

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 10 June 2021

Report of the Head of Fostering and Adoption, Residential, and Child and Youth Justice Service

Part I

Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);

Revision of Foster Care Allowances 2021/22

(Appendix 'A' refers)

Contact for further information:

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Executive Summary

Proposals for the increase of Foster Care Allowance rates for 2021/22, in line with National Minimum Standards.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to agree the increase in the current scale of Foster Care Allowances as set out at Appendix 'A'.

Background and Advice

In March 2009, the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People approved a fostering strategy, which amongst other things, agreed that the county council's Fostering Allowances should be linked to the Government National Minimum Foster Care Allowances. This requirement is now enshrined in legislation.

In 2011, the Fostering Service introduced a new Tier based payment structure which allows the council to pay carers a range of different allowances which are dependent upon the level of skill, experience and service the carer is able to offer.

Tier 1 - payments are in line with the recommended National Minimum Standard

Tier 2 - payments provide an enhancement, currently £115 per week above Tier 1

Tier 3 - payments provide an enhancement, currently £230 per week above Tier 1

Tier 3+ - payments are negotiated on a place by place basis depending upon the complexity of the placement.

It is recommended that these payments are not amended for 2021/22.

The Government National Minimum Foster Care Allowances have been updated for 2021/22, and it is proposed that the rates for Lancashire also be updated, to ensure that the requirements of the fostering strategy are maintained, and that the service meets regulatory requirements.

It is recommended that other allowances such as those for Holiday, Birthday, Religious Festivals and discretionary payments covering clothing and school uniform, all remain unchanged for 2021/22.

It is proposed that the enhancement element of the weekly allowances for Tier 2 and Tier 3 payments remain unchanged for 2021/22. Fostering Focus Fees and Specialist Allowances will also remain unchanged as these schemes are being phased out following the introduction of the new scheme.

Details of the above are set out at Appendix 'A'.

Consultations

N/A

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

No significant risk management implications have been identified; the estimated cost of this proposal will be met from within the Fostering Service Budget.

Financial

The estimated cost of the proposal is £124,000 which has been provided for within the 2021/22 budget.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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None

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A