

# SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL

12 DECEMBER 2018

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## AGENDA ITEM C11

### WAIRARAPA LIBRARY SERVICE FEES AND CHARGES

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#### **Purpose of Report**

For the Council to consider a proposal to remove overdue charges and rental charges from the Wairarapa Library Service libraries.

#### **Recommendations**

The Wairarapa Library Service recommend that the Council:

1. *Receive the Wairarapa Library Services Fees and Charges Report.*
2. *Agree that the proposal to reduce library fees and charges will be included as a consultation item in the Annual Plan 2019/20 Consultation Document.*

#### **1. Executive Summary**

The Wairarapa Library Service (WLS) Committee is recommending a change to library charges in the four libraries from the beginning of next financial year. The reason for the proposed change is to encourage more residents to use the services of our libraries with the result being increased literacy and educational achievement and removal of barriers to accessing library services to support families.

The WLS are recommending that this be a topic for consultation as part of the Annual plan 2019/20 process.

#### **2. Background**

The Wairarapa Library Service Committee oversees the strategy and direction of the three South Wairarapa and Carterton libraries.

When reviewing current charges for overdue books and rentals it was apparent there are widely different policies across New Zealand libraries in relation to overdue charges applied to children and young adult materials.

Central Hawkes Bay Libraries, Masterton, Upper Hutt and South Taranaki do not apply overdue charges on these materials and other public libraries are in the process of removing these charges.

Masterton District Library removed overdue charges on children's and young adult library materials from 1 July 2017.

There is widespread desire throughout the public library profession for libraries to remove overdue charges on children and young adult library collections.

Local government has invested in a considerable asset in the form of collections held in their libraries. Setting barriers to the use of this asset prevents the maximum possible outcome from the asset for building community capacity and capability.

Members of the community on fixed incomes find it difficult to afford the charges for books and increasingly are borrowing young adult, large print or non-fiction materials because they are free.

The Wairarapa Library Service Committee would like to propose removal of overdue charges for Carterton and South Wairarapa Libraries. They would also like to propose removing the rental charges for adult fiction.

### **3. Current Charges**

The current WLS fees and charges are:

Rental – adult fiction	\$0.50 for three weeks
DVDs	\$2.00 for one week
Overdue adult book thereafter	\$0.50 first week / \$1.00 per week
Overdue children's book thereafter	\$0.20 first week / \$0.70 per week
Reserves/Holds	\$0.50
Interloans request	\$10.00 per book, article or subject
Charges from lending library	At cost
Replacement card	\$2.00
Lost or irreparable damage	Replacement cost

### **4. Proposal**

The Wairarapa Library Service Committee has agreed to propose a move towards 'Free Libraries' for Carterton and South Wairarapa.

The four options are:

#### **4.1 Status quo**

Charges for:

- Rental – adult fiction
- DVD rental

- Overdue adult book
- Overdue children's book
- Reservations between libraries within WLS
- Interloans (outside WLS)
- Charges from lending library
- Replacement card
- Lost or irreparable damage

#### **4.2 Removal of young adults and children's overdue fees, addition of an "out-of-area" membership fee**

Charges for:

- Overdue adults
- DVD rental
- Lost/damaged books
- Reservations between libraries within WLS
- Interloans (outside WLS)
- Out of area membership (new)

#### **4.3 Removal of all overdue fees and adult fiction charges, addition of an "out-of-area" membership fee**

Charges for:

- DVD rental
- Lost/damaged books
- Reservations between libraries within WLS
- Interloans (outside WLS)
- Out of area membership (new)

#### **4.4 Removal of all fees except direct costs (interloans and lost books), addition of an "out-of-area" membership fee**

Charges for:

- Lost/Damaged books
- Interloans (outside WLS)
- Out of area membership (new)

The WLS Committee recommends **Option 3** as its preferred option.

## **5. Benefits**

Other libraries that have removed fees, including Masterton District Library, have found an increase in issues of children's materials, a significant drop in the number of lost books and staff have reported improvement in the relationship between staff and families.

Other benefits that would derive from removing fees include:

- Increased community capability through improving levels of literacy and educational achievement.
- Removal of barriers to accessing library services to support families.
- Encouraging reading and improving literacy among the more vulnerable in the community
- Improving wellbeing of the community (see: <https://readingagency.org.uk/news/media/reading-for-pleasure-builds-empathy-and-improves-wellbeing-research-from-the-reading-agency-finds.html>).

## **6. Costs**

Removal of overdue charges on children's and young adults materials only:

- For Carterton District Library this would result in an annual loss of income amounting to approximately \$362.
- For the three South Wairarapa Libraries, this would result in an annual loss of income amounting to approximately \$630.

Removal of overdue charges on adult fiction:

- Carterton District Library this would result in an annual loss of income amounting to approximately \$1,977.
- For the three South Wairarapa Libraries, this would result in an annual loss of income amounting to approximately \$4,910.

Removal of rental charges for adult's fiction:

- For Carterton District Library this would result in an annual loss of income amounting to approximately \$7,815.
- For the three South Wairarapa Libraries, this would result in an annual loss of income amounting to approximately \$9,890.

The removal of all of these items would result in a reduction of income of approximately \$15,430 which is approximately 41% of the total income received for the three SW libraries for the 2017/18 financial year.

There are options to lessen the monetary impact of the proposed changes. These include:

- Reservation charge to be increased from 50c to \$1.00.
- Adult overdue charge changed from 50c per week or part of a week to a flat 20c every day an item is overdue.
- Charge non-WLS ratepayers a membership fee.

## 7. Summary

The WLS Committee recommends **Option 3** as its preferred option.

This would mean charges going forward would be as follows:

DVDs	\$2.00 for one week
Reserves/Holds between WLS libraries	\$1.00
Interloans request	\$10.00 per book, article or subject
Charges from lending library	At cost
Out of area membership (new)	Amount yet to be decided

Carterton District Council considered this proposal at its meeting on 5 December 2018. CDC decided to adopt the above recommendation with immediate effect but are awaiting the outcome of SWDC's consideration of this paper.

If Council decides to wait until consultation for the Annual plan, CDC will do the same.

The cost to implement this change immediately at SWDC would mean a reduction in income of an estimated \$8,000 for the remainder of the current financial year.

Note CDC also decided to offer an amnesty for all current overdue book fines until Christmas 2018, with an invitation to donate a can of food to the Carterton Foodbank in lieu of the fine.

## 8. Next Steps

If Council agrees to the recommendations above the proposal to reduce library fees and charges will be included as a consultation item in the Annual Plan 2019/20 Consultation Document

Concurrently Carterton District Council will follow the same process.

Both Councils will need to agree the same fees and charges arrangements following the consultation. The opportunity for the two Councils to hear submissions and deliberate on the decisions together will be explored.

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