

**REPORT TO: EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE ON 13
FEBRUARY 2008**

**SUBJECT: UPDATING OPERATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE MORAY
FOSTERING AND ADOPTION PANELS**

BY: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

1. REASON FOR REPORT

1.1 To seek approval from Committee in updating the operational arrangements for the Moray Adoption and Fostering Panels.

1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section D(2) and D(30) of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to functions under the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and the Adoption (Scotland) Act 1978.

2. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Committee agree the approval by Moray Council of carers assessed by Aberlour Child Care Trust for their Moray Options respite care scheme.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 At Social Work Committee on 4 March 1996, an Adoption and Fostering Panel was established in Moray to meet the new Council's responsibilities as a fostering and adoption agency (para 4 of the minute refers). On 1st April 1996 separate Adoption and Fostering Panels were created in accordance with the Adoption Agencies (Scotland) Regulations 1996 and the Fostering of Children (Scotland) Regulations 1996. The panels in Moray have the same membership but their proceedings are minuted separately.

3.2 The work of the Moray Adoption and Fostering Panels has been reported to Committee on an annual basis.

3.3 At Community Services Committee on 10 October 2001, a report was presented titled 'Discharge of duties under Fostering of Children (Scotland) Regulations 1996 to Aberlour Child Care Trust' (para 26 of the minute refers). Committee agreed that Aberlour Child Care Trust assume responsibility under Parts II and III of the Fostering of Children (Scotland) Regulations 1996 on behalf of the Moray Council in providing a respite care fostering scheme for children with disabilities. This is ongoing as part of the Trust's Moray Options Project.

3.4 Aberlour Childcare Trust have asked that the Moray Fostering Panel assumes approval responsibilities and review of carers for it's Moray Options respite care scheme. This will not add significantly to the work of the Moray Fostering Panel and is more operationally cost-effective than Aberlour maintaining their own Panel locally.

- 3.5 Carers would be approved by the Moray Council through it's Fostering Panel and then managed by the Moray Options Scheme with Aberlour Child Care Trust (ACCCT) discharging associated duties under Fostering of Children (Scotland) Regulations 1996.

An updated agreement to reflect these arrangements will be agreed with ACCT.

4. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a) Corporate Development Plan/ Community Plan/ Service Improvement Plan

The technical changes referred to in this report have no significant planning implications.

(b) Policy and Legal

The policy and legal implications have been referred to earlier in the report.

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

There are no significant resource implications associated with this report. The Moray Fostering Panel can absorb any additional workload.

(d) Consultations

This report has been prepared by the Chair of the Moray Fostering and Adoption Panels and Margaret Forrest, Senior Solicitor (Litigation and Licensing) who acts as the Panel's Legal Advisor.

Len Seal, Assistant Director (North), Aberlour Childcare Trust, Dave Cameron, Moray Fostering & Adoption Team Manager, Katrina McGillivray, Senior Personnel Advisor and Deborah Brands, Principal Accountant have been consulted in the preparation of this report and are in agreement with the content relating to their areas of responsibility.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The recommendation in this report seeks, for reasons of operational efficiency, the approval and review, through the Moray Fostering Panel, of carers assessed by Aberlour Child Care Trust for their Moray Options scheme.**

Author of Report: John Carney

Background Papers: with author

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