

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

PUBLIC REPORT

Report to:	STRATEGIC DIRECTOR (LOCAL SERVICES) IN CONSULTATION with DEPUTY LEADER
Report of: Date of Decision:	ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, CULTURE 21 November 2012
SUBJECT:	LIBRARY SERVICES: CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP AND BORROWING REGULATIONS
Key Decision: No	Relevant Forward Plan Ref: n/a
If not in the Forward Plan: (please "X" box)	Chief Executive approved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> O&S Chairman approved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Relevant Cabinet Member(s):	Cllr Ian Ward, Deputy Leader
Relevant O&S Chairman:	Cllr Carl Rice, Governance, Resources and Member Development Committee
Wards affected:	All

1. Purpose of report:
1.1 To seek approval for changes to membership categories and loan entitlements to operate within the Library of Birmingham and across all Community Libraries.

2. Decision(s) recommended:
2.1 To approve the changes to membership and loan entitlements to apply to all libraries, as set out in Appendix 2.

Lead Contact Officer(s):	Brian Gambles
Telephone No: E-mail address:	303 3372 Brian.gambles@birmingham.gov.uk

3. Consultation

3.1 Internal

The Chairman of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the opposition spokesman on Leisure Sport and Culture have been consulted and support the proposals going forward for Executive decision.

Senior Officers responsible for Community Libraries have been consulted and support the proposals going forward for Executive decision.

3.2 External

Consultation with the public (via public notices in all libraries and on the relevant pages of the City Council website) was conducted in July-October 2012. The number of responses was extremely small (81 from over 125,000 regular library users). The main concerns raised were about the time needed to read books, and the difficulty of physically visiting libraries. Both are adequately addressed by the facility to renew books either online or by telephone and an increase in the number of times a book may be renewed.

4. Compliance Issues:

4.1 Are the recommended decisions consistent with the Council's policies, plans and strategies?

- The Library of Birmingham is a top priority project for the council and the Library & Archive Service specifically. Investment in the Library of Birmingham will deliver state-of-the-art new facilities in a world-class building and enable the transformation of Library & Archive Services city-wide. The new library will be the hub for the network of community libraries. The aim is to enable the Library & Archive Services to benefit more citizens, more effectively.

These proposals will enable

- Citizens to enjoy a high quality of life by maximising the potential of the Library & Archive services in changing and enriching citizen's lives and supporting communities, in particular by increasing the availability and turnaround of library books and other stock, reducing waiting times for reservations.

4.2 Financial Implications

(Will decisions be carried out within existing finances and Resources?)

This proposal involves the need to provide stamps to mark library stock at an estimated cost of £3-5,000, which can be accommodated within the revenue budget for the Library of Birmingham Project.

4.3 Legal Implications

The council's powers to provide a library service is contained in sections 7 and 12 of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964. Section 144 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides a power for the Council to encourage visitors and provide conference and other facilities.

Section 1 of the Localism Act confers a general power of competence on the City Council.

Under section 111 the Local Government Act 1972 gives the Council power to do anything which is ancillary or incidental to or facilitates the discharge of its functions.

4.4 Public Sector Equality Duty (see separate guidance note)

A copy of the Equality Act 2010 – Public Sector Duty statement is appended at Appendix 1. The proposals will affect all equally and there is no specific adverse impact upon protected categories. Mitigating actions previously planned address the concerns of people with mobility difficulties. There will be a positive impact for all in the increased availability of popular lending materials

