

Report to:	Executive Cabinet Member – Childrens Services		
Date of meeting:	12 th September 2022		
Report of:	Bernie Brown – Director of Childrens Services	Report Number:	
Reporting Officer:	Ian Walker – Assistant Director of Children’s Social Care	Telephone Number:	01204 332011
Contact Officer:	Minaxi Patel - Head of Service Childrens Resources and Placements	Telephone Number:	01204 337464
Report title:	Fee review – Short Break Carers - Bolton Shared Care		

Not confidential

This report does not contain information which warrants its consideration in the absence of the press or members of the public.

Purpose:	To put forward a review of the fees paid to Bolton Shared Care short break foster carers, day carers and sessional carers. To confirm that these will fall within the current annual budget		
Recommendations:	The Executive Member is recommended to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the proposed increase in fees for all categories of Bolton Shared Care short break carers, backdated to 1st April 1st 2022. • Approve future years (sessional carers) to be uplifted in line with the real living wage. 		
Decision:			
Background documents:			
Signed:	Leader/Executive Cabinet Member	Monitoring Officer	
Date:			

Consultation with other officers

Finance	Yes	14/7/2022	Lynne Hargreaves
Legal	No		
HR	No		
Procurement	No		
Climate Change	No		
Equality Impact Assessment	Yes	15/08/2022	Jenny Foy
Vision outcomes	1. Start Well		X

Please identify the appropriate Vision outcome(s) that this report relates or contributes to by putting a cross in the relevant box.	2. Live Well	X
	3. Age Well	
	4. Prosperous	X
	5. Clean and Green	
	6. Strong and Distinctive	x

1. **INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND**

- 1.1. Bolton Shared Care recruits, trains, assesses and matches short break carers for disabled children in Bolton. Short breaks are an assessed need and can be from a few hours a week pursuing a social and leisure activity, up to regular planned overnight care in the home of short break foster carers.
- 1.2. Carers are offered one of two levels of financial reimbursement. One reimbursement covering short break maintenance and a fee during a child's visit, or an hourly sessional rate for carers offering support outside of their own homes.
- 1.3. The hourly sessional rate is a payment and is kept in line with the Minimum Living Wage which is £9.50. This is a legal requirement and moral obligation. Bolton Council is proposing to pay the Real Living Wage at £9.90.
- 1.4. The reimbursement covering maintenance and fee reflects the length of time a child is visiting, the costs associated with the visit and the needs of the child.
- 1.5. We have several contracted short break carers offering overnight care to the most vulnerable and those with the highest level of need. These carers are offered an agreed retainer payment to retain their availability and enable short break foster care to be a main source of income. These carers have a high level of skill, training, experience, and resilience and offer care and support to some of the most challenging disabled children in the authority

2. **CONTEXT**

- 2.1. The sessional carers hourly rate needs to be increased in line with government legislation and guidance in respect of the minimum living wage of £9.50. The proposal is to use the Real Living wage of £9.90 and backdate to 1st April 2022.
- 2.2. A review and increase in fees would reflect not only rising costs of living, but also better reflects the value we place on the highly specialised care and support provided by our carers to disabled children and young people in Bolton.
- 2.3. An increase in fees helps to retain Local Authority foster carers making us competitive with outside agencies.
- 2.4. Calculations based on the current level of activity on the scheme would indicate that the increase can be funded with no overall increase to the Bolton Shared Care budget.

3. **FEE PROPOSAL**

- 3.1. Increases are proposed that would take the spend on family based short break care support from £141,690 to £154,380. This is within the current financial envelope of £214,700 and allows for the additional funding of bespoke and emergency short break packages should the need arise.
- 3.2. The table below shows the proposed price increase. Please note that only the sessional carers are reimbursed on an hourly rate calculated at the rate of the Real Living Wage. Foster carers and day carers receive a fostering fee.

