g. employees or service users (you could use monitoring data, survey data, etc to compile this). As indicated above, the relevant protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability including Deaf people
- Gender reassignment/gender identity
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race/Ethnicity/Nationality
- Religion or belief
- Sex/gender
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage or Civil Partnership status (in respect of which the s. 149 requires only that due regard be paid to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment or victimisation or other conduct which is prohibited by the Act).

In considering this question you should again consider whether the decision under consideration could impact upon specific sub-groups e.g. people of a specific religion or people with a particular disability. You should also consider how the decision is likely to affect those who share two or more of the protected characteristics – for example, older women, disabled, elderly people, and so on.

This decision does impact on people over 65 and those who are disabled or who consider themselves to have a disability.

We have 65055 members who are adults aged 65 or over; 1115 blind members, 4349 disabled members, 929 long term sick and 3242 other exemptions which may for example include those who have dyslexia.

Together these groups of people make up nearly 15% of our total membership.

We feel that the changes we are proposing will make the charging of

overdue fines a fairer process because it will remove the current inconsistencies and will enable us to offer a wider range of stock to all our customers through encouraging the return of items on time.

Question 2 – Engagement/Consultation

How have you tried to involve people/groups that are potentially affected by your decision? Please describe what engagement has taken place, with whom and when.

(Please ensure that you retain evidence of the consultation in case of any further enquiries. This includes the results of consultation or data gathering at any stage of the process)

We have undertaken a consultation exercise with users of the library service through an in branch survey. The survey clearly sets out the proposed changes to our exemptions policy and the feedback from this survey is attached at appendix i. In summary of the 20 sample branches surveyed we received 236 completed forms, 122 of whom felt that the policy should remain as it is and 114 who felt that the proposal to remove exemptions was fair.

In addition to this we have written to the following organisations who represent the interests of affected groups and asked for their comments on our proposals. Responses from these organisations are detailed at appendix ii.

Age UK Lancashire

Age Concern, Central Lancashire

East Lancashire Deaf Society

Action for Blind People

Disability First

Lancashire Care

Galloways Society for the Blind

Deafway

East Lancashire Learning Disability Board

Lancashire Learning Disability Consortium

North Lancashire Area Learning Disability Partnership Board

One Voice – Advice, information and support to help disabled people and their families.

Disability Equality NW Ltd

Jinnah Development Trust Ltd - Provides drop in advice and general information for the over 50's.

Pukar Centre – Advice and support for disabled people.

Enterprise 4All NW Ltd - Works with all underrepresented groups from female entrepreneurs and the over 50's to social enterprises and people dealing with a disability.

Friends of Dorothy - Senior Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender befriending and support service.

The individual responses from these groups and their members are detailed at appendix ii.

We have also sought to consult and liaise with various representative fora across the County Council. These included the Deafblind, Blind, Older People and Learning Disability fora to enable them to consult with their members.

Many users of the service recognise the need for change in order to help protect the service for all our customers regardless of any protected characteristics they may or may not have.

Question 3 – Analysing Impact

Could your proposal potentially disadvantage particular groups sharing any of the protected characteristics and if so which groups and in what way?

It is particularly important in considering this question to get to grips with the actual practical impact on those affected. The decision-makers need to know in clear and specific terms what the impact may be and how serious, or perhaps minor, it may be – will people need to walk a few metres further to catch a bus, or to attend school? Will they be cut off altogether from vital services? The answers to such questions must be fully and frankly documented, for better or for worse, so that they can be properly evaluated when the decision is made.

Could your proposal potentially impact on individuals sharing the protected characteristics in any of the following ways:

- Could it discriminate unlawfully against individuals sharing any of the protected characteristics, whether directly or indirectly; if so, it must be amended. Bear in mind that this may involve taking steps to meet the specific needs of disabled people arising from their disabilities
- Could it advance equality of opportunity for those who share a particular protected characteristic? If not could it be developed or modified in order to do so?
- Does it encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low? If not could it be developed or modified in order to do so?
- Will the proposal contribute to fostering good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not, for example by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding? If not could it be developed or modified in order to do so? Please identify any findings and how they might be addressed.

The impact of these proposals will mean that those groups who are not currently required to pay fines are now asked to do so.

The current charges are as follows:

Overdue books are charged at 15p per day per item (to a maximum of £6.00).

For audio visual stock re-hire charges are automatically incurred on items not returned by the due date and are calculated at a daily rate percentage of the full hire charge as follows:

DVD - £2.00 per week ("U" classification DVD - £1.00 per week).

Music CDs - 50p per week.

