

**NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL  
REPORT**

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE		Subject: MEMBER / OFFICER GROUP: FOSTERING AND ADOPTION SERVICES
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 24 AUGUST 2006	Ref: JD/JM	

**1. Purpose of Report / Introduction**

The purpose of this report is to set out the terms of reference for a member / officer group on aspects of fostering and adoption services in North Lanarkshire.

**2. Background**

- 2.1. At the Social Work Committee on 18 May 2006 a report on fostering service developments and financial allowances was approved.
- 2.2. This report set out in some detail significant changes in the organisational arrangements for fostering services in North Lanarkshire aimed at ensuring the Council and the Department are geared up to deliver on improved foster care services consistent with national policy and legislation.
- 2.3. It is considered timely to take the opportunity to look further at how fostering and adoption services take account of practice issues in this very important field including; recruitment, assessment, approval, matching and support. The member / officer group will focus on these areas.
- 2.4. Members will be aware that the Executive is currently undertaking a major review of adoption legislation and is about to launch a national fostering strategy.
- 2.5. It is important to note that recent contact from the Care Commission has confirmed that the fostering service in North Lanarkshire will be inspected in August 2006. The inspection will assess the service against national standards relating to:
  - services to children; including information, decision making, and promoting good quality care
  - service to foster carers; including assessing and approving carers, allowances, expenses and fees and the fostering panel
  - management and staffing; including structure posts and management arrangements

**3. Member / Officer Group membership**

- 3.1. The member / officer group will comprise core membership of 3-4 elected members, including the Convener and fostering and adoption panel members and 3-4 Social Work managers including the Head of Social Work Services and Manager, Children and Families. In addition other individuals will be invited to join the group on an adhoc basis where it is considered that they will have an important contribution to make.

- 3.2. The Social Work Department will provide administrative support to the work of the group

#### **4. Approach**

- 4.1. The group will consider the following:

- information in policy and performance reports provided to the Social Work Committee in North Lanarkshire Council
- national policy and related guidance in the fields of fostering and adoption
- experience of foster carers and adoptive parents in North Lanarkshire
- experience of staff involved in fostering and adoption services
- input from specialist adoption and fostering agencies

- 4.2. Other sources of information and perspectives will be taken up where they emerge and are identified in the course of the work of the member / officer group.

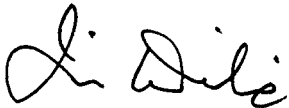
#### **5. Timescale**

- 5.1 The group will have its inaugural meeting in September 2006 and will be expected to complete its work in time to report to the Social Work Committee in January 2007.

#### **6. Recommendation**

The Social Work Committee is invited to note:

- (i) the establishment of a member/officer group
- (ii) the intention to report in January 2007



**Jim Dickie**  
**Director of Social Work**  
**5 July 2006**

For further information on this report please contact Jim Dickie, Director of Social Work on telephone 01698 332027