

## CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

### POSSIBLE FEES OPTIONS FOR SAFEGUARDERS

Question 1: Do you agree that the current fee scheme should be abolished and replaced?

Yes  No

#### Comments

The current scheme is more complex than is necessary. This was developed through negotiations between COSLA, SSA and representative of administrators of local authority panels. At that time it reflected the views of the majority of safeguarders as to an appropriate level respect of fees.

There had been serious inequalities in the remuneration safeguarders claimed and received. It was intended as an interim measure to attempt to standardise fees, acknowledging the aspects of work entailed in the role. Automatic annual increases in line with inflation were built in.

Once in place it was intended that further appraisal of the scheme would be undertaken. However COSLA subsequently decided to cease advising local authorities about levels of fees. This resulted in a system more complex than necessary remaining in place but also to different fees being paid , dependent on whether local authority continued to raise fees annually as previously agreed.

Question 2: Which of the fees options (1 - 4) would you support?

Option 1  Option 2  Option 3  Option 4

#### Comments

***This response reflects the consensus views of SSA members.***

SSA gives qualified support to Option 2.

This is considered the most attractive of the four options. It does ensure remuneration is standardised and that the different elements of the task are

acknowledged.

All respondents to SSA internal consultation agreed about the need for a about a national standardised rate. However we consider the current scheme complicated and cumbersome.

Option 2 does not eliminate the unnecessary complexities of what can be claimed. We consider the Fees structure needs to be simplified and also that the level of remuneration should be raised to more accurately reflect the task, as detailed in response to Question 3.

While these are the views expressed by most members who responded to SSA seeking comments the following individual comments were made:

- Some individual members would seek a more radical overhaul of the Fees structure and seek to have greater increases in the level of remuneration than proposed below.
- Some would like minor tweaks such as postage added
- One respondent considers that proposal two is, and should stand while the fees as suggested by SSA response are unrealistic.
- one favoured proposal 4 with a separate report fee

Question 3: Do you have a suggestion as to alternative method of fees payments? If so, please provide details.

#### Comments

SSA propose:

#### **In respect of Children's Hearings**

##### **Appointment Fees**

Appointment Fee for an individual child	£400
Additional Fee for additional children living together (one set fee despite number of children)	£100
Additional Fee for Additional Child Living separately	£200
Fee for Continued Hearing	£200

##### **Attendance Fees**

per Children's Hearing, irrespective of number of children and living arrangements	£200
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#### **In respect of Sheriff Court**

### **Appointment Fees**

Appointment Fee for an individual child	£400
Additional Fee for additional children living together (one set fee despite number of children)	£100
Additional Fee for Additional Child Living separately	£200
Fee for Continued Hearing	£200

### **Attendance Fees**

per Court diet, irrespective of number of children and their living arrangements	£200
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## **EXPENSES AND ALLOWANCES FOR SAFEGUARDERS**

Question 4: Do you accept the proposal to apply Scottish Government Rates for expenses and allowances?

Yes  No  (if you have answered 'No' please give your reasons below)

### **Comments**

On the whole SSA members consider the application of Scottish Government rates to be fair.

Question 5: Are there other expenses or allowances you would like to be added to the proposed list?

### **Comments**

We would suggest some discretion be given to those administering the National Panel to make additional payment in exceptional circumstances e.g. as reflected in the rates for expenses and allowances, on occasion an appointment might result in a safeguarder being away from their base overnight with these absences sometimes being for two or three night depending on the distance and number of interviews involved. Some

recognition of being unavailable for other commitments work would be appropriate. While these circumstances are rare, at times the safeguarder's involvement can save the expenses of other, both professional and family, travelling.

We are happy to provide more details examples if required.

Question 6: If you support an alternative set of expenses and allowances, please provide detail.

#### Comments

We accept the proposed set of expenses and allowances, apart from comment in respect of Question 5.above, so have no further comments to make.