Audio visual items would not be charged for people in the following groups:

- Visually impaired members
- Members with dyslexia or who have a disability which significantly impairs their ability to read standard print materials
- Members who are deaf and/or hard of hearing

Question 4 –Combined/Cumulative Effect

Could the effects of your decision combine with other factors or decisions taken at local or national level to exacerbate the impact on any groups?

For example - if the proposal is to impose charges for adult social care, its impact on disabled people might be increased by other decisions within the County Council (e.g. increases in the fares charged for Community Transport and reductions in respite care) and national proposals (e.g. the availability of some benefits) . Whilst LCC cannot control some of these decisions, they could increase the adverse effect of the proposal. The LCC has a legal duty to consider this aspect, and to evaluate the decision, including mitigation, accordingly.

If Yes – please identify these.

Benefit reforms and changes to the way some social care services are provided to people by the County Council may also impact customers who are over 65 or who have or consider themselves to have a disability.

Question 5 – Identifying Initial Results of Your Analysis

As a result of your analysis have you changed/amended your original proposal?

Please identify how –

For example:

Adjusted the original proposal – briefly outline the adjustments

Continuing with the Original Proposal – briefly explain why

Stopped the Proposal and Revised it - briefly explain

The proposal has not been changed as it is clear from the consultation we have carried out that although there are a number of concerns around payment of fines for those groups who will be affected we are confident that through the measures outlined in mitigation below that groups will become used to managing their accounts in the same way as other members.

Question 6 - Mitigation

Please set out any steps you will take to mitigate/reduce any potential adverse effects of your decision on those sharing any particular protected characteristic. It is important here to do a genuine and realistic evaluation of the effectiveness of the mitigation contemplated. Over-optimistic and over-generalised assessments are likely to fall short of the “due regard” requirement.

Also consider if any mitigation might adversely affect any other groups and how this might be managed.

There are now a number of ways for customers to renew their items. These are listed below and the information is also available for customers in every library and on the library website. The proposals would apply only to static sites and do not affect our home or mobile library services.

- Library Elf- This is an on line facility which enables you to receive text or email notifications if your items are approaching the renewal date. You can see all your family member's tickets and also receive notification when reserved items are in. This is a free service.
- On line renewal. Customers can manage their account online. Books can be renewed up to a maximum of 10 times (if they have not been reserved elsewhere).
- By phone.
 1. Lancashire County Council's call centre is open from 8am until 6pm Mon to Fri and from 8am to 4pm on Saturdays and Sundays
 2. A 24 hour renewal line is in operation. Customers can renew their items at any time using this automated system
- Email. An email message can be sent at any time. The email addresses are listed on the library website.
- Items can also be renewed at any Lancashire library in person. The library service increased its opening hours in 2015 so that customers can access a member of staff at a time convenient for them.

It is also worth noting that the majority of members, whether they have protected characteristics or not, are not required to pay fines through effective management of their accounts.

Question 7 – Balancing the Proposal/Countervailing Factors

At this point you need to weigh up the reasons for the proposal – e.g. need for budget savings; damaging effects of not taking forward the proposal at this time – against the findings of your analysis. Please describe this assessment. It is important here to ensure that the assessment of any negative effects upon those sharing protected characteristics is full and frank. The full extent of actual adverse impacts must be acknowledged and taken into account, or the assessment will be inadequate. What is required is an honest evaluation, and not a marketing exercise. Conversely, while adverse effects should be frankly acknowledged, they need not be overstated or exaggerated. Where effects are not serious, this too should be made clear.

At present, some customers who are exempt from fines keep items for longer than the agreed loan periods. This results in loss of income generation from audio visual items and also prevents other customers from accessing the item.

Now that customers can access the library service online, they are able to see when an item is due back and therefore can reasonably expect to borrow a book after the date it is due to be returned.

Members affected by these proposals represent 15% of our total membership. Current income from fines is £15,341 per month. If these members pay fines at the same rate as other members then this would give a monthly increase in fines income of £2,707.

Stock is often issued to members as a result of their browsing items on the shelves rather than an individual going in with a fixed idea of what they are going to borrow. The public is missing out on many items which they could have borrowed had they been returned on time and were therefore able to be displayed in the library.

Question 8 – Final Proposal

In summary, what is your final proposal and which groups may be affected and how?

To introduce a change to overdue charges so that they are applicable to all customers aged 18 and over. The exceptions to this will be users of the home library service and mobile library service.

Those members who are currently exempt would be required to pay fines under the new proposals.

