

MEMO: To PLSA members
FROM: Janice Nitschke
SUBJECT: Recommendations and Levy discussion for March Quarterly



In acknowledging levies discussions that have taken place across the network I include some background information within this paper tracking the decisions that have been made and agreed to by PLSA in consultation with PLS and relevant committees. Some of my information may also be in the paper from PLS - my apologies if so. It is intended that this is an introductory and overview paper for your information.

PLSA members have agreed that the most effective way to provide some services is through a cooperative purchasing arrangement where funds are pooled and then used to buy products and services, which are available to all libraries. These services are funded through levies on each council's materials grant funds.

The services, which are currently funded through levies, are:

Print Disability Collection
Community Languages (LOTE)
Online Resources

And this year it is recommended that we add an additional service: Digital Content.

Every year at the March Quarterly PLSA membership votes on the percentage of Materials grant funds, which will be used to provide state-wide collections through a range of levies. Levies maintain the principle that all libraries contribute to shared collections for equity of access across the state, collections that they may not be regularly access by individual libraries however they are available if and when required. These recommendations regarding the levies are then provided to the Public Library Services Standing Committee for discussion and recommendation through to the Libraries Board for consideration.

March 2011 will herald changes to the methodology of voting for the levies, when voting will take place in the week following the Quarterly and be online. This will ensure that all members will be able to place their vote once they have gained information from papers circulated and the panel presentation and be assured that the number of votes applicable to their library service will be acquitted accordingly.

The PLSA Executive has met with PLS Management and has taken advice from management and recommendations received from working parties. We have also given due regard to the level of levies to be implemented across the public library network for the consortia purchasing of resources and their value to the network and community. Members of the Executive, PLS and representatives of the field have participated in a number of working parties that have made recommendations for the quantum of the levies to be set. These committees have reported back at quarterlies and via the intranet.

The **Community Language levy** continues to grow the community language resources, reflecting growing community needs. As stated above levies maintain the principle that all libraries contribute to shared collections for equity of access across the state, while recognising that those libraries with a higher NESB population are likely to make greater use of the collection. Acknowledging this usage pattern it was agreed (2006-2007) that the community language levy would be a differential levy, with the growth in funds coming from the materials budget of those libraries that are most likely to have a demand for these materials (specialist libraries).

It was agreed that this differential levy would be implemented in line with the Memorandum of Understanding that commenced in 2005/2006. The Public Libraries SA Executive, in

collaboration with the Languages Committee and staff at Public Library Services reviewed the LOTE levy and agreed the levy needed to be increased (a differential levy to 6%) in order to continue to meet the needs of the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities.

The Community Languages levy is calculated as a percentage of the annual materials subsidy allocation. The levy is made up of two components. One portion is a fixed 2.93%, which is applied to all libraries. The other portion is a calculation based on the library population that speaks a language other than English (LOTE). These communities referred to as (CALD) communities. In accordance with a decision made by the Libraries Board in May 2006, the total of these two components will increase by 0.3% each year from 3.30% in 2006/2007 to 6% by 2015/2016.

This figure of 6% is based on the ABS survey information, which shows that 12% of South Australians speak a language other than English as their “first” or primary language. On the basis that approximately 50% of the community are library borrowers, the PLSA Executive agreed to gradually raise this levy to be 6% of the materials funds. It was agreed that:

- o Non-English materials must be available from all public libraries and all will contribute to the purchase of Non-English materials and be catalogued ensuring ease of access, funded from the levy.
- o The funds for Non-English materials will increase from 3% to 6% of the materials budget over a period of 10 years
- o The rate of increase will be reviewed after three years and adjusted if necessary (undertaken 2009/2010)
- o Those libraries with the largest resident Non-English speaking population will make a larger contribution than other libraries on the basis they are likely to have the heaviest demand for LOTE materials
- o The funds for Non-English materials will be raised by a differential levy on the materials budget and will have two components (see above)

This change

- o Addressed the inequity of only contributing 3% of the materials budget to serve the needs of Non-English speaking customers
- o The growth in funds came from the materials budget of those libraries that are most likely to have a demand for these materials
- o It ensured all libraries have access to the Non-English materials.
- o Phasing in the increase over time, enabled the Public Library network to evaluate the impact of the additional resources and for those libraries who are making a significantly increased contribution to the purchase of Non-English resources to adjust their budgets accordingly

A review took place in 2009/2010 and as a result increased the number of suppliers from one to five (a “panel contract” with a number of suppliers), reported on increased quality, decreased costs and a speed up in delivery times. The Community Language Committee was pleased with the outcome and in the 09/10 period the levy increased (4.2% overall) and the My Languages Website - a national website to support library access for people speaking & reading languages other than English - was supported see <http://www.mylanguage.gov.au/> along with language materials and resources.