5. Relevant background/chronology of key events:

- 5.1 The Library of Birmingham is a flagship project for the City Council. It is the UK's largest public sector cultural project and has the potential to raise Birmingham's standing as a global city, delivering significant long-term social, economic and physical regeneration benefits.
- 5.2 Community consultation and engagement with over 10,000 individual citizens of all ages has been underway since 2002, to enable the Library of Birmingham to reflect citizen requirements of a public library service in the twenty-first century. This has led to a thorough transformation programme where all aspects of the service have been scrutinised for efficiency and responsiveness to public requirements, as well as to considerations of equality of access.
- 5.3 Customers will benefit from increased access to state-of-the-art library and archive facilities in a world-class building, including Sunday opening, which has been much requested. Simplified membership and loan entitlements will make the conditions of use more transparent and accessible, providing a faster turnover of material and thereby improving access to a wider range of library books.
- 5.4 Analysis of loan periods in other authorities shows that 5 other core cities successfully operate a 3 week loan period.
- 5.5 Analysis of the pattern of book borrowing shows that most loanable items are returned within two weeks of being borrowed so three weeks is now proposed as the standard for Birmingham's libraries, compared to the present four week period. Membership categories will also benefit from a simplified structure, which will be more efficient and easier to administer.
- 5.6 In order to respond effectively to the legitimate issues raised by a small number of respondents, mitigating measures are proposed as follows:
 - Housebound clients will not be included within this change, their loan period will remain at 4 weeks;
 - The number of renewals permitted will be increased to 4, so ensuring that the total available loan period (other than for high demand items) is only slightly reduced;
 - Information about access to housebound services will be improved for customers with mobility issues;
 - The change will be introduced for a 12-month trial period, with a review of the true impact at the end of this pilot.

6. Evaluation of alternative option(s):

6.1 A wide range of alternative options has been evaluated, with many possible permutations. That presented for approval is the simplest option which nonetheless allows for the particular requirements of children, vulnerable adults and people with disabilities to continue to be recognised.

6.2 The “do-nothing” option of retaining existing arrangements was rejected as failing to increase access to the available resources of the library service.

7. Reasons for Decision(s):

7.1 The recommendations allow for a simpler presentation of membership categories, and increased access to library resources which will “turn over” more quickly through these arrangements.

Signatures

	<u>Date</u>
Cabinet Member consulted (Cllr Ian Ward, Deputy Leader)
Chief Officer: (Sharon Lea, Strategic Director, Local Services)

List of Background Documents used to compile this Report:

Relevant Officer’s files save for confidential information

List of Appendices accompanying this Report (if any):

- Public Sector Equality Duty
- Summary of Proposed Membership Categories & Entitlements

Report Version		Dated	20 th November 2012
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Equality Act 2010

The Executive must have due regard to the public sector equality duty when considering Council reports for decision.

The public sector equality duty is as follows:

1	<p>The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act; (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
2	<p>Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it; (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
3	<p>The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.</p>
4	<p>Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) tackle prejudice, and (b) promote understanding.
5	<p>The relevant protected characteristics are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) age (b) disability (c) gender reassignment (d) pregnancy and maternity (e) race (f) religion or belief (g) sex (h) sexual orientation

APPENDIX TWO: Summary of Proposed Membership Categories & Entitlements

Category	Borrowing entitlements and loan periods		
	Book loans (including Talking books)	Loan Period	*Other loans
1. U18s- Child (0-4)	10	3 weeks	8 music items 5 DVDs
2. U18s – Child (5-11)	10	3 weeks	8 music items 5 DVDs
3. U18s – Young Person (12-17)	10	3 weeks	8 music items 5 DVDs
4. Looked after Child (0-17)	10	3 weeks	8 music items 5 DVDs
5. Adult (18-59)	10	3 weeks	8 music items 5 DVDs
6. Adult 60+	10	3 weeks	8 music items 5 DVDs
7. Adult- Concessions	10	3 weeks	8 music items 5 DVDs
8. Adult - Exempt	10	3 weeks	8 music items 5 DVDs
9. Staff	10	3 weeks	8 music items 5 DVDs
10. Print-disabled	10	3 weeks	8 music items 5 DVDs
11. Visitor	2 books	3 weeks	
12. Self-registered (inc Neighbourhood library)	2 books	3 weeks	
13. Housebound Individuals	120	4 weeks	
14. Prison	tbc	tbc	
15. On-line remote users	Nil	N/A	
Groups:			
16. Registered Reading Groups	30	3 months	
17. Community Groups	30	3 months	
18. LSAH residential group	400	4 weeks	
19. Performance groups	By agreement	By agreement	

* Loan period varies and depends on item type, e.g. Top Titles have shorter loan periods.