

**REPORT TO: COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 13 DECEMBER 2004**

**REPORT ON: THE INTRODUCTION OF INFORMAL AREAS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY LIBRARIES**

**REPORT BY: HEAD OF COMMUNITIES**

**REPORT NO: 807-2004**

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Committee's approval for the creation of more informal areas within the Community Libraries.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Committee approves the following:

2.1 the creation of informal areas, initially within each of the following Community Libraries: Blackness, Broughty Ferry and Fintry, with the intention to extend this provision across the City over the next year, incorporating lessons learned from the first phase.

2.2 the introduction of the provision, for a small charge, of tea, coffee and bottled water.

## **3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 The furniture costs arising from these proposals can be contained within the Communities Department's Revenue Budget 2004/05.

3.2 The recurring costs of the service will be met by charges, but will be based on cost recovery as opposed to income generation.

## **4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 These proposals aim to ensure the most effective and efficient use of departmental resources.

## **5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Dundee's strategy for Community Libraries reflects the needs of the City. The location of Community Libraries serves the population profile of the City and provides access to services locally for groups who would otherwise find it more difficult to access these opportunities.

5.2 Citizens will have access to enhanced facilities in some Community Libraries.

## **6.0 BACKGROUND**

6.1 Community Libraries have traditionally been at the centre of their local community. Developments in the provision of library services, including the introduction of computer facilities and free internet access, have encouraged more people within the local community to use their local library. These developments have meant that the traditional image of libraries has been changing.

6.2 In response to these changes, the Communities Department is actively seeking to develop the role of Community Libraries through the introduction of more informal areas. This will enable the Department to meet the expectations of visitors accustomed to the informal areas now commonly provided in most bookshops. The proposals are intended to ensure that new and existing customers have access to a welcoming environment.

6.3 The new informal areas will incorporate comfortable seating, newspaper provision, popular paperback fiction displays, and local community information, to encourage library users to stay within the library for an extended period. This will give library staff the opportunity to actively promote the range of information and services available, including internet access, adult learning opportunities, volunteering opportunities, bestseller titles and DVDs.

6.4 The provision of tea, coffee and bottled water for a small charge will further reinforce the change of image and environment and improve customer satisfaction, increasing the likelihood of return visits.

## **7.0 CONSULTATION**

7.1 These changes reflect feedback from current and prospective library users, and have been discussed with staff.

7.2 Consultation has taken place with the Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executives (Finance) and (Support Services) in the preparation of this report.

## **8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

8.1 No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

**Signed: Stewart Murdoch**  
**Head of Communities**

**Date: 3 December 2004**