1. All members will pay the appropriate fee for audio visual items with the exception of:
 - Visually impaired members
 - Members with dyslexia or who have a disability which significantly impairs their ability to read standard print materials
 - Members who are deaf and/or hard of hearing

Question 9 – Review and Monitoring Arrangements

Describe what arrangements you will put in place to review and monitor the effects of your proposal.

Stock Issues and fines income will be monitored over the coming months and senior managers kept informed of the impact of any changes on the service through existing reporting arrangements.

We will report back to managers on levels of membership and fines imposed on those groups who are currently exempt and review the decision as necessary once we feel have enough evidence and information on the impact of these proposals.

Position/Role: District Library Managers and Senior Business Manager

Equality Analysis Endorsed by Line Manager and/or Chief Officer Ann Marsh, Cultural Services Development Manager

Decision Signed Off By

Cabinet Member/Chief Officer or SMT Member

Please remember to ensure the Equality Decision Making Analysis is submitted with the decision-making report and a copy is retained with other papers relating to the decision.

Where specific actions are identified as part of the Analysis please ensure that an EAP001 form is completed and forwarded to your Directorate's contact in the Equality and Cohesion Team.

Directorate contacts in the Equality & Cohesion Team are:

Karen Beaumont – Equality & Cohesion Manager

Karen.beaumont@lancashire.gov.uk

Contact for Adult & Community Services Directorate

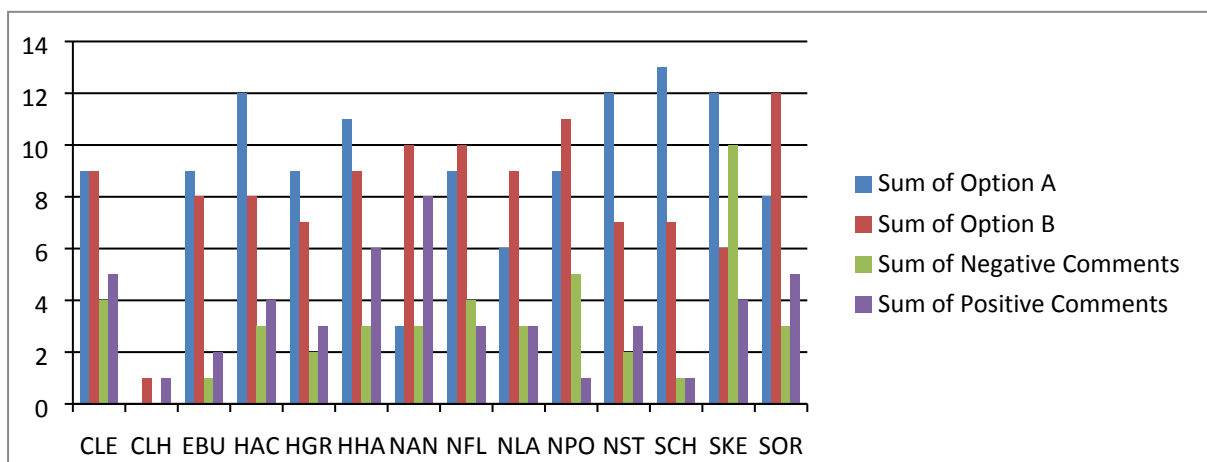
Appendix i

The in branch consultation in 20 library sites across the county with differing demographics resulted in a very mixed response, details of which can be seen in the table below.

Option A was agreement with current arrangements and option B agreement with the proposals to change.

Comments were invited on the form and whether these were positive or negative comments are also shown in the table.

In summary 122 people felt that the current policy of exemptions should be retained while 114 people felt that it was fair to remove the exemptions for payment of fines.



Appendix ii – Responses from interest groups and representative organisations

From organisation 55 plus

Summary of Responses from Professionals

Concerns are the same as the service users:

- Cost of the fines for those with little money.
- Memory problems may mean people forget to renew books.
- Mobility issues.
- Isolation of users afraid to use the service in case they incur fines.
- Practical problems of avoiding fines when no IT solution is available and users can be unable to use the phone as they are hard of hearing/can't get through to the local library.
- Consider imposing additional conditions such as higher age limits, fine capping, consider retaining some exemptions.

Judith Culshaw Response

Concerns

Lack of IT equipment or literacy:

Opportunities to extend loans and other methods of communicating with the Library service seem to be based on the assumption that people have both the IT knowledge and technology to support electronic communication. Those most likely not to have either kindles or internet are the ones most likely to visit the library to borrow a book.

Will discourage people from using the library therefore increasing isolation:

It could put lots of people off using the library lending service, thereby further isolating older people who visit as much for the experience as the reading.

