

## Record of Delegated Executive Decision(s)

### 1. Subject of decision

Foster Care Allowance, Special Guardianship Allowance, Adoption Allowance and Child Arrangement Order Allowance Increases.

### 2. Name and Title of Decision Maker

Julie Firth, Director of Children's Services

### 3. Details of any Conflict of Interest and any Dispensation granted in respect of such Interest

None

### 4. Executive summary (To be taken from written report)

The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Director of Children's Services to the proposed uplift of the Fostering Allowances for 2025/2026 in line with the national minimum proposed allowances published by the Government and national Fostering Network in April 2025. Included in the Fostering Allowances is a London and Southeast of England weighting that would be applied for carers living in those areas who have children for which the Authority is responsible living with them.

The report also seeks approval from the Director of Children's Services to an uplift in Special Guardianship Allowances, Child Arrangements Order Allowances and Adoption Order Allowances for 2025/26.

In addition this report seeks to agree that those carers living in London and the South East will receive the weighting applied for these areas in calculating the Fostering allowances in line with the recommended minimum levels.

All uplifts in Allowances will take effect from 1 April 2025.

## **5. Alternative Options considered**

Do not increase the allowances as specified to maintain national minimum levels as recommended by the Department for Education.

## **6. Decision(s)**

Director of Children's Services: -

- (1) Agrees the uplifts to the current 2024/2025 Fostering Allowances to the new national minimum rates for Fostering Allowances for 2025/2026 with effect from 1 April 2025 as set out in paragraph 1.5.7 of this report;
- (2) Agrees the uplifts to the current Special Guardianship Allowances, Child Arrangements Order Allowances and Adoption Order Allowances with effect from 1 April 2025 as set out in paragraph 1.5.9 of this report; and
- (3) Agrees that the London and South East of England weighting be applied in calculating the Fostering Allowances, for foster carers caring for children in the Authority's care living in the Greater London area, in line with the National Minimum allowance framework with effect from 1 April 2025.

## **7. Reasons for the Decision(s)**

1. The Authority will remain competitive in the recruitment and retention of foster carers with other Local authorities.
2. There will be no reputational risk to the Authority.
3. Children in care, and children living in other kinship arrangements, will remain well looked after by their immediate carers who will receive appropriate allowances for providing care of the children.
4. There is less financial risk to the Authority by investing in the recruitment and retention of foster carers.

**8. Date Decision Made**

21 March 2025

**9. Is this decision subject to call-in and if so expiry date of call-in period**

5pm on 28 March 2025

**10. Date of Publication**

21 March 2025

**11. Implementation Date (if decision not called in)**

After 5pm on 28 March 2025