Item No: 9

Meeting Date: **Wednesday 25th November 2026**

Glasgow City Integration Joint Board

Report By: **Karen Dyball, Assistant Chief Officer, Children's Services**

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Scottish Recommended Allowances for Kinship and Fostering Services

Purpose of Report:	To advise the IJB of the Scottish Recommended Allowances for kinship and fostering services agreed by COSLA and the Scottish Government and to seek approval to implement the payment of the proposed allowances backdated to 1st April 2026.

Background/Engagement:	The Scottish Recommended Allowance (SRA) was introduced by Scottish Government in 2023 to ensure a consistent minimum allowance to support kinship and foster carers. The rates have been increased in 2026/27, backdated to 1st April 2026. This development is aligned to the report of the Independent Care Review and the delivery of the Promise through seeking to strengthen the stability and quality of care arrangements for children and young people who cannot live with their parent/s.

Governance Route:	The matters contained within this paper have been previously considered by the following group(s) as part of its development. HSCP Senior Management Team ☒ Council Corporate Management Team ☐ Health Board Corporate Management Team ☐ Council Committee ☐ Update requested by IJB ☐

	Other ☐ Not Applicable ☐

Recommendations:	The Integration Joint Board is asked to: a) Note the proposed Scottish Recommended Allowances; b) Approve the proposed Scottish Recommended Allowances for kinship and foster carers and implementation of the new rates by Glasgow City Council, backdated to 1st April 2026; and c) Instruct the council to uplift the rates paid to kinship and foster carers as outlined within this report.

Relevance to Integration Joint Board Strategic Plan:

Foster Carers and kinship carers are integral to the delivery of high-quality stable care for children in Glasgow who cannot live at home with their own families. These carers are critical to the delivery of the children's transformation programme to sustain children and young people's links to their families, schools and communities in Glasgow. This contributes to achieving the vision set out in the IJB's Strategic Plan and all the Partnership Priorities.

Implications for Health and Social Care Partnership:	
Reference to National Health & Wellbeing Outcome(s):	Foster, Kinship Carers and Supported Carers contribute to key national outcomes by improving outcomes for children and young people, through improving their safety, quality of life and health. Improving support for carers ensures that children and young people have positive experiences, and have their dignity respected, when being supported by services. Such outcomes are aligned to the HSCP's transformation agenda to strengthen family-based care, thereby securing better outcomes for all children and young people.

Personnel:	None.

Carers:	Carers are key stakeholders and partners to ensure the best outcomes for care experienced children and young people. Supports to carers directly benefit the young people in their carer, supporting stability and positive outcomes.

Provider Organisations:	Providers of fostering services commissioned and/or purchased by the HSCP may consider the impact of the SRA on their services, many of which already pay in excess of the SRA.

Equalities:	An EQIA is not deemed necessary. The wider Children's Transformation Programme, of which the work detailed in this report is a part, has been subject to a recent and updated EQIA.

Fairer Scotland Compliance:	The Children's Transformation Programme actively seeks to reduce inequalities and to support children, young people, and carers to improve their quality of life and reduce the impact of health and social inequalities. Sustainable and stable placements for children and young people not only promotes the opportunity for better outcomes but significantly reduces the cost of additional placements and costs.

Financial:	The adoption of the SRA has financial implications which are detailed in the report. Additional funding of £949,000 has been received from the Scottish Government for this purpose and is intended to cover the difference between current rates paid by Glasgow and the SRA.

Legal:	There are no direct legal implications of implementing the SRA in the way proposed in the report, however all normal legal processes will be followed.

Economic Impact:	Providing children and young people with high quality care makes best use of current resources and mitigates against the need for longer term or specialist resources, through ensuring positive long-term outcomes. Additional financial support mitigates the impact of the cost of living and has a positive economic impact for children and young people, enabling them to achieve educationally and in future employment, through supporting stable consistent high quality care arrangements.

