17 October 2018

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST – 1304/18

Dear Sir/Madam

Your request for information has now been considered and the information requested is provided below.

Request:

I would like to request the following information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) in relation to the fostering service provision of your Local Authority:

Foster Carer Payments

1. When did foster carers last receive an increase to their fostering allowances? (show as month/year)
   
   Answer: April 2018

2. A breakdown of fees currently paid to foster carers:

   Answer: Question 2,3,4 and 5 can be answered by the following extract taken from the Rutland Fostering Services Retention and Recruitment Policy dated April 2018.

3.4 Carers Allowances

All Rutