



**Peterborough
Public Library**

To: Peterborough Public Library Board of Trustees

From: Jennifer Jones, Acting Library Manager/CEO

Meeting Date: October 25, 2016

**Subject: Report PPL16-043
Accessible Collections**

Purpose

A report to inform of a concern raised by a patron that the Peterborough Public Library's physical collection is not entirely mirrored in accessible formats, and that the Materials Acquisition Policy requires a review and amendments.

Recommendations

That the Library Board approve the recommendations outlined in Report PPL16-043 dated October 25, 2016, of the Acting Library Manager/CEO, as follows:

- a) That Report PPL16-043 be received for information;
- b) That Staff be directed to continue efforts to gradually increase the Library's supply of materials in accessible formats, in keeping with the existing Materials Acquisition Policy; and
- c) That the Materials Acquisition Policy not be reviewed or amended at this time.

Budget and Financial Implications

There is no budget or financial implication resulting from the approval of the recommendations of this report.

Background

A patron recently contacted the Library Staff with a concern regarding the Library's collection. In particular, the patron believes the Library's quantity of material available in accessible formats is lacking. The patron believes that the entire physical collection should be mirrored in accessible formats. In other words, every physical book purchased by the Library should also be purchased in an accessible format. The patron stated he would like to see the Library's Materials Acquisitions Policy be amended, to reflect a gradual increase in alternative and accessible formats, both Fiction and Non-Fiction, working towards a goal of mirroring that of the print collection.

The Material Selection Policy is attached as Appendix "A". Staff would specifically draw attention to Section 3 (h) of the Materials Selection Policy, which states the following:

- i) In accordance with the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act** (2005), Integrated Accessibility Standards, the Library provides access to materials in alternate formats where they exist, using the selection criteria outlined in this policy. Access to the collection is also available through the use of technology available in the library.

Staff believes the Materials Selection Policy, in its current state does support a continued effort to gradually increase the quantity of material available at the Library in alternative accessible formats. Therefore, Staff does not recommend a review of the policy, at this time.

Current Practice for the Provision of Accessible Materials

When patrons request accessible formats they are made available, when possible, through purchase, interlibrary loan and/or the Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA). When the Library purchases new materials, it seeks to build a collection that is accessible to the widest range of people, in keeping with the Material Selection Policy. This includes all formats, including large print, electronic, DVDs, CDs, Playaways, etc.

The physical constraints of the library itself limit the quantities of items that can be purchased in any format. This is one of the reasons that the Library enjoys the opportunities to purchase materials in an electronic format; it allows for expansion of the collection as well as providing alternative formats to Library patrons. Many of the Library's visually-impaired patrons are migrating to the electronic format, as it provides more choice.

The Library has roughly 4,033 physical items for adults available in either Audiobooks on CD, Playaways and MP3 Audiobooks formats. In comparing the Peterborough Library with other peer municipalities, Peterborough is relatively on par with the number of items being offered:

Barrie Public Library - 5768 adult items
Whitby Public Library - 5515 adult items
Ajax Public Library - 4006 adult items
Newmarket Public Library - 2602 adult items

*These other libraries are in larger communities (with the exception of Newmarket).

The Library adds approximately 350 to 400 CD Audiobooks for adults annually to the collection. The majority of the titles are fiction, bestsellers, and a few non-fiction (mostly biography, history, and popular nonfiction). The Library does not acquire as much literary or academic-oriented titles, as those titles do not circulate very well. The Library Staff tries to keep some literary classics as well as award-winners in stock. Of the latter, literary prize winners (especially Canadian) are not as commonly produced by the publishers.

The Library relies on CELA and interlibrary loans services to supplement its collection. Being able to borrow requested items from other libraries alleviates some of the demand on its space and financial resources. It also allows the Library to provide a better selection of alternative format materials to its patrons by pooling and sharing our resources.

Publishers decide which of their titles they want to make available in alternative formats, which is only a small percentage of their overall catalogue. CELA is the Library's connection to provide access to materials that are not available through the publishers. They have the ability to transfer existing works into an alternative format for patrons with print disabilities, a service the Library cannot provide locally at this time.

Submitted by,

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Attachments:
Appendix A – Materials Selection Policy