

Report

Report to: **Social Work Resources Committee**
Date of Meeting: **20 January 2021**
Report by: **Director, Health and Social Care**

Subject: **Remuneration for the Independent Chairs of the Fostering and Adoption Panel, Child Protection Committee and Adult Protection Committee**

1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ seek authorisation to increase the remuneration paid to the Independent Chairs of the Fostering and Adoption Panel and Child Protection and Adult Protection Committees from £300 per day to £350 per day

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the increase in remuneration paid to the Independent Chairs of the Fostering and Adoption Panel and Child Protection and Adult Protection Committees from £300 per day to £350 per day be approved.

3. Background

- 3.1. South Lanarkshire Council engages the use of Independent Chairs in relation to the Fostering and Adoption Panel and Child Protection and Adult Protection Committees. This is considered to be good practice and is, therefore, common in Fostering and Adoption Services and Protection Committees.
- 3.2. The use of Independent Chairs provides an essential impartial perspective that ensures that the functions of the panels are carried out rigorously. The panel and the Independent Chair has an essential quality assurance role in monitoring activity.
- 3.3. Independent Chairs are recruited through external advertisement. They are selected through an interview process and references and statutory checks are undertaken. They are given fixed term contracts and are appraised on an annual basis. They are not employed by the Council and invoice individually for the work they undertake.
- 3.4. Currently, Independent Chairs in South Lanarkshire are remunerated at a rate of £300 per day. They are also compensated for reasonable expenses, including parking costs.
- 3.5. The rates of remuneration have not been increased since 2015. The proposed uplift to £350 is based on the composite price index, prices at July 2020 were 9.2% higher than average prices since 2015 and a benchmarking exercise with other local authorities.

- 3.6. Benchmarking has shown that the remuneration paid in South Lanarkshire has fallen behind that paid elsewhere for fostering and adoption panel chairs. Of the sample six local authorities contacted, 5 paid £350 per day or more.

Local Authority	Remuneration per day
South Lanarkshire	£300
Clackmannanshire	£350
Argyll and Bute	£350
West Lothian	£350
Borders	£400
East Lothian	£300
Mid Lothian	£40 per hour

4. Practice Implications

- 4.1. Having experienced and capable Panel Chairs in place has a positive impact on employees who present to panel as well as carers and applicants who attend. This can promote professional and accountable practice within our authority.

5. Employee Implications

- 5.1. The Independent Chairs are not employed by South Lanarkshire Council. The table below shows the current number of Independent Chairs and related Committees and Panels

Post: Independent Chair	No of posts	Remuneration per day
Fostering and Adoption Panels	2	£350
Child Protection Committee	1	£350
Adult Protection Committee	1	£350

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. This cost will be met from the Family Placement budget and the respective Committee budgets for the Chair. There is capacity within the existing budget for this. The effective chairing of panels, particularly in relation to agreeing children's permanence plans, may reduce legal costs encountered by our authority by ensuring thorough examination of plans before legal routes are agreed.

7. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

- 7.1. There are no implications for climate change, sustainability and environmental implications in terms of the information contained in this report.

8. Other Implications

- 8.1. There are no risk implications associated with this report.
- 8.2. There are no sustainable development issues associated with this report.
- 8.3. There are no other issues associated with this report.

9. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 9.1. This report does not introduce a new policy function or strategy, nor does it recommend a change to existing policy, function or strategy, therefore, no impact assessment is required

9.2. There is no requirement for consultation in respect of this report.

Val de Souza
Director, Health and Social Care

24 November 2020

Link(s) to Council Values/Ambitions/Objectives

- ◆ Protect vulnerable children, young people and adults

Previous References

- Social Work Resources Committee of 11 November 2015

List of Background Papers

- none

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

Jan Strain, Adoption and Fostering Manager

Ext: 6457 (Phone: 01355 806457)

Email: jan.strain@southlanarkshire.gov.uk