

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT

Social Work Committee :	Subject : Special Payments to Foster Carers
From : Jim Dickie, Director of Social Work Prepared by : Cheryl Moran, Senior Child Care Officer	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek approval of special fostering payments for two permanent foster carers for the following purposes.

Payment towards the purchase of a car

- (a) A contribution towards a large family estate car for community foster carers who care for a North Lanarkshire child.

Payment towards accommodation costs

- (b) To provide a financial contribution to assist permanent foster carers to move to accommodation suitable for two North Lanarkshire siblings who are placed with them on a permanent basis.

2. BACKGROUND**2.1 Payment towards the purchase of a car**

Mr. & Mrs. M. are community foster carers approved by Glasgow City Council. They have provided permanent care for a child, JW aged thirteen years, since June, 1995. It is anticipated that JW will remain in this placement until he reaches adulthood. North Lanarkshire Council has parental rights and responsibilities for JW under Section 86 of the Children (Scotland) Act, 1995.

Mr. & Mrs. M. also provide permanent care for a sibling group of five children from Glasgow, aged between six and twelve years.

In order to provide transport for the whole family, Mr. & Mrs. M. leased a people carrier which they paid for themselves.

The lease expires in March, 1999 and Mr. & Mrs. M. intend to enter into another lease arrangement which they will pay for themselves.

Due to the ages of the children, and in attempting to provide for their individual social and educational needs, Mr. & Mrs. M. have asked Glasgow City Council to contribute to the

purchase of a second vehicle. This will enable both carers to facilitate the childrens' needs and remove the current difficulties the family experience in attempting to promote activities for each of the children to improve self esteem and social skills.

Glasgow City Council Social Work (Service Development) Sub Committee approved funding of £8,000 towards the total cost of £13,000 for a large family estate car on 8th February, 1999. Mr. & Mrs. M. will contribute £3,200 and they are requesting that North Lanarkshire Council meet the cost of the remaining £1,600.

2.2 **Payment towards accommodation costs**

Mr. & Mrs. D. were approved as permanent foster carers for D. & P.K. by North Lanarkshire Fostering Panel in May, 1998. Parental Responsibilities Orders for D & P have been applied for in terms of Section 86 of the Children (Scotland) Act, 1995.

D & P had been placed with Mr. & Mrs. D since May, 1995 on a temporary fostering basis prior to their approval by the Fostering Panel as permanent carers in May, 1998, where their accommodation needs were noted by the Fostering Panel.

Mr. & Mrs. D lived in a five apartment public sector house which was not adequate to meet D & PK's long term needs as they shared a bedroom with two other male children aged eleven and sixteen years.

Agreement was given by the Social Work and Housing Departments in line with current procedures for Mr. & Mrs. D to appoint an architect to undertake a feasibility study to convert the loft to provide two additional bedrooms.

The recommendations were to be presented to the Joint Housing and Social Work Committee for approval. Due to structural problems it was not possible to proceed with the proposed conversion.

However, Mr. & Mrs. D were offered alternative larger accommodation by the Housing Department's Special Cases Committee.

The standard of accommodation required to be improved to bring it up to the standard of Mr. & Mrs. D's previous accommodation which they had upgraded considerably. The new accommodation required complete refurbishment and redecoration.

Mr. & Mrs. D accepted the accommodation due to the urgent need to improve the living arrangements for D & P in line with the wishes of the Fostering Panel and with the backing of the Social Work Department.

3. **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.1 The cost of contributing to the purchase of a large family vehicle for Mr. & Mrs. M would be £1,600.
- 3.2 The cost of contributing to the financial expenditure incurred by Mr. & Mrs. D in refurbishing their current accommodation is £5,800.

3.3 Both of the above costs, totaling £7,400 would be met from the existing fostering budget held at Child Care Headquarters which is specifically set aside for such purposes.

4. SUMMARY

4.1 The foster carers for JW and D & P provide permanent care for children for whom the alternative accommodation would be in a residential children's home. These children's immediate and long term needs are being met in secure and stable family units.

4.2 The requests are for money to meet the cost of extraordinary expenditure to meet the particular needs of each child and is not provided for in the payment of fostering allowances.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Committee -

- approve £1,600 to contribute to the cost of a large family estate car for Mr. & Mrs.M.
- approve £5,800 to contribute to the extraordinary expenses incurred by Mr. & Mrs. D moving to accommodation to meet the needs of D. & P.K.


JIM DICKIE,
DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK
8th March, 1999.

(For further information contact Cheryl Moran, Senior Child Care Officer - Telephone 01698 332045).