

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

SUBJECT: FOSTERING FINANCE AND RELATED ALLOWANCES

BY: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To gain approval for the level of payments for Moray Fostering Scheme Allowances based on the Fostering Network recommendations for 2008/09.
- 1.2 To gain approval for the level of payments for Residency Allowances and Adoption Allowances for 2008/09.
- 1.3 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section G (14) of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to the functions of the Council under the Children (Scotland) Act 1995. The report also relates to functions under the Adoption (Scotland) Act 1978 and the Children Act 1975.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **It is recommended that the Committee approves the allowances shown in Tables 1 and 2 below from 1st April 2008.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Moray Council Fostering Scheme was approved at Committee on 11th August 2004 (para 32 of the minute refers) and at Policy and Resources Committee on 1st September 2004 (para 20 of the minute refers).
- 3.2 A previous report on Fostering Finance and Related Allowances was tabled at Community Services Committee on 14th April 2007.
- 3.3 Fostering Allowances (the allowances paid to carers to provide direct care to children) are based on recommendations from the Fostering Network and reflect a 2.6% increase over the rates in 2007/08. The recommended rates for 2008/09 can be found in **Table 1**.

Table 1 – The Fostering Network recommended allowances from April 2008.

Age (Years)	Allowance per week
0 – 4	£121.68
5 – 10	£138.61
11 – 15	£172.55
16+	£209.86

- 3.4 These allowances along with agreed levels of fees to be paid to carers have been used to calculate the cost of the Moray Fostering Scheme in 2008/09.
- 3.5 COSLA has now ended its practice of recommending rates that could be used by the Moray Council to fix Residency Allowances and Adoption allowances locally. Subsequently, a 2.6% increase has been applied to rates for 2007/08. The recommended rates for 2008/09 can be found in **Table 2**.
- 3.6 **Table 2 – Proposes Residency Allowances and Adoption Allowances for 2008/09.**

Table 2 – Recommended Adoption & Residency Allowances from April 2008.

Age (Years)	Allowance per week
0 – 4	£71.31
5 – 10	£88.48
11 – 15	£110.15
16+	£142.61

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Service Improvement Plan

The 2007/08 Children's Services Development Plan needs to increase the number of alternative care placements available for children and the provision of realistic allowances to carers is part of that process.

(b) Policy and Legal

The Fostering of Children (Scotland) Regulations 1996 allow local authorities to set the payment levels for boarding-out allowances. The Adoption Allowance (Scotland) Regulations 1996 similarly allow local authorities to set allowances in relation to adoption and the Children Act 1975 allows local authorities to set the level of Residency Allowances.

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

The estimated additional costs of implementing the proposals are shown in **Table 3**.

Table 3

Fostering Scheme	Residency Allowances	Adoption Allowances	TOTAL
£21,780	£530	£2,770	£25,080

(d) Consultations

Katrina McGillivray, Senior Personnel Adviser, Deborah Brands, Principal Accountant and Margaret Forest, Senior Solicitor (Litigation and Licensing) 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 allowances recommended in this report are based on 2007/08 rates with an uplift for inflation.**

Author of Report: Moira Duncan

Background Papers: With Author

Ref: Comm Services/13.02.08/Fostering Finance and Related Allowances