

**All Committee meetings were cancelled with effect from 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 2020 due to the COVID-19 emergency.**

**The recommendations in this report were approved by an Executive Director of the Council, acting under delegated authority in terms of paragraph 2.1.1 of the Council's List of Officer Powers**

31st March 2020 (CANCELLED)

*Approved by Executive Director, Education & Children's Services -  
27<sup>th</sup> March, 2020*

## Annual Uplift in Payments to Foster Carers for Financial Year 2020/21

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Report by: Kathy Henwood, Head of Service (Education & Children's Services Directorate)

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Wards Affected: All

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### Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the Council with information on the proposed uplift in payments to Foster Carers.

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### Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that members approve:

- a) The application of 2.5% increase in the maintenance payments made for children in a foster care setting.
- b) The application of an uplift of 2.5% in the fees paid to Foster Carers.

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### Resource Implications

The funding for this increase is included within the current budget.

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### Legal and Risk Implications

None

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### Impact Assessment

There is no requirement for an impact assessment in respect of this report as no change or revision to existing policies and practices is proposed.

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### Consultation

None

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## 1.0 Background

- 1.1 Social Work Children and Families Service supports Foster Carers who care for looked after children via a weekly fee and a maintenance payment. Foster Carers provide an essential service for Fife's looked after children and young people in their family home.

- 1.2 Fostering is a way of providing a family life for children and young people who are unable to live with their parents. This can be due to a variety of reasons from parental illness to abuse and neglect. Foster care gives children a secure, safe and stable environment where they can grow in confidence. It is different from adoption in that the child's family maintain parental rights and responsibilities, which can be shared with the Council.
- 1.3 Carers provide different types of fostering from providing a home for a few days, months or even years. Many children and young people will return to their families, but others may need help for longer either through continued fostering, adoption or being helped to live independently. Foster care provides children, who will be experiencing loss, and may have been exposed to harm or have a range of complex care and support needs a secure, safe and stable home. Efforts are made to ensure children have the opportunity in foster care to live with their sisters and brothers wherever possible.
- 1.4 The fees and maintenance payments to Foster Carers are normally reviewed at this point in the financial year; following approval of the Revenue Budget, and recommendations brought forward. Increases to Fees are normally similar to the level of pay award for council staff and Increases to Maintenance are subject to any budget inflationary increases.
- 1.5 Kinship Carers of Looked After Children and Non-Looked After children with a Residence Order or equivalent who are in receipt of an allowance will also benefit from this decision as the basis for the payment of Kinship Allowance and Non-Looked After Kinship Allowance is the Fostering Maintenance Allowance.

## **2.0 Conclusions**

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- 2.1 In order to support Foster Carers, it is recommended that in recognition of rising household costs, the fees payments made to Foster Carers in respect of children in a foster care setting are increased by 2.5% for 2020-21 and Maintenance will be increased in 2020-21 by 2.5%.

### **Appendices**

None

### **Background Papers**

None

### **Report Contact**

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