Suggestion

Raise the age applicable for charges:

Raise the age at which charges would not apply to, for example, 75. People below that age may be more likely to be IT literate.

Questions

- How much they are intending to raise from fines? Is it really cost effective?
- Why would the mobile library not be affected?
- What is the home service?

- Should the amount of the fine and detail regarding alternatives be made clear in the consultation information?

All of the above could be pertinent to older people with a disability.

Julie Newton Response

Not many responses, none negative:

Not had a good response to this consultation. Teams were to speak to older people and carers, but from the few responses received, carers understood the need to change the “fine exemption” with most saying if they needed, they would phone rather than go online.

Iain Pearson Response via Hazel Becker (Community Advisor)

(Hazel previously managed Library services across Central Lancashire so knows the service extremely well.)

Not surprised the library service is considering these proposals given the scale of budget cuts.

Strong arguments against the changes for many clients:

Cost: Although many older people would be able to afford the charges exemptions should be made for the most vulnerable i.e. those on means tested benefits (such as Pension Credit) and those who are disabled or frail (and claiming Attendance Allowance or DLA).

Evidence shows that older people tend use the library more often and more regularly than other age groups. Many pensioners, especially those on benefits such as Pension Credit, would really struggle to afford the current library fines of 15p per day, per item. We know that many older people borrow 6 items or more at a time, so fines could accumulate remarkably quickly. It seems that, if the library service introduces these proposed changes it risks alienating some of its most loyal customers.

Lack of IT resources: Older people are less likely than other library users to find online or text message services accessible. While the introduction of these services is welcome for those who are IT literate, it remains a fact that many older and disabled people are excluded from these options.

Unable to use the telephone/difficult to get through to the library by

phone/memory concerns: Telephone renewal of items is difficult for those who are hard of hearing. In addition, we are aware that many clients become frustrated when telephoning the LCC call centre as they can often be kept on hold for some time.

We have also noted that it is now very difficult to get through by phone to a local library and the personal touch so valued by older clients has been lost now that

queries are dealt with at the call centre. While many older people remain fit and healthy, a large proportion suffer from memory concerns and it seems unfair to introduce fines for those who struggle to remember when their items are due back.

The needs of people with disabilities vary hugely: I am concerned that the proposed changes may mean that **adults with learning difficulties** might unwittingly build up large fines. Also, if they are unwell or if the weather is bad, older people with mobility problems are less likely to be able to get to the library when their books are due. I presume the proposals would also mean that **visually impaired people** would lose their exemption from fines - the possibility of fines might make them very reluctant to continue to borrow talking books etc from the library. Materials such as this are quite difficult to obtain elsewhere and offer vital access to the emotional and intellectual benefits of reading.

Table below shows result of member survey undertaken by 55 plus:

Lancashire Over 50's Assembly

(Email reproduced with permission)

From: ROGER RYMER **Sent:** 21 February 2014 16:32
To: Jones, Gareth (LCLIS)
Subject: Fines Exemption

Hi Gareth

As a member of the Lancashire Over 50s Assembly I feel that the proposal to remove the fines exemption from the over 65s is reasonable given the range of options that are available for renewing books and the fact that the home library service would clearly be unaffected. This proposal is preferable to the less palatable options of reducing library opening hours or closing libraries. As for people with a disability I can see no obvious reason why they should not be treated in a similar fashion on the basis that if their circumstances were that difficult they would qualify for the home library service. If not, then they should be able to renew by one of the methods available.

Disability Equality NW.

From: John Pearson [mailto:john@pacomms.co.uk]
Sent: 12 February 2014 12:53
To: Jones, Gareth (LCLIS)
Subject: Consultation on Fines Exemption
Importance: High

Dear Mr Jones,

My overall view of this proposal is general agreement – my only comment would be to be to introduce a “three strikes and you`re out” clause.

Where persistent overdue borrowers are faced with removal of library membership and/or paying the full replacement cost of the “overdue” book.

I strongly agree that over 65`s and disabled members should be exempt from fines unless there is tangible evidence to permanently deprive the library of a book or other item loaned to them.

Yours sincerely

John Pearson

Executive Trustee

Consultation feedback over phone with Gareth Jones on the 25 February.

Phone call from Eileen Clarke. Eileen feels that as an older person she should be expected to pay for late return of books and that it is fair to all users for older people to do this. She has discussed with friends and they feel the same way.

Appendix iii

Preston Learning Disabilities Forum

LIBRARIES CONSULTATION:

About stopping the exemption for fines for disabled people and elderly.

