

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE - 18 August 2003
REPORT ON: PURCHASE OF COMPUTERS FOR FOSTER CARERS
REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK
REPORT NO: 487 - 2003

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report seeks approval to purchase 53 computers and supporting software/training packages for Foster Carers.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Social Work Committee:-

2.1 approve the purchase of 53 computers and supporting software/training packages for Dundee Foster Carers providing placements to school age children.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Monies have been made available from the Scottish Executive to be spent on improving the educational attainment of Looked After Children. The £60,000 required will come from this fund.

4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Promoting Young People's educational attainment is in line with the principles of Agenda 21 in terms of enabling and empowering Young People to participate in their community.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The work of the Family Placement Service promotes the principles of equal opportunities.

6.0 MAIN TEXT

6.1 Background

Research shows that most Looked After Children have low educational attainment. They are likely to leave school earlier, with fewer qualifications and be at greater risk of school exclusion. Local Authorities clearly have a duty to ensure that the care Looked After Children and Young People receive is of the highest possible standard, including their educational opportunities.

Foster Carers can make a significant difference to the educational attainment of Children and Young People. They ensure educational attainment is given a high priority, providing an "educationally rich environment" where learning opportunities are maximised and support is readily available.

6.2 Computer Packages

It is proposed to provide each Foster Carer home, with placements of school age children, with a computer package, comprising of 3 main parts.

- A personal computer with on-board graphics and sound, printer, CD/DVD re-writer and scanner.
- Individual educational software packages to meet the specific needs of the children and young people in the placement.
- Training and support tutorials for Carers and Children and Young People, based within the foster home.

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 Foster Carers have been consulted regarding this proposal and view this as an excellent opportunity to help children and young people with their learning. Consultation has also taken place with the Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Depute Chief Executive (Finance) and the Director of Education.

8.0 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.

Alan G Baird
Director of Social Work
Date

8th August 2003