

## **CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION**

RECORD OF DECISIONS of the meeting of the Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education held on Thursday, 2 November 2023 at 5.00 pm at the Guildhall, Portsmouth

### **Present**

Councillor Suzy Horton (in the Chair)

Councillors George Fielding

### **19. Apologies**

Councillor Ryan Brent emailed his apologies to Democratic Services during the meeting. Mark Jowett, Interim Head of Looked After Children had sent his apologies for absence.

### **20. Declarations of Members' Interests**

Councillor Horton declared a non-prejudicial interest in that she is Vice-Chair of Governors at Craneswater Junior School.

### **21. Special Guardianship Order Procedures and Financial Policy**

Sam Bushby, Deputy Director, Children and Families, introduced the report explaining that it set out revisions to the Special Guardianship Order Procedures and Financial Policy which were being made to support increased permanence for children in their family network. She informed members that the policy offers greater support than previously, it reflects current legislation, has been planned for and there is a budget allocation for its implementation.

#### Members' questions

In response to members questions, it was clarified that officers will be proactively contacting families which had previously received payments to ask if they wish to be reassessed. Looking forwards the policy will be embedded in assessments when reviewing care plans for children and parents and foster carers will be asked if this is an option they wish to pursue.

#### Members' comments

The Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education, Councillor Suzy Horton commented that she was looking forward to hearing about feedback from parents and foster carers and welcomed the introduction of the policy.

### **DECISIONS - The Cabinet Member:**

- a) **Approved the new Special Guardianship Order Procedures and Financial Policy as attached at Appendix A to the report.**

- b) Noted that the recommendation supports best practice and ensures Portsmouth City Council complies with legislation, statutory practice, and case law.**
- c) Noted that the recommendations will ensure that special guardians are appropriately financially supported for children in their care.**
- d) Noted that the recommendations will ensure that the special guardians receive their existing allowance for a transitional period of two years, before they are means tested in line with the policy.**

The meeting concluded at 5.10 pm.

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Councillor Suzy Horton  
Chair