Feedback from Meeting on 6.3.14: The Forum had very mixed views on it. Some thought it should be at the Librarian's discretion, others worried who's responsibility it should be to make sure the books etc. was returned on time. i.e. Service User or Support Worker depending on the service users capacity. (This echoes the concern that people's support is much more limited due to social care cut backs so could

miss this and many people with learning disabilities struggle with time and dates etc. If people have 24 hrs support there should be no excuse for not getting books renewed and library could know if people have to have support worker support to get a book)

The group also felt that the libraries should bring back the 'post card' reminder. This has apparently been replaced with text message or email which many service users will not have access to. The 'post card' should be in easy read format (REACT could help with this = needs a clear pictorial understood backup to written reminder and if used consistently would be helpful)

Everyone needs a clear set of rules to say what you can do eg people not knowing that you can phone to renew or even text or email for those who can. Is it possible for this to be stuck in the book when taken out? Again clear message supported by



picture eg and if can do this 3 times - maybe 3 phones? Probably helpful for others too.

Individual feedback from People who couldn't get to the meeting:

My first job after leaving school was in a town library and we fined all adults. My friend who works in the University library says they apply fines to all students The policy of anyone who 'considers they have a disability' does seem rather generous.

Another supports the view that over 65's and disabled individuals should be exempt whilst respecting the fact that "overdue" items go missing at a cost to authority and deprive other borrowers of access to literature. He doesn't think fines are an very effective deterrent to abusers of the service. Libraries are, he thinks, an important and relatively underutilised community resource. He suggests that people who are irresponsible and fail to return books on time, without good reason, should be given the "three strikes and you're out" rule. If an individual borrower/member of the library have three consecutive overdue returns, then in my view, they should have their membership cancelled.

Books and other items borrowed which "disappear" should be the responsibility of the borrower to replace in addition to any fines which may have being levied. Too many libraries close and aren't ever re-opened. In this age of austerity the library service is another easy target for the "bean counters". So any abuses and material losses have to eliminated as much as possible.

As a Lancashire citizen I have a friend with acquired brain damage who has a few hours of support to help with her short term memory difficulties. Recently, although she had noted in her diary to return library books (and I'm not clear that she knew you could renew by phone) she was unable to find her books, despite searching over many weeks. She is a private person and it would not have been appropriate for her support worker to be searching her whole house, other than helping her in the more public rooms. It thus took some weeks for her to find them and then only with more systematic direction. Her budget is very limited and she struggles to manage on it

and it has little room in it for extras and had the library not exercised their discretion on understanding she had a disability of this nature, the level of fine would have caused her significant hardship. (It is likely that for some people this situation might worsen with the cuts being made on disabled people's income by the welfare reform).

I do appreciate the significant savings to be made and libraries are an area too, but personally feel that their centrality in the community could be used more and more as an information hub and area of support as well as accessing IT and hope that LCC and adult services might review how they manage this currently and whether there is room to transfer some resources from elsewhere to build this function in a place which everyone recognises and has no stigma. This would be more likely to save money than too many other places for people to go. It could also be where voluntary organisations have some space too - like CAB. It seems a logical place to signpost people and have a good resources data base.

Maybe a blanket exemption is not right but there should be some discretion as some people have genuine difficulties but the library is important for them.

I know that many people with learning disabilities do use the library and it is an important resource for them. Some will be people with little or no care support who also may well struggle to manage renewals on time. Many don't have access to IT and have limited reading ability. Telephone renewals sound really good if people know about it and how to do it, but some may need help.

I don't agree there should be a blanket policy but I would hope that there could be some discretion or maybe some special arrangements made for people with cognitive disabilities who don't have any significant level of support.

Do the group have any ideas how they can help the library help people who genuinely don't have support and who might struggle to understand or get things back on time? Might the library offer some ways to remind people that they'd understand when they take out books/other loans - check date reminders and also phone numbers?

Feedback from on the 12 March on behalf of the deafblind forum held on the 28 February 2014

The chair of the forum said that she felt that disabled people should still be exempt from paying fines as payment of fines is an extra worry for disabled people particularly when they are feeling unwell and that the changes proposed are unfair. Two or three other people in attendance at the forum agreed with what the chair was saying.

Another member of the forum who was 94 years old said that he felt it was the responsibility of the citizen to ensure materials are returned on time which he always makes sure he does.

Kiran said that she felt the forum was split roughly half and half in terms of its support for and against the proposals.

There will be more feedback from Kiran following the blind forum which is to be held on the 17 March.

Feedback from the older people's forum held on the 18 February 2014

The response was fairly positive I guess as the comments were perhaps based on a realisation that the public sector has to make savings and this is a contribution towards that.