	2021/2022 FEES	2022/2023 PROPOSED INCREASES
FULL TIME CONTRACTED CARERS 21 overnights per month	£305 per week £25.00 per night TOTAL £60,180	£330 per week £30.00 per night TOTAL £66,600
PART TIME CONTRACTED CARERS	£155 per week £25.00 per night TOTAL £44,300	£165.00 per week £30.00 per night TOTAL £46,200
SHORT BREAK FOSTER CARERS	£40.00 overnight 24 hours and over £30.00 overnight under 24 hours £30.00 five hours and above £15.00 under five hours TOTAL £26,400	£45.00 per night 24 hours and above £35.00 per night under 24 hours £35.00 five hours and above £20.00 up to 5 hours TOTAL £29,700
SESSIONAL CARERS	£9.00 per hour TOTAL £10,800	£9.90 per hour backdated to April 1 st and in line with actual living wage TOTAL £11,880
	TOTAL £141,690	TOTAL £154,380

4. **IMPACTS AND IMPLICATIONS:**

4.1. **Financial**

4.2. The proposed fee increase will be accommodated under the current budget and is outline in 3.2.

4.3. **Legal**

4.4. Brings the sessional carer payment in line with the real living wage

4.5. **HR**

4.6. NONE

4.7. **Climate Change**

4.8. NONE

4.9. **Other**

4.10. Helps carer retention and recruitment

5. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)**

5.1. Under the Equality Act 2010, the council has a general duty to have due regard to the need to:

1. **eliminate unlawful discrimination**, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
2. **advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
3. **foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

5.2. It is important to consider how the proposals contained within this report may impact positively or negatively on protected characteristics. It has been determined that due to the report proposing an improvement in terms and conditions for carers, it is not anticipated that the proposals within this report will have a differential impact on any of Bolton's diversity groups, including staff. A full EIA has been completed.

6. **VISION 2030**

6.1. The proposal aligns to the Vision principles: -

- Protecting the most vulnerable
- Reforming our services in partnership

6.2. The proposal will contribute to the following Vision priorities.

- Ensuring our children have the best possible start in life
- Improving the health and wellbeing of residents
- , cohesive, more confident communities in which people feel safe, welcome and connected

6.3. The proposal will use the following drivers of change which underpin the 2030 Vision.

- Behaviour change
- Delivering efficiently
- Rebalancing our finances
- Maximising our assets
- Engaging and empowering

7. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

7.1. The Executive Member is recommended to:

- Approve the proposed increase in fees for all categories of Bolton Shared Care short break carers, backdated to 1st April 1st 2022.
- Approve future years to be uplifted in line with the real living wage.

Equality Impact Assessment

Title of report or proposal:
Fee review – Short Break Carers - Bolton Shared Care

Directorate:	Children's Services
Section:	Bolton Shared Care
Date:	15 th August 2022

Public sector bodies need to be able to evidence that they have given due regard to the impact and potential impact on all people with 'protected characteristics' in shaping policy, in delivering services, and in relation to their own employees.

Under the Equality Act 2010, the council has a general duty to have due regard to the need to:

1. **eliminate unlawful discrimination**, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
2. **advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
3. **foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

By completing the following questions, the three parts of the equality duty will be consciously considered as part of the decision-making process.

Details of the outcome of the Equality Impact Assessment must also be included in the main body of the report.

1. Describe in summary the aims, objectives, and purpose of the proposal, including desired outcomes.

Bolton Shared Care recruits, trains, assesses and matches short break carers for disabled children in Bolton. Short breaks are an assessed need and can be from a few hours a week pursuing a social and leisure activity, up to regular planned overnight care in the home of short break foster carers.

Carers are offered one of two levels of financial reimbursement. One reimbursement covering short break maintenance and a fee during a child's visit, or an hourly sessional rate for carers offering support outside of their own homes.

The hourly sessional rate is a payment and is kept in line with the Minimum Living Wage which is £9.50. This is a legal requirement and moral obligation.

The report proposes to use the Real Living wage of £9.90 and backdate to 1st April 2022.

2. Is this a new policy / function / service or review of existing one?

This is a review of fees for Short Break Carers.

3. Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the proposal?

The main stakeholders include:

- Bolton People – who are eligible for short break care
- Short Break Carers

4. In summary, what are the anticipated (positive or negative) impacts of the proposal?

The proposal to review and increase fees would reflect the rising costs of living and reflects the value that Bolton Council place on the highly specialised care and support provided by carers to disabled children and young people in Bolton. An increase in fees also helps to retain Local Authority carers ensuring continued delivery of services.