Recommended that for 2011/2012 that the Community Languages levy increase to 4.8% which will be \$342,000. (2010/2011 was 4.5% \$320,000) and be composed of mylanguage website and language materials and resources.

As we move to the next Memorandum of Understanding period it may be timely to once again undertake a review of Community Languages, theoretically midway in the period when it was agreed that CL levies would increase and between two MOU periods.

Online Resources Levy: In 2010 PLS convened the *Online Resource Assessment Project Team* comprising of network staff, which completed a thorough review of the network online resources requirements. The Online Resources report located at <http://www.libraries.sa.gov.au/site/page.cfm?u=161> was presented to the PLSA Executive in February 2011. It recommends the purchase of the online resources: Ancestry Library Edition, Press Display, World Book Web and Public Libraries Discover for a period of 1 year with an annual renewal up to a maximum of 2 years:

Two online resources are paid for by PLS from its operating budget, Nielsen Bookdata Online and Libraries Australia subscription

As the area of online resources continues to change rapidly the PLSA Executive will work with PLS to keep this area under constant review, considering value for money, changes in freely available resources on the internet and accessibility for all library users as key determinants to the amount of funds allocated to this resource area.

It is recommended that the online levy be reduced from 2.35% representing \$167,000 in 2010-11 to 2% \$142,000 in 2011/2012, utilising carry forward funds and the favourable exchange rate.

Print Disability Levy: Considerable changes in technology have resulted in many options being available in the print disability field, which impact on the collection along with customer expectations. This collection was established predominantly for the use of people with a print disability with restricted access. Audio books have become increasingly popular with the general community and PLSA members have been buying more commercial audio books. PLS facilitated a working party of library staff to examine alternatives to and complimentary to physical collections.

The Digital Audio Committee (established March 2010) chaired by Abby Dickson, the report is at (<http://www.libraries.sa.gov.au/site/page.cfm?u=289>) has undertaken extensive research reviewing trends and the current status within libraries nationally and internationally. This committee has reported at previous quarterlies and via the intranet on the needs of print disability customers, undertaken review of the current print disability audio book collection and the capacity of digital audio content to meet the need of print disability customers and our mainstream library users.

They recommended that the Print Disability Collection be composed of solely commercial product. PLS also reviewed their processes and this led to a reduction in cataloguing costs where these resources were also available on the monthly selection list.

Recommended that proposed reduction in the levy from 1.64% to 1.23% will decrease funds available for the PD collection by \$29,000, namely \$88,000 recognising changes in technology and customer expectations.

The **Digital Content Levy** is a new levy recognising the changing methodology of delivering these services and embracing new technologies. Audio digital delivery has been implemented in some libraries and planned by others and this levy will enable the base to build upon for the transition to this technology and ensure that libraries are able to provide their communities with access to new technologies. The planned reduction in the print disability levy ensures that this digital collection grows whilst preserving the print disability collection for some time.

Whilst the main focus of the Digital Audio Content Working Party was delivering digital audio services to print disability customers, this new environment and online platform presents an opportunity for the network to establish the infrastructure required to provide a range of services in a digital environment.

It is therefore proposed that a new Digital Content levy be initiated in 2011-12 dedicated in the first instance to providing digital audio items. This levy could then be used as the platform to provide other digital content such as eBooks for the network in the future.

The Public Library Network is built upon collaboration and resource sharing and this is an opportunity to establish a shared state-wide Digital resource from one or more vendors which would be a collaborative and cost saving way to embrace this new technology in a consortia manner. A staged reduction in the current Print Disability levy would reduce the impact of the new levy and acknowledge the changes from physical to digital delivery in a gradual and acceptable manner.

The PLSA Executive work with PLS to constantly review, consider value for money and accessibility for all users as key determinants.

I acknowledge the discussions around levies and suggest that there may be the opportunity to review the principles of the levies, which languages are selected, dollar allocations and network benefit. Such a review must be undertaken in a measured and rigorous manner. It is timely as we move to the One Library Management System and the review of principles of management of resources held locally and relating these principles to a statewide environment a network of resources now online and accessible by all: all libraries contributing to shared collections for equity of access across the state.

The intent of this paper is to inform members of the recommendations from the PLSA Executive for levies to be set for 2011/2012, highlight issues, the development of the philosophy behind the levy, the collaborative nature of the network and shared resources and opportunities to further review and refine processes and collections.

I acknowledge the efforts of the working parties and the collaboration between PLS and PLSA that has ensured that the public library network benefits from the sharing of resources, effective management and contract management of these resources and a willingness by PLS to continually revisit their processes for the benefit of the network.

Please contact me if you have further queries.

Please see attached documentation provided by PLS in support of the proposed levies.

This is the era of change and change management challenging but achievable.

Janice Nitschke
PRESIDENT
9TH March 2011
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