

MEETING OF ANGUS COUNCIL

16 FEBRUARY 2017

**REVIEW OF FEES AND ALLOWANCES
WITHIN CHILDREN AND LEARNING DIRECTORATE CHILDREN'S SERVICES 2017-2018**

REPORT BY MARGO WILLIAMSON, STRATEGIC DIRECTOR - CHILDREN & LEARNING

ABSTRACT

This report sets out proposals for the fees and allowances within the Children and Learning Directorate Children and Family Services for 2017-2018.

1. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Council:

- (i) approve the rates specified in Appendix 1, with effect from 3 April 2017.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE ANGUS COMMUNITY PLAN/ SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT/ CORPORATE PLAN

This report contributes to the following local outcomes contained within the Angus Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement 2013-2016:

- (i) Our children and young people are confident individuals, effective contributors, successful learners and responsible citizens.
- (ii) Individual and families are involved in decisions which affect them.
- (iii) We have improved the health and wellbeing of our people and inequalities are reduced.

3. BACKGROUND

Each year Angus Council reviews the fees and allowances for specific services in line with statutory requirements, guidance and Angus Council policy. This report proposes the rates for 2017 – 2018 in relation to the Children and Families Service.

Please note that this year there is no proposal to increase Foster Carer fees or Child-minder fees and they will remain the same as was agreed in 2016/17.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 Fostering Allowances:** In April 2010 it was agreed that fostering allowances in Angus should be linked to the national rate established and revised each year by 'The Fostering Network' (TFN). These rates were used widely by independent fostering agencies and the majority of local authorities. However, TFN announced in 2015 that they would no longer make recommendations following an announcement by the Scottish Government that there would be a system of national recommendations. A national working group is taking forward this work. In the absence of a specific national recommendation, it is proposed that fostering allowances should increase by 1.5%.

- 4.2 Additional Holiday Allowance:** We want our children to enjoy the benefits of family holidays with their fostering families. To encourage carers to include their foster child/ren on family

holidays, it is proposed that foster carers are paid an additional £20 per day per child if they take their foster child on holiday. Other holiday allowances are not affected.

- 4.3 Proposed change to Christmas Allowance:** It is proposed that the Christmas allowance is revised to the equivalent of one week's fostering allowance paid at the rate applicable for the age of the child. This slight reduction is based on the feedback from foster carers that the current higher rate is not required.
- 4.4 Other expenses and allowances:** It is proposed that the recommended 1.5% increase is applied to all other allowances and expenses including those paid for kinship, residence and adoption allowances.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The additional cost associated with the proposed uplift in Fostering and equivalent allowances is £54,500 per annum and provision for this has been made within the 2017/18 budget.

Based on the number of placements, the maximum additional cost associated with the proposed additional holiday allowance is £23,500 per annum although it is unlikely that there will be 100 percent uptake of this. There is a saving of £4,600 in relation to the proposed reduction in the Christmas Allowance. Overall, the net position is a maximum cost of £18,900 which will be met within the existing revenue budget.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS (IF APPLICABLE)

This report does not require any specific risk issues to be addressed. The issues in the report have been the subject of consideration from an equalities perspective and an equalities impact assessment is not required.

7. CONCLUSION

This report sets out proposals for a revision of fees and allowances within Children and Learning Directorate Children and Family Services for 2017-2018.

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

REPORT AUTHOR: Kathryn Lindsay, Head of Children and Young People's Service
EMAIL DETAILS: childrenandlearning@angus.gov.uk

List of Appendices

Appendix 1