

**REPORT TO: DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL EDUCATION COMMITTEE – 21 MAY 2001**

**REPORT ON: EDUCATION MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCES – PILOT SCHEME**

**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION**

**REPORT NO: 315-2001**

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

**1.1** This report seeks approval for the adoption of a Pilot Scheme for the payment of Education Maintenance Allowances for sessions 2001/2002 to 2003/2004.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

**2.1** The Committee is recommended to:

- i) approve the proposed pilot scheme for the awarding of maintenance allowances to young people between the ages of 16 and 19 from lower income families to provide an incentive for them to remain in full-time education and to improve their attainment levels.
- ii) agree that in addition to administering payments to eligible S5 and S6 pupils the Council will facilitate the payment of maintenance allowances to eligible Dundee College students.
- iii) instruct the Director of Education in conjunction with the Director of Personnel and Management Services to bring forward a further report on the additional temporary staffing implications attached to the administration of the pilot scheme which will be fully funded by the Scottish Executive.
- iv) instruct the Director of Education to proceed to invite applications for maintenance allowances by circulating advertising materials and application forms to schools and by advertising as appropriate.

## **3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**3.1** The Scottish Executive will fully fund the costs of the pilot scheme including payment of Maintenance Allowances, Attendance and Achievement bonuses; additional staffing costs and start-up costs eg. publicity, stationery.

The initial estimate of costs provided to the Scottish Executive total approximately £2.5M per academic year. This figure includes an estimate of the cost of allowances paid to students by Dundee College.

#### **4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The provision of Education Maintenance Allowances will improve the access to skills, knowledge and information needed to assist pupils and students from low income families to play a full part in society.

#### **5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The provision of Education Maintenance Allowances will improve the quality of access to educational opportunities for pupils and students from low income families in Dundee.

#### **6.0 BACKGROUND**

- 6.1 The Scottish Executive has been piloting Education Maintenance Allowances in East Ayrshire Council since the start of session 1999. The three year pilot project is aimed at helping young people from low income families to stay on in full-time education.

- 6.2 On 26<sup>th</sup> March 2001 the Minister for Enterprise and Lifelong Learning announced that it was intended to extend the pilot project to a further three authorities Dundee City Council, Glasgow City Council and West Dunbartonshire Council. These Councils had been identified because staying-on rates are lower than average at school, income levels are lower than average and unemployment levels are higher than average.

#### **7.0 THE PILOT SCHEME**

- 7.1 The proposed pilot scheme for payment of Education Maintenance Allowances, copies of which have been placed in the Councillors' Lounge, will replace the existing scheme for higher school bursaries for the duration of the pilot, and is based on the guidance given by the Scottish Executive Enterprise and Lifelong Learning Department.

- 7.2 The aim of the pilot is to test the extent to which a financial incentive improves post-16 participation retention and achievement rates in education. This follows research which indicates that young people from low income families are considerably less likely to stay-on in formal learning after compulsory education.

- 7.3 In order to participate pupils are required to sign up to a Learning Agreement with their school giving a commitment to their programme of study and agreed levels of attainment and attendance. They are also committed to supporting the school's aims and standard of conduct.

- 7.4 Education Maintenance Allowances of up to £40 per week will be paid to eligible pupils/students between the ages of 16 and 19 years who are engaged in an approved learning agreement for a minimum of 21 hours per week.

**7.5** To be eligible pupils will require to be resident in Dundee or attending a Dundee school in year S5 or S6 and College students will require to be resident in Dundee. The amount of allowance payable is on a sliding scale in bands up to £40 per week dependent on total taxable family income ie. a maximum of £40 where annual income is less than £13,000 to nil where income exceeds £25,000.

**7.6** Payment is made directly to the pupils/students bank account.

**8.0 CONSULTATION**

**8.1** This report has been subject of consultation with the Director of Finance, Director of Support Services and Director of Personnel and Management Services.

**8.2 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information), were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.

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Director of Education

AHW/DD  
May 2001