

## **Appendix 2: Methodology for each proposed rate increase set out in Appendix 1.**

To aid understanding each charge as been labelled as either “to be noted” or “to be approved” in line with the recommendations. Where a charge is to “to be noted” these relate to charges that are set by or in line with the Government or external agencies.

### **1.1 Adoption Service Charges (to be noted)**

#### **Inter-Agency Charges – Voluntary Adoption Agencies and Local Authorities**

The inter-agency fee for adoption was first introduced in 1992 to reflect the expenditure incurred in family finding, preparation and placement of children. These charges are agreed by the following; Local Government Agency (LGA), Consortium of Voluntary Agencies (CVAA), Association of Directors of Children Services (ADCS) and Society of Local Authority Chief Executive (SOLACE) and therefore are not within our discretion to alter. The rates between Local Authorities remain unchanged since 2014-15.

In 2018, the CVAA announced the decision to link the interagency rate for Voluntary Adoption Agencies (VAA) to the CPIH measure (including owner occupier’s house costs) for the preceding financial year. This is to reflect the upward pressure on staff salaries and the complexity of work involved in the adoption placements. The increase for 2022-23 has been set as 4.8%, reflecting the CPIH measure for 12 months to December 2021.

From 2022-23 all inter-agency charges will be co-ordinated and incurred by the Adoption Partnership on behalf of Kent. There is no increase expected for 2022-23.

### **1.2 Foster Care Payments**

Further details on the different types of Foster Care Payments can be found in Kent Fostering Payments Policy (please see [background documents](#)).

#### **a) Maintenance (to be approved)**

The Council has traditionally maintained a direct link to the Department for Education (DfE) published fostering rates. At the time of writing this report, the rates for 2021-22 have not been published by the DfE (<https://www.gov.uk/fostercarers/help-with-the-cost-of-fostering>). The figures shown in Appendix 1 show KCC’s approved 2021-22 rates only and are for information purposes. We intend to update these rates, using the existing methodology, as soon as the DfE publish their 2022-23 rates. The rate is calculated by taking the DfE published rates, divide by 52 and multiple by 56. This provides an additional four weeks of funding to Kent foster carers to cover holidays, birthdays, religious observations and Christmas.

Please note that these rates also apply to Permanency Arrangement Orders payments within Children’s Services e.g. Adoption and Special Guardianship Orders.

b) Reward Element (to be approved)

An inflationary increase of +3.0% is proposed.

c) Disability Enhancement (to be approved)

There are currently two rates:

Standard – Carers will receive an enhancement payment of 30% uplift of the higher reward element.

Enhanced – Carers will receive an enhancement payment of 40% uplift of the higher reward element.

Therefore, an inflationary increase of +3.0% is proposed.

d) Foster Care Skills Based Payments (to be approved)

This rate has historically been uplifted in line with the CPIH rate +2.9%.

e) Foster Carer Mileage Rate (to be approved)

The mileage rates paid to foster carers is proposed to remain unchanged at 45p per mile in line with KCC staff.

f) Emergency Foster Carer Retainer (to be approved)

This is not subject to standard inflationary uplift and it is proposed this rate remains unchanged for 2022-23.

g) Sessional & Day Care Rates (to be approved)

Historically these rates have not been subject to standard inflationary uplift and it is proposed the Day Care rate is increased to align with the sessional rate, therefore standardising the rate paid to foster carers for all additional work. It is also proposed that in future the rate is aligned with changes to the Foundation Living Wage where the daycare/sessional rate proposed each year, will be set as 50p above the Foundation Living Wage.

h) Foster Carer Parent & Child – Rate adjustment (to be noted)

Where a foster carer is in receipt of an enhanced parent and child payment, a reduction in the foster carer's maintenance fee equivalent to the income support personal allowance for a lone parent over 18, is made. The Income Support Personal Allowance for a lone parent over 18 has been confirmed by DWP as £74.70 from 1 April 2022.

i) Foster Carer – Savings adjustment (to be noted)

It is expected that all carers/providers save a minimum of £10.00 a week for any child in care from the maintenance payment starting at week 14 of a

child or young person coming into care. When the child or young person has been in care for a year, it is expected that this amount (a minimum of £10.00 a week) for any child or young person in care, is paid into either a Child Trust Fund or a Junior ISA. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022, the £10.00 per week will be automatically deducted from the maintenance payment and paid into a Child Trust Fund or a Junior ISA directly by KCC.

### 1.3 **Kent Supported Homes** (to be approved)

The payment to hosts is split into 2 parts: a support payment and a rent payment. The support payment is proposed to increase in line with foster carers reward rate of 3% inflation. The rent payment is applicable where the host is supporting a young person who is under 18 years old or over 18 years old and not eligible for Housing Benefit/Universal Credit. The rent payment will vary depending on the circumstances of young person.

The Staying Put Extended Foster Care Rate may be applicable where the young person is in further education (this is subject to the Staying Put policy and the rate will vary dependent on circumstances).

### 1.4 **Essential Living Allowance** (to be noted)

This is the weekly payment to Care Leavers including Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC). The rate payable is in line with the Job Seeking Allowance for a single adult aged under 25 which has been confirmed by DWP as £59.20 from 1 April 2021.

### 1.5 **Other Local Authority Charges**

#### a) Social work support and assessment (to be approved)

This relates to KCC social workers undertaking work on behalf of other local authorities. The proposed rate for 2022-23 is £77.08 per hour and increase of 3% in line with KCC Pay Performance.

#### b) Administration fee associated with social work support and assessment (to be approved)

This relates to the administration fee to cover the time associated with recharging other local authorities, and it is credited to the social work team claiming the recharge. This is a flat rate and had not been updated since 2018-19 therefore it is proposed for the rate to increase to £25.00 per invoice in 2022-23.

#### c) Residential Respite Service (to be noted)

This relates to a charge we make to other local authorities who place children in our in-house respite residential beds. The value of the charge will be agreed by the operational service on an individual home basis, and will be calculated based on full cost recovery.

