

**REPORT TO: NEIGHBOURHOOD RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE -
20 OCTOBER 2003**

**REPORT ON: FINES AMNESTY – TO CELEBRATE 150 YEARS OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN
SCOTLAND**

REPORT BY: HEAD OF COMMUNITIES

REPORT NO: 588-2003

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The Head of Communities seeks the Council's approval to implement a fines amnesty on books throughout the City's libraries during the month of November 2003.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee approve:

2.1 the contents of this report.

2.2 the implementation of a moratorium on fines relating to overdue books during the month of November 2003, including the opportunity for members of the public to donate quality books which may be suitable for loan.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The total loss of fines income in one month is estimated at £750. However, this should be more than offset by the value of the returned material.

4.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None

5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The proposals contained in this report will encourage re-cycling.

6.0 FINES AMNESTY - BACKGROUND

6.1 The Public Libraries Act in Scotland was passed 150 years ago. The fines amnesty is one of a number of events planned to mark this anniversary. This moratorium on fines aims to encourage borrowers to return overdue library items without embarrassment or having to pay a fine.

6.2 The cost of recovering long term overdue items can be expensive and becomes decreasingly cost effective. It is anticipated that the fines amnesty will lead to the return of significant quantities of material.

6.3 The placement of special containers in a wide variety of Council buildings e.g. Housing offices, Olympia as well as libraries will heighten awareness of the campaign and allow people to return or donate items to more venues with different opening hours. These other departments will also provide anonymity to those returning very long overdue items.

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executives and the Directors of Housing and Leisure and Arts have been fully consulted in the development of this report.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

Stewart Murdoch
Head of Communities

3 October 2003