

EX150. KINSHIP CARE – PROPOSED REVIEW OF POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The Executive considered a report by the Director of Social Work Services recommending an amendment to the Kinship Care Policy and Procedures.

Following an enquiry by the Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) in regard to the equity of payments to approved kinship carers of looked after children compared to allowances paid to foster parents, the Kinship Care Policy was reviewed. The enquiry, made to a number of Local Authorities, has implications for all Scottish Local Authorities and a response is being co-ordinated by Social Work Scotland and COSLA, with the Scottish Government. At the request of the Scottish Government an interim position is sought pending a longer term solution.

The report provided background together with the legal and financial implications.

Decision

The Executive agreed to:-

- (1) note the enquiry that Falkirk Council have received from Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) in relation to equity of payment to kinship carers of looked after children with foster carers, the potential for EHRC to use its enforcement powers and the legal and financial implications arising from the proposed amendment to the current Kinship Care Policy and Procedures;**
- (2) the amendment to the current Kinship Care Policy and Procedures on an interim basis to make payments in terms of Section 22 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 with a view to ensuring Kinship Carers income is broadly comparable with foster care allowances, effective incrementally from 1 April 2015;**
- (3) authorise the Director of Social Work Services, or duly authorised officers on her behalf, to continue working with Social Work Scotland; COSLA and Scottish Government to contribute to a longer term solution, and**
- (4) request the Director of Social Work Services and thereafter the Director of Children's Services to update the Executive as the situation progresses.**