

# KENT COUNTY COUNCIL - RECORD OF DECISION

## DECISION TAKEN BY

Jenny Whittle, Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services

## DECISION NO.

14/00041

*If decision is likely to disclose exempt information please specify the relevant paragraph(s) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972*

### Subject:

**PROPOSED REVISION OF RATES PAYABLE AND CHARGES LEVIED FOR CHILDRENS SERVICES IN 2014-15**

### Decision:

In line with the recommendations in the report on the Proposed Revision of Rates Payable and Charges Levied for Children's Services in 2014-15, as Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services, I:

- a) **APPROVE** the following rates:
  - i. Assessment for first home study (2.2.a)
  - ii. Assessment for second home study (2.2.b)
  - iii. Reports of post placements or post adoption (2.2.c)
  - iv. 12 months reviews of approval (2.2.d)
  - v. Foster Care Reward Element (2.3.a)
  - vi. Foster care skills based payments (2.4.a)
  - vii. Single placement supplement (2.5.a)
  - viii. Therapeutic fostering – Enhanced reward (2.5.b)
  
- b) **NOTE** the increase to the following rates that are dictated by external agencies.
  - i. Inter-agency charges (2.2.e)
  - ii. Foster Care Maintenance (2.3.b)

### Reason(s) for decision

The proposed rates payable and charges levied are considered annually, with any revisions normally introduced at the start of each financial year.

The report is focused on Children's Social Services and the rates and charges that are currently in place, with the Adult's Social Services presented separately.

Member should be aware that in previous years, some of the children's rates were increased in line with the KCC staff pay award. As there is no explicit pay award in 2014-15 (salaries will increase for TCP awards only), it is recommended that an increase of 2%, be added for these rates in 2014-15.

Any charges proposed in this report have been increased by 2.7% in line with CPI at September 2013 which is in line with the benefits uplift.

The rates and charges payable for 2014/15 will be introduced the week commencing 7th April 2014.

The report distinguishes between those rates and charges over which Members can exercise their discretion, and those which are laid down by Parliament.

A review is underway for rates payable on other types of care arrangement. A separate report will follow when this review is complete.

**Financial Implications:**

The increase in income and the increase in payments that these changes will bring have been included in the 13 Feb 2014 County Council agreed budgets for the services affected.

**Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:**

Due to the need implement changes to payment and other systems in time for the financial year 14/15 it has not been possible to discuss this at Cabinet Committee. In previous years, the Cabinet Committee has made no comment on these changes.

**Use of Urgency Procedure:**

In previous years some elements of the Rates & Charges decisions have been linked with the separate decision about any revision of salaries KCC staff. As the salary decision for 14/15 has been delayed it has now become necessary to use the Urgency Procedure for both the Adults' and Children's Rates & Charges decisions. This is necessary so as to avoid a loss of income to the council and to ensure that there is clear delegated authority to make certain payments in line with government regulations.

As set out in KCC's Urgency Procedures, the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee and the Corporate Director for Families & Social Care have agreed that the procedure can be used. Additionally all the appropriate opposition group spokesmen and chair of the Cabinet Committee have also been contacted and have either made no comment or have confirmed they agree with the use of the urgency procedures.

**Background Documents:**

Report by the Corporate Director of Families & Social Care - Proposed Revision of Rates Payable and Charges Levied for Children's Services in 2014-15

**Any alternatives considered:**

As noted, elements of these revisions are set by external agencies and are not subject to discretion.

For the discretionary elements, alternative % were considered but, as in previous years, the respective recommended uplifts equivalent to:

- CPI (2.7% in Sept 13), and
- Increase in KCC staffing costs (2%)

as the best balance between increases and the agreed budget available.

**Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:**

None

  
 signed

22/3/14  
 date

**FOR LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES USE ONLY**

Decision Referred to Cabinet Scrutiny				Cabinet Scrutiny Decision to Refer Back for Reconsideration				Reconsideration Record Sheet Issued				Reconsideration of Decision Published			
YES		NO		YES		NO		YES		NO					