

By: Andrew Ireland, Corporate Director of Families and Social Care

To: Jenny Whittle, Cabinet Member, Specialist Children's Services

Subject: **PROPOSED REVISION OF RATES PAYABLE AND CHARGES
LEVIED FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN 2012-13**

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: To seek Member approval to the revision in the rates payable and charges levied for the services listed below in 2012-13.

FOR DECISION

Introduction

1. (1) This report is produced annually and seeks approval of the Directorate's proposed rates and charges levied for the forthcoming financial year, along with any potential changes to the Children Social services charging policy.

(2) All proposed rates and charges levied for 2012-13 are listed in one of the attached appendices and represent those published in the annual booklet and in the Kent.gov.uk website.

- Appendix 1 lists the proposed rates for Children Services.

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

(4) The effective date, unless otherwise stated, for all proposed changes to children's services will be the 1 April 2012.

Charges and Rates Payable for Children's Services

2. (1) All rates and charges proposed for 2012-13 in respect of Children Services are shown in Appendix 1 and reflect what is published on the kent.gov.uk website. For ease of members' reference, the basis of their proposed increase is shown throughout Section 2.

(2) It should be noted that **NO** extra budget has been built into the children's 12-13 MTP to accommodate any proposed increases over/above the 1% FPS Reward element or 2% Maintenance. As a consequence, I suggest that those affected rates are left at 0% increase, other than the reward elements which are recommended to increase in line with the Personnel Committee's recommended 1% pay award.

Payments to Foster Carers

Payments to Foster Carers

- (3) It is recommended that the reward element be increased by 1%

Maintenance

- (4) It is proposed that maintenance payments increase by 2%.

(5) The Cabinet Member needs to consider that increasing this payment by 2% will in some cases increase the payments past the national minimum fostering allowance and in others cases cause the payment to fall under. To address this issue, any payments that fall below are realigned to the national minimum fostering allowance.

- All placements under 2 - £136.16 - National minimum £135.66
- All placements 2-4 - £140.00 - National minimum £140.00
- All placements 5-8 - £156.10 - National minimum £156.10
- All placements 9-10 - £156.10 - National minimum £156.10
- All placements 11-15 - £176.79 - National minimum £176.61
- All placements 16-17 - £207.83 - National minimum £207.83
- All placements 18+ - £207.83 - National minimum £207.83

(6) Based on current forecast, the Directorate has enough budget within its Medium Term Plan to fund both the 2% maintenance and 1% reward increase.

Kinship Payments

(7) In light of the contents of Section 2(1) and (2) above, it is recommended that this attract 0%, as it is not deemed as either a reward or maintenance payment.

Specialist Fostering Rates

(8) In light of the contents of Section 2(1) and (2) above, it is recommended that the following attract 0%

- Foster Care Skills Based Payments

(9) It is recommended that the following rates be increased by 1%:

- Reward Payment
- Single Placement Supplement

(10) In addition to this, the recommended Treatment Fostering rate has been calculated as the enhanced reward rate increased by 1% (the same as standard reward rates, plus maximum maintenance element), this calculates as 1.27% increase.

(11) The recommended Therapeutic Fostering rate has been calculated as twice the maximum reward plus maximum maintenance, this calculates as 1.34% increase.

(12) Further to this, the Carers for Disabled Children rate has been introduced and calculated as the maintenance, reward plus the equivalent of Disability Living Allowance, based on child's assessment.

Residential Respite Services

(13) It is proposed that this charge remains at the same level as in 2011-12 of £323.59, in line with the 0% proposed increase to Private & Voluntary providers.

Fostering Service and Other Local Authority Charges

(14) The current charge is £66.41 per hour and is applied when charging for Social Work Support, reviews and assessments. It is recommended that this attract 0%.

Adoption Service Charge

(15) In light of the contents of Section 2(1) and (2) above, it is recommended that all these attract 0%.

- Assessment home study
- Reports of post placement
- 12 months reviews of approval

Recommendations

3. (1) The Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services is asked to:
 - a) **APPROVE** the revised application of 0% to the following rates:
 - i. Kinship (Section 17) 2(7)
 - ii. Specialist Fostering Rates – skills based 2(8)
 - iii. Residential Respite Service 2(13)
 - iv. Fostering service and OLA charges 2(14)
 - v. Adoption service charge 2(15)
 - b) **APPROVE** the revised application of 1% to the following rates:
 - i. Payments to Foster Carers 2(3)
 - ii. Specialist Fostering Rates – Reward & Single Supplement 2(9)
 - c) **APPROVE** the calculated increases to the following rates:
 - i. Specialist Fostering Rates – Treatment Fostering by 1.27% 2(10)
 - ii. Specialist Fostering Rates – Therapeutic Fostering by 1.34% 2(11)
 - iii. Specialist Fostering Rates - Carers for Disabled Children 2(12)

- d) **APPROVE** if the 2% proposed increase applicable to fostering maintenance payments is acceptable and should the banding fall below the national minimum rates it is amended to equate to the national minimum fostering allowance 2(4) and 2(5).

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Background documents: None