

## KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

### DECISION TAKEN BY

Sue Chandler, Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services

### DECISION NO.

20/00020

Key decision: YES

To revise the rates payable and charges levied for Children's Services from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020.

**Subject:** Proposed Revisions of Rates Payable and Charges Levied by Kent County Council for Children's Social Care Services in 2020-21

### Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services, I agree to:

- a)
- i. The weekly Foster Care Maintenance allowance is increased to:

All placements under 2 years old	£157.23
All placements 2 to 4 years old	£161.54
All placements 5 to 10 years old	£178.77
All placements 11 to 15 years old	£203.54
All placements over 16 years old	£239.08

- ii. The weekly Foster Care Reward element is increased to:

Non-related placements 0 to 8 years old	£119.12
Non-related placements 9 to 18 years old	£226.26

- iii. The weekly Foster Care Disability Enhancement is increased to:

Standard	£67.88
Enhanced	£90.50

- iv. The weekly Foster Care Skills Based Payment is increased to:

Skilled (Level 2)	£21.92
Advanced (Level 3)	£54.76

- v. The weekly Emergency Foster Carer Retainer payment remains at:

Retainer	£250.00
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- vi. The hourly Sessional & Day Care payments remain at:

Sessional Work	£10.00
Day Care	£7.50

vii. The Local Authority charges to OLAs for Children's Services are increased to:

Social work support and assessment (per hour)	£77.08
Administration fee associated with social work support and assessment (per invoice)	£20.00

viii. The Foster Carer Mileage Rate will remain at 45p per mile in line with KCC staff.

b) The introduction of the Kent Fostering Payment Policy, an overarching policy document to set out all foster payments, which includes the following changes to the current payment structure:

i. Parent & Child Policy:

- Introduction of an enhanced payment for complex parent & child fostering placements equivalent to receiving an additional reward payment. The weekly Foster Care Parent & Child reward element will be:

Standard Parent & Child Reward	£345.35
Enhanced Parent & Child Reward	£571.64

- Introduction of a two weeks holiday allowance at the end of each 12-week enhanced fostering arrangement in addition to the standard two weeks all foster carers receive.
- Increase the number of hours of day care to 8 hours per week.
- The foster carer maintenance fee for an enhanced parent and child placement is reduced by £73.10 where the parent is in receipt of benefits.

ii. Skills Based Payment Policy:

- Retain the current structure of three skills level but change the name of the three levels from 1, 2, and 3 to Foundation, Skilled and Advanced Level. Payment amounts remain unchanged (except for the annual inflationary increase).
- Change the minimum requirement to recognise both the length of service of carers and experience of the carer rather than just their qualification status.
- Change the eligibility criteria so foster carers can start at any of the levels (dependent on eligibility) rather than having to start at level 1 (now called Foundation).
- Increase the number of annual leave days for skilled and advanced levels from 14 to 16 days annual leave.
- Simplify the evidence requirement for meeting wider contribution and practice.

iii. The expansion of the criteria for specialist foster care payments to include Complex Placements where a young person is on remand or stepping down from residential care. This will be paid at the same rate as a Single Placement Supplement. The weekly Foster Care Single Placement or Complex Placement Supplement Reward Element (equivalent to receive an additional reward payment) is:

Age 0 to 8 years old	£238.24
Age 9 to 18 years old	£452.52

iv. All other foster care payments and criteria remain unchanged.

c) **NOTE:**

ix. The rates which are dictated by external agencies i.e. Inter-agency charges and Essential Living Allowance

- x. The charges for other Local Authorities for use of in-house respite residential beds is to be calculated on a full cost recovery basis.

d) **DELEGATE:**

- xi. Authority to the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education, or other nominated officers, to undertake the necessary actions to implement the decision.

**Reason(s) for decision:**

The rates payable and charges levied for Children's Services are reviewed annually, with any revisions normally introduced from the start of the new financial year.

Some of the increases are directly linked to the published Department for Education fostering rates, which are reviewed by the Department annually.

**Equality Implications:**

We have not assessed any adverse impact within these proposals to increase funding rates for children's services.

**Financial Implications:**

The increase in payments and income have been reflected in the Council's budget plans presented to County Council on 13 February 2020.

**Legal Implications:**

The report distinguishes between those rates and charges over which Members can exercise their discretion, and those set by Government or external agencies.

**Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:**

This will be added after the meeting of Children and Young People's Cabinet Committee on 11 March 2020.

**Background Documents:**

None

**Any alternatives considered:**

All options were considered and presented to the Cabinet Member in the report to Children and Young People's Cabinet Committee on 11 March 2020.

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

None

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Signed

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Date