

**20 June 2022****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, YOUTH, FAMILIES AND SOCIAL  
WORK****NATIONAL MINIMUM FOSTERING ALLOWANCES FOR FOSTER CARERS  
2022/23****Purpose of the Report**

1. The report proposes that Nottinghamshire County Council continues to pay its foster carers the National Minimum Fostering Allowances, at the rates prescribed by the Department for Education. Allowances are payments made by the Local Authority, to its foster carers, for the living costs of fostered children.
2. It is important to note that Nottinghamshire uses the national allowances as a minimum baseline for allowances to its foster carers. Nottinghamshire Foster carers receive additional allowances based on:
  - the child's specific needs
  - the number of children fostered
  - the skills and experience of the foster carers.

**Information**

3. The Children Act 2004 (Section 49) introduced new powers for the Government to compel local authorities to pay foster carers at prescribed minimum rates.
4. On 27<sup>th</sup> July 2006, the Department for Education and Skills announced the recommended minimum rates for Fostering Allowances for Foster Carers. These rates were effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007. The Council has previously agreed to pay the recommended minimum rates each year since 2007.
5. The report proposes that the Council continues to use the national prescribed allowances as a minimum baseline to pay its foster carers for 2022-2023. As mentioned above Nottinghamshire Foster Carers will receive additional payments dependent upon the child specific needs, the number of children fostered and the skills and experience of the foster carers.

6. The **table** below shows the weekly minimum allowance that Nottinghamshire currently pays its foster carers and the increased weekly minimum allowances from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022:

Age	Weekly allowance 2021/22	Weekly allowance 2022/23
Child 0 - 4 years	£138	£141
Child 5 - 10 years	£152	£156
Child 11 - 15 years	£173	£177
Young person 16+	£202	£207

### Other Options Considered

7. The Children Act 2004 (Section 49) introduced new powers for the Government to compel local authorities to pay foster carers at prescribed minimum rates. The Council does pay additional allowances as stated above. We are currently reviewing additional allowances to see if they remain appropriate.

### Reason/s for Recommendation/s

8. The fostering budget for 2022-23 has been set and the new rates reflect the minimum rate increase as recommended by the Department for Education.

### Statutory and Policy Implications

9. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

### Financial Implications

10. The increase in the National Minimum Fostering Allowances rates the Council pays its foster carers will result in an increase to the fostering budget of around £60,000 which will be contained within the 2022/23 fostering budget for child specific payments which is £3.772m.

### Implications for Service Users

11. The Council's foster carers will receive a small increase in the minimum fees they receive to help meet the needs of the child/ren they are fostering. Nottinghamshire foster carers will continue to receive allowances above the nationally prescribed minimum rates.

## RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) That approval is given for Nottinghamshire County Council to continue to pay foster carers a minimum weekly fostering allowance at the national minimum rates, as prescribed by the Department for Education as follows:

- child 0 - 4 years               £141
- child 5 - 10 years           £156
- child 11 - 15 years       £177
- young person 16+       £207

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### **Constitutional Comments (CEH 15/06/22)**

12. The recommendation falls within the remit of the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People.

### **Financial Comments (LCD 17/05/22)**

13. The increase in the National Minimum Fostering Allowances rates the Council pays its foster carers will be contained within the 2022/23 fostering budget for child specific payments which is £3.772m.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

None.

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

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