Sustainability:	The implementation of the uplift in the SRA is crucial to mitigate the impact of cost of living pressures on carers and sustaining the availability of kinship and foster carers for Glasgow's children and young people. Continued investment in financially supporting carers is crucial to sustaining the provision of carers, which in turn contributes to sustaining the service's transformational agenda.

Sustainable Procurement and Article 19:	None.

Risk Implications:	There are a number of risks associated with decision making in relation to the SRA. It is possible, if unlikely, that a significant, sustained increase in children and young

	people entering kinship or fostering arrangements could create significant unbudgeted cost pressures. However, the greater risk is that failing to implement the SRA will add to destabilisation of kinship and fostering arrangements, contributing to placement breakdown and incurring greater financial expense, and impacting on the wellbeing, stability and safety of children and young people. Scotland is experiencing a significant reduction in the numbers of foster carers entering the role, and a significant number are aging out of caring: financial pressures appear to play a role in deterring prospective carers. The associated increase in the allowance to Kinship Carers also strengthens the opportunity for placement stability and the opportunity for children and young people to remain within their extended families and also often within their local school and local community.

Implications for Glasgow City Council:	As discussed in the report, the implementation of the SRA to carers looking after young people 18 and over, has financial implications over the grant amount, however, failure to implement to all kinship and foster arrangements in scope risks destabilising placements to older young people, increasing the risk of breakdown, and increased financial expense. Not implementing the SRA could cause reputational damage.

Implications for NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde:	None.

Direction Required to Council, Health Board or Both	
Direction to:	
1. No Direction Required	☐
2. Glasgow City Council	☒
3. NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde	☐
4. Glasgow City Council and NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde	☐

1. Purpose

1.1 To advise the IJB of the increase and extension to the Scottish Recommended Allowance (SRA) for kinship care and foster care services, previously implemented in 2023 by agreement with COSLA and Scottish Government.

1.2 To seek approval to implement the increased SRA allowances, backdated to 1st April 2026.

2. Background

2.1 In March 2022 the IJB agreed an increase in financial support to the 40% of children in Glasgow's foster and kinship placements who were believed to be below the, then, anticipated Scottish Recommended Allowance (SRA) level.

2.2 The SRA was a key commitment in the Programme for Government and in the Scottish Government's Promise Implementation Plan, published in March 2022. It aligns with the Scottish Government priority of tackling child poverty and supporting the most vulnerable in society, especially given the ongoing cost of living crisis. Specifically, the SRA is intended to help ensure that children in foster and kinship care get the support they need to thrive.

2.3 When implemented, the SRA introduced parity in the allowances paid to foster carers and kinship carers to meet the costs of care for children who they are looking after, regardless of where they live in Scotland.

The allowances are intended to cover the following:

- Food, toiletries, clothes, wear and tear
- Hobbies and activities
- Bedding, furniture
- Pocket money / toys
- Insurance and utility bill increases
- Daily access to a computer and the internet for homework/course work/ mobile phone
- Transport costs for the child (for the purpose of attending review meetings, children's hearings, contact, travel to school, college or other educational facility)
- Holiday costs to cover school holiday activities and family trips
- Birthday / Christmas or other cultural or religious events.

2.4 In addition to the allowances, foster carers are also entitled to fees paid by the local authority and kinship carers have the ability to draw down Child Benefit payments, in addition to any other relevant welfare benefits.

2.5 In November 2022 the IJB also agreed to increase the fee to foster carers from £150 to £165.

2.6 In November 2023, the IJB further agreed to implement the agreed SRA rates, backdated to 1st April 2023. This included the additional four weeks allowance paid to carers to cover additional costs of holidays and birthdays throughout the year.

2.7 In May 2026 the IJB agreed to implement the agreed 2025/26 SRA rates backdated to 1st April 2025 to Kinship Carers, Foster Carers and Supported Carers.

