

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE		Subject: PRIVATE FOSTERING : REVISED GUIDANCE FOR STAFF	
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK			
Date: 24 AUGUST 2006	Ref: SG/CC		

### 1. Purpose of Report

To advise committee of revised departmental guidance for staff regarding private fostering.

### 2. Background

- 2.1. Private Fostering is the term used when a parent or guardian places a child under school leaving age in the care of someone who is not a close relative or officially approved foster carer for a period of more than 28 days.
- 2.2. The department currently follows private fostering procedures that were produced by Strathclyde Regional Council.
- 2.3. Under Section 2 of the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001, the Care Commission has a duty to inspect how the local authority responds to private fostering in its area.
- 2.4. There are currently no known private foster care arrangements in the North Lanarkshire Council area.

### 3. Proposals

- 3.1. The revised procedures comply with the Council's duties to:
  - visit the child and their parent/guardian when notified of the placement.
  - obtain medical information on the child.
  - ascertain the child's wishes.
  - visit the private foster home and check it is appropriate to meet the child's needs.
  - interview the carers.
  - obtain medical information on the carers.
  - prepare written reports and make decisions as to the suitability of the placement.
  - give written notification to the parent/guardian on the suitability of the placement.
  - visit the child on a regular basis.
- 3.2. The Scottish Executive has produced information leaflets regarding private fostering. These leaflets have been amended to include local contact details, and will be distributed throughout North Lanarkshire. This will ensure public awareness of their duty to advise the Council of a private fostering arrangement taking place.

#### 4. Financial/Personnel/Legal/Policy Implications

4.1. The revised procedures have been considered by Legal Services and are approved as meeting the Council's legal obligations. Private fostering is underpinned by the following legislation :

- i) Foster Children (Scotland) Act 1984
- ii) Foster Children (Private Fostering)(Scotland) Regulations 1985
- iii) Section 2 of the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001

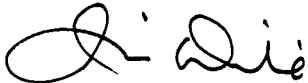
4.2. There are no duties on the council to make payment to private foster carers.

4.3. These procedures do not apply to those foster carers or link carers who are approved by local authorities or voluntary agencies who look after children in the care of the authority.

#### 5. Recommendations:

5.1. Committee is asked to:

- i) note the contents of the report.



**Director of Social Work**  
**25 July 2006**

For further information on this report please contact Susan Taylor, Manager, Children, Families and Justice (tel: 01698 332032) or Jim McCreanor, Service Manager Children & Families on tel (01698 332723)

Note : A copy of the revised guidance has been placed in the members library.