

CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

RECORD OF DECISIONS of the meeting of the Cabinet Member for Children and Families held on Thursday, 1 March 2018 at 3.40 pm at the Guildhall, Portsmouth

Also Present

Councillor Rob Wood

1. Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence. Councillor Brent gave apologies for being late which was as a result of the adverse weather conditions.

2. Declarations of Members' Interests

There were no pecuniary interests declared. However, Councillor Wood wished to place on record that his son-in-law works for the Harbour School, his daughter works for Motiv8 and his Step Grandson works for the Housing team and his sister-in-law is the Director for Academies and Free Schools at the Education Funding Agency. He also wished to record that he is a local authority governor at both Charter Academy, Ark Ayrton Primary Academy and Ark Dickens Primary Academy.

3. Allowances and Skill Fees Annual Review

(TAKE IN REPORT)

The Cabinet Member said that adequate time had been given to read the report and therefore an officer presentation was not required. Councillor Wood had no questions or comments to make on the report.

DECISIONS: The Cabinet Member

(1) Approved the revised policy (Appendix 1) with effect from 01 April 2018, and specifically noted the following key changes:

- (a) The proposal to ensure carers are paid fostering leave for the number of children they care for by the removal of the current cap of 2 children.**
- (b) The proposal to simplify how foster carers' leave payments are made as set out in section 8.**
- (c) The proposal to allow the payment of a skill fee to a temporary approved foster carer, on a case-by-case basis, where the temporary approved foster carer can evidence they meet the skill fee criteria for that specific child.**
- (d) The proposal not to pay an on-call fee to an on-call carer who declines to accommodate a child during the period they are on call (excluding situations where there are safeguarding concerns).**
- (e) The proposal that respite foster carers are not required to set-aside a proportion of the fostering allowance for long**

term savings for their children as the savings are made by the main foster carer.

(2) Agreed that the Deputy Director of Children's Services -Safeguarding in consultation with the S.151 officer (or their representative), may adjust the Standard Fostering Allowance (and any allowances which are directly linked to these rates) in line with changes to the Government Minimum Fostering Allowance - South East; having consulted with carers.

(3) Agreed that the Deputy Director of Children's Services - Safeguarding in consultation with the S.151 officer (or their representative), may adjust the Staying Put, Family Link and Lodgings Plus Allowance in line with the percentage change to the relevant Government Minimum Fostering Allowance - South East; having consulted with carers.

4. Children and Families Portfolio Budget Monitoring for the Third Quarter 2017/18

(TAKE IN REPORT)

The Cabinet Member said that adequate time had been given to read the report and therefore an officer presentation was not required. Councillor Wood made reference to the budget that was presented to Council on 13 February and said there was a figure under the heading for 'children and education' and he thought this should in fact be 'children'. The Cabinet Member said that this would be duly noted.

DECISIONS: The Cabinet Member

1) Noted the Children and Families Portfolio forecast budget position, at the end of December 2017, of £3.0m in excess of current approved cash limit provision and the explanation provided for this significant increase in projected overspend since the beginning of the year.

(2) Noted the steps which have been taken to strengthen the scrutiny of care placement decisions with a view to controlling costs where possible and the further development this year of approaches to managing demand, with the aim of reducing the projected overspend position and delivering a balanced budget within the area of Children's Social Care.

(3) Noted the capital programme spending is currently in line with the approved capital budget

The meeting concluded at 3.45 pm.

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Councillor Ryan Brent
Chair

