

**Meeting:** Corporate Parenting Panel  
**Date:** 22 April 2013  
**Subject:** Allowances for Foster Carers  
**Report of:** Sue Tyler, Acting Assistant Director Children's Services Operations  
**Summary:** The report outlines the position in relation to Fostering Allowances in 2013-14.

Contact Officer: Fiona Mackirdy, Head of Adoption and Fostering  
Public/Exempt: Public  
Wards Affected: All  
Function of: Council

## **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Council Priorities:**

Central Bedfordshire Council's Strategic Plan 2012-16 Priority 3 – Promote health and wellbeing and protecting the vulnerable

The Children and Young People's Plan 2011-2014 Priority 2 – Protecting children and keeping them safe.

Providing a sufficient number and range of foster placements is a key statutory responsibility to Looked After Children.

### **Financial:**

1. The Council currently allocates a total annual budget of approximately £3.5million to provide in-house and independent sector foster placements for looked after children.

### **Legal:**

2. National Minimum Standards for Fostering (DfE 2011) specify that the council must publish its allowances paid to foster carers. It also states that foster carers must be consulted if any changes to the allowance scheme are made.

### **Risk Management:**

3. No identified risks from these proposals.

### **Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

4. Not Applicable.

**Equalities/Human Rights:**

5. Services provided to Looked after Children affects all sectors of communities. Looked after children are particularly vulnerable in comparison with non-looked after peers.

**Community Safety:**

6. Not Applicable.

**Sustainability:**

7. Not Applicable.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**that the Corporate Parenting Panel comment on the proposals to increase the allowances for foster carers by 2%.**

**Background and Proposal**

8. In 2011 the Executive agreed a scheme for determining fostering allowances. The scheme agreed was that fostering allowances would be paid which were at a rate equivalent to that recommended by the Fostering Network enhanced by 10%.
9. For 2013-14 the Fostering Network has recommended that allowances rise by 2% to reflect increases in cost of living measures.
10. National Minimum Standards for Fostering state that allowances should be reviewed annually and foster carers should be consulted in advance of any changes to the allowance scheme
11. There is no material change to the allowance scheme, rather a cost of living increase is proposed.

**Appendices:**

None

**Background Papers:**

None

**Location of papers:**

N/A