No negative impacts are anticipated as part of this proposal.

5. What, if any, cumulative impact could the proposal have?

None

6. With regard to the stakeholders identified above and the diversity groups set out below:

Consider:

- How to avoid, reduce or minimise negative impact (if you identify unlawful discrimination, including victimisation and harassment, you must stop the action and take advice immediately).
- How to **advance equality of opportunity**. This means considering the need to:
 - Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people with protected characteristics due to having that characteristic.
 - Take steps to meet the needs of people with protected characteristics that are different from people who do not have that characteristic
 - Encourage protected groups to participate in public life and in any other activity where participation is disproportionately low
- How to **foster good relations**. This means considering the need to:
 - Tackle prejudice; and
 - promote understanding between people who share a protected characteristic and others.

	Is there any potential for (positive or negative) differential impact? Could this lead to adverse impact and if so, what?	Can this adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group, or for any other reason? Please state why	Please detail what actions you will take to remedy any identified adverse impact i.e., actions to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations
Race (this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality, and caste, and includes refugees and migrants; and gypsies and travellers)	No negative or adverse impact is anticipated with regard to race. The proposal to review and increase fees would reflect the rising costs of living and reflects the value that Bolton Council place on the highly specialised care and support provided by carers to disabled children and young people in Bolton. An increase in fees also helps to retain Local Authority carers ensuring continued delivery of services.	No adverse impacts are identified.	There are no negative impacts anticipated for Bolton people including those with protected characteristics.

Religion or belief (this includes any religion with a clear structure and belief system. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief. The Act also covers lack of religion or belief)	See comments under Race	See comments under Race	See comments under Race
Disability (a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities)	See comments under Race No negative impacts are anticipated as part of this proposal. Due to the nature of the service, those eligible for support are disabled children and young people.	No adverse impacts are identified.	There are no negative impacts anticipated for Bolton people including those with protected characteristics.
Sex / Gender	See comments under Race	See comments under Race	See comments under Race
Gender reassignment / Gender identity (a person who's deeply felt and individual experience of gender may not correspond to the sex assigned to them at birth, they may or may not propose to, start, or complete a process to change their gender. A person does not need to be under medical supervision to be protected)	See comments under Race	See comments under Race	See comments under Race
Age (people of all ages)	See comments under Race No negative impacts are anticipated as part of this proposal. Due to the nature of the service, those eligible for support are disabled children and young people.	No adverse impacts are identified.	There are no negative impacts anticipated for Bolton people including those with protected characteristics.

Sexual orientation - people who are lesbian, gay, and bisexual.	See comments under Race	See comments under Race	See comments under Race
Marriage and civil partnership (Only in relation to due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination)	See comments under Race	See comments under Race	See comments under Race
Caring status (including pregnancy & maternity)	No negative impacts are anticipated as part of this proposal. Due to the nature of the services, families/carers of those who may be eligible for support are to be considered as part of this proposal.	No adverse impacts are identified.	There are no negative impacts anticipated for Bolton people including those with protected characteristics.
Socio-economic	See comments under Race	See comments under Race	See comments under Race
Other comments or issues.	N/A		
Please provide a list of the evidence used to inform this EIA, such as the results of consultation or other engagement, service take-up, service monitoring, surveys, stakeholder comments and complaints where appropriate.	N/A		

This EIA form and report has been checked and countersigned by the Directorate Equalities Officer before proceeding to Executive Cabinet Member(s)

Please confirm the outcome of this EIA:

No major impact identified, therefore no major changes required – proceed	X
Adjustments to remove barriers / promote equality (mitigate impact) have been identified – proceed	
Positive impact for one or more groups justified on the grounds of promoting equality - proceed	
Continue despite having identified potential for adverse impact/missed opportunities for promoting equality – this requires a strong justification	
The EIA identifies actual or potential unlawful discrimination - stop and rethink	

Contact Officer

Name: Sally Hinde

Date: 15/8/2022

Directorate Equalities Lead Officer

Name: Jenny Foy

Date: 15/08/2022
