
Report To: Regeneration Committee **Date:** 11 March 2010
Report By: Corporate Director
Regeneration and Resources **Report No:** R/LAM10/02/SJ/SM
Contact Officer: Head of Economic and Social **Contact No:** 01475 712321
Regeneration
Subject: Free Reserves in Libraries

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to ask the Committee to consider the proposal of introducing free reserves in Inverclyde's libraries.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Library members currently pay £0.45 (£0.35 concession) to reserve a book that is in stock in Inverclyde Libraries. The net annual income from this process amounted to £660 in 2008-09.
- 2.2 Several local authorities have now introduced free reservations for books that are in stock (i.e. on the library catalogue).
- 2.3 To improve the service, address issues of equality of access and increase issues and performance, it is proposed that the current charge is dropped and offset against income from Coffee machines installed at Greenock Central, Port Glasgow and Gourock Libraries.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That the Committee agrees to offer free reserves in libraries and that the loss of income (estimated at £660) is balanced against income from the new library coffee machines.

Stuart Jamieson
Head of Economic and Social Regeneration

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Under the current scale of charges, library members in Inverclyde pay £0.45 (£0.35 for over 60s) to reserve an item that is in stock (i.e. already on order or in the library catalogue). This practice is common in all public libraries but over the last few years, the trend in many local authorities has been to introduce free reserves.
- 4.2 Free reserves are successful in improving customer service and providing better access for customers, who live in smaller communities and whose libraries do not have the range of stock available in the larger branches. It also opens up access by allowing members who have a disability to collect reserves from libraries that are DDA compliant and have wheelchair access.
- 4.3 It is proposed that the original charge of £0.45 (£0.35 concession for over 60s) is retained for any titles which are not in stock and need to be purchased.

5.0 PROPOSALS

- 5.1 Inverclyde Libraries collected a total of £817 for reserves in 2008-09, which includes £157 for reserving brand new titles. As we intend to keep this charge for requesting a new title not in stock, the net balance required for offering free reserves is £660.
- 5.2 In response to a public consultation exercise, which was part of the Library Service Review and the subsequent upgrading of libraries, coffee machines have now been installed in Greenock Central (October 2008) and Port Glasgow Libraries (October 2009). This has been a very popular addition to the library facilities and 2009-10 income from April 2009 to 31st January 2010 has so far totalled £733. A coffee machine has also been ordered for Gourock Library, which will be installed in March 2010.
- 5.3 It is proposed that the new income from the coffee machines is used to balance the loss of income from introducing free reserves.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Finance:

Financial Implications – One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Year	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
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Financial Implications – Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
Libraries	Overdues (books)	1/04/10	£660	Sales	
Libraries	Sales	1/04/10	(£660)		Coffee machines in Greenock Central and Port Glasgow - Gourock will be added by 1 st April

6.2 Personnel: none

6.3 Legal: none