

**REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE COMMITTEE 20
AUGUST 2008**

SUBJECT: CROW HALL COSTINGS

BY: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

1. REASON FOR REPORT

1.1 To provide Committee with a breakdown of the financial expenditure incurred at the NCH Residential Unit at Crow Hall in Dyke.

1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to exercising the functions of the Council under the Children (Scotland) Act 1995.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the breakdown of the baseline cost of Crow Hall, which is £ 12,322 per month.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 A report providing full background information to the establishment of the pilot project was tabled at Education and Social Service Committees on 22 August 2007 (para 43 of the minute refers) and 9 April 2008 (para 8 of the minute refers).

3.2 The April Committee recommended an increase in NCH residential provision and this was approved by the Policy Committee on 30 April 2008 (para 13 of the minute refers).

3.3 A report was requested by Policy Committee to provide a breakdown of the expenditure for the Crow Hall Unit to be presented to the service committee.

3.4 The occupancy rates for Crow Hall during April – July 2008 are summarised in **TABLE 1**.

Table 1 – Occupancy rates

Young Person	Start of Placement	End of Placement	Length of Placement	Parent Resident (Y/N)
YP1	01.04.08	07.04.08	6 days	N
YP2	01.04.08	07.04.08	6 days	N
YP3	07.04.08	04.05.08	28 days	Y
YP4	04.05.08	30.05.08	26 days	N
YP5	06.05.08	02.06.08	28 days	N
YP6	03.06.08	15.06.08	9 days	Y
YPs 7-11	16.06.08	06.07.08	20 days	Y
YP12	06.07.08	03.08.08	Planned 28 days	N
YP13	18.07.08	14.08.08	Planned 28 days	N

- 3.5 The table reflects the ability of the Crow Hall to provide a flexible residential care resource, with the capacity to offer care and assessment for two unrelated children or up to a sibling group of four. The staff are skilled in undertaking assessments of parental capacity to care, and the unit is able to accommodate parents and children.
- 3.6 The existence of local temporary alternatives reduces the risk of out of area placement being made by Children's Hearings due to that being the only option available to them. Such placements made by Hearings may be made on a temporary basis initially but often develop into long-term arrangements.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Service Improvement Plan 2008/9

There is a clear coherence between the proposal in this report and Service Priority 4.1 of the Community Services Department's Service Development and Improvement Plan in consolidating the reduction of out of area placements.

(b) Policy and Legal

There is a relationship between the proposal and the duty placed on local authorities in the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 'to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need'.

(c) Resources (Financial, Risks, Staffing and Property)

The financial implications are referred to in Section 4(d) of this report.

The key risk issues relate to the:-

- (i) responsibility placed on the Council to accommodate vulnerable and challenging children and young people whose needs dictate that they should be looked-after away from home; and
- (ii) to reduce the additional impact on area social work teams of managing distant out of area placements and local Additional Resource Packages (without the necessary support infrastructure).

There are no direct staffing or property implications for the Council.

(d) Financial

The use of Additional Resource Packages (ARP's) are a 'spend to save' initiative designed to reduce expenditure on out of area placements. The cost has been met from the out of area budget.

The addition of a residential component to the ARP infrastructure will add additional costs to some such arrangements. However, this is designed to offset the use of distant placements and the time spent residentially will be minimised within the ARP's themselves.

The comparative data is that the cost per month is £12,322 providing a residential resource with the capacity to accommodate two young people; against an average equivalent of £14,400 per placement for the out of area alternatives.

The breakdown of the Crow Hall costs are summarised in **TABLE 2**.

Table 2 – Crow Hall costs per month

Item	Amount	Notes
Staff & Training	£9,413	Reflects Care Commission Standards for 24h care
Premises	£734	Includes heating
Running costs	£734	Household expenditure
Travel & Subsistence	£528	Includes maintaining school placements
Management fee @ 8%	£913	Contribution to NCH central support costs
Total	£12,322	-

A request may be made to the Council on a case by case basis for additional staffing if children, young people or families require extra support.

Based on the pilot it is estimated that the cost of utilising Crow Hall for a year would be £148,000.

The project is governed by a Service Level Agreement between the Council and NCH (Scotland).

(e) Consultations

Katrina McGillivray, Senior Personnel Adviser, Deborah Brands, Principal Accountant and Karen Wiles, Principal Solicitor have been consulted in the preparation of this report and with the relevant sections of the report.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The NCH Residential Unit at Crow Hall has added positively to the resources available to children and families in Moray. The provision reflects a high standard of care; the ability to maintain young people and their families in Moray and the achievement of agreed outcomes. The relationship between The Moray Council and NCH has enabled the integration of the residential services to maximise resources and skills. The overall cost per month of £12,322 for Crow Hall represents a significant saving to the Council compared with out of area equivalents.**

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Background Papers: with author
Ref: Pilot Development of NCH Residential Provision