2.8 In June 2026 the IJB agreed to increase fees to all Foster Carers and Supported Carers to an additional £100 per week per child to be implemented on 1st October 2026. This was in recognition that the fee element of payments to carers had not kept up with inflation or national trends and had fallen behind other local authorities. This investment was part of work being undertaken to attract more foster carers to work in Glasgow as the number of carers was reducing and pressure on current placements was considerable.

2.9 £949,000 has been awarded to Glasgow City per letter of 11th May 2026: this represents a shortfall of £22,441 for implementation of the allowance to all children and young people including those over the age of 18.

3. Financial Implications

3.1 The updated rates for 2026/27 are shown below:

Age	**0-4**	**5-10**	**11-15**	**16+**
SRA	£177.68	£206.71	£206.71	£283.35

3.2 The SRA remains the recommended national allowance that all local authorities must pay as a minimum. Local authorities that already pay above these rates should continue to do so, ensuring that no existing kinship or foster carers are financially disadvantaged as a result of this change.

3.3 Funding has been made available from Scottish Government for previous annual uplifts and this forms part of the Children and Families budget. For the 2026/27 rate increase the Scottish Government have allocated £949,000 to Glasgow.

3.4 The costs of implementing the 2026/27 SRA increase are broken down across age groups for children in foster care, supported care, kinship care and adoptive carers are shown in the table below:

Age band	Current weekly allowance	New weekly rate	Difference weekly	Annual difference	Number of children/YP	Total cost (by age)
0-4	£171.17	£177.68	£6.51	£364.56	185	£67,298
5-10	£199.14	£206.71	£7.57	£423.92	472	£198,055
11-15	£199.14	£206.71	£7.57	£423.92	593	£248,417
16/17	£272.97	£283.35	£10.38	£581.28	267	£152,644
18+	£272.97	£283.35	£10.38	£581.28	347	£200,774
Additional Cost (Foster Care, Supported Care, kinship care, adoption allowance, excluding short breaks)						£867,188
Cost of short breaks						£4,258
Additional Cost of Purchased Services						£99,995

Total cost	**£971,441**
Funding from Scottish Government	£949,000
Variance – Additional Costs to HSCP	**£22,441**

3.5 By including the additional costs associated with short breaks and eligible purchased services, the total cost of implementing the 2026/27 is £971,441. The small overspend against Scottish Government funding of £22,441 will be met form existing Children and Families budgets.

4. Recommendations

4.1 The Integration Joint Board is asked to:

a) Note the proposed Scottish Recommended Allowances;
b) Approve the proposed Scottish Recommended Allowances for kinship and foster carers and implementation of the new rates by Glasgow City Council, backdated to 1st April 2026; and
c) Instruct the council to uplift the rates paid to kinship and foster carers as outlined within this report.

Direction from the Glasgow City Integration Joint Board

1	**Reference number**	251126-09
2	**Report Title**	Scottish Recommended Allowances for Kinship and Fostering Services
3	**Date direction issued by Integration Joint Board**	25 November 2026
4	**Date from which direction takes effect**	25 November 2026
5	**Direction to:**	Glasgow City Council only
6	**Does this direction supersede, revise or revoke a previous direction – if yes, include the reference number(s)**	Yes (reference number: 130526-10) Supersedes
7	**Functions covered by direction**	Children's Services – Fostering, Supported Carer and Kinship Care Allowances
8	**Full text of direction**	Glasgow City Council is directed to implement the payment of the uplifted Scottish Recommended Allowances for kinship and foster carers, backdated to 1st April 2026 and including the retention of the additional 4 weeks of allowances made over the course of the year.
9	**Budget allocated by Integration Joint Board to carry out direction**	The budget allocation for implementation of the new rates is Glasgow City's allocation of £949,0000 from the Scottish Government. The shortfall in funding of £22,441 will be drawn from the service's core budget.
10	**Performance monitoring arrangements**	In line with the agreed Performance Management Framework of the Glasgow City Integration Joint Board and the Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership.
11	**Date direction will be reviewed**	April 2027