

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 18th January 2018

Report of the Head of Service Libraries, Museums, Culture and Registration Services

Part I

Electoral Divisions affected: All

Libraries, Museums and Archive Fees and Charges

(Appendix 'A' refers)

Contact for further information:

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Executive Summary

This proposal relates to fees and charges in the Libraries, Museum, Culture and Registrars Service (LMCR) following a service review. The aim of the review is to ensure that charges support service efficiency and effectiveness, recover costs where this is appropriate and achievable and as far as possible ensure consistency across the service. Fees and charges will be reviewed regularly and the service will analyse the impact of these proposals, should they be approved, and undertake a further review during 2018.

This is deemed to be a Key Decision and the provisions of Standing Order No. 25 have been complied with.

Recommendation

The Cabinet is recommended to approve the implementation of changes to fees and charges from 1 April 2018 as set out below and as listed in detail at Appendix 'A':

- (i) To increase the Library reservation fee and extend this to general subject area requests.
- (ii) To increase fines for the late return of Library books.
- (iii) To increase commission on works of art and crafts sold in Libraries and Museums.
- (iv) To increase admission charges at Gawthorpe Hall, Padiham.
- (v) To increase the charge for a copy of an archive probate record.
- (vi) To levy an additional carriage charge for all non-UK archive copying orders.

Background and Advice

There have been periodic reviews of fees and charges in recent years including libraries and heritage services, archives and museums.

Library reservation fees have not been changed since 2005 nor fines since 2012.

Admission charges at Gawthorpe Hall have not been increased since 2006, and this service runs at a considerable net cost to the County Council.

Consultations

Employees within the LMCR service have been consulted in developing these proposals.

The published fees and charges of the Library services in the following local authority areas have been used as benchmarks for the proposals: Cumbria, Derbyshire, Devon, Essex, Gloucestershire, Kent, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Staffordshire, Suffolk, Warwickshire, Worcestershire and North Yorkshire.

The admissions charges of 55 museums and historic houses across Lancashire, Cumbria, Yorkshire, Cheshire, Greater Manchester and also further afield (for example Lanarkshire, Ironbridge Gorge and Devon) have been referenced to compare current offers and admissions charges.

Implications:

This item has the following implications:

There is a possibility that some of the proposals in this report may attract negative publicity and that some services may be used less frequently because of the increase. Although more libraries will be open in 2018/19 the library service is being provided to the same number of people across Lancashire and there may therefore be limited or no change in income arising directly from the re-openings.

Financial

The projected income from the proposed changes to fees and charges set out in Appendix 'A' is an anticipated increase of around c£0.050m but there is a risk that this overall target might not be achieved. Income from fines is generally reducing because of greater use of online and telephone renewals. Improvements to the County Council website have made it easier for borrowers to renew online.

The income budget relating to the fees and charges detailed within this report is currently under pressure, with the current level of budgeted income not achieved. This proposed increase will assist in moving towards achieving the income target, however there is still a risk that this may not be achieved and this will need to be closely reviewed as part of the budget monitoring process.

Equality and Cohesion

Some of these changes will be applied to people with protected characteristics. Age and disability protected characteristics are most likely to be affected. Given the financial position of Lancashire County Council, the levels of increase proposed, and the fact that these are not necessarily regularly incurred by members of groups with protected characteristics, we believe that the proposals will not have a disproportionate adverse impact on people with protected characteristics.

Risk Management

The proposed increases have been benchmarked and do not represent excessive increases which could provide a significant barrier to users. They are based on basic principles of service efficiency and effectiveness, cost recovery and value for money. The service will communicate with customers will explain the reasons for the changes.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
Libraries, Museums, Culture and Registrars (LMCR) Proposed Policy Clarification and Interim Fees and Charges report	4 Nov 2015	Gareth Jones/(01772) 534007
Archive Service: Proposed Fees and Charges Report	16 March 2016	Jacquie Crosby/(01772) 533028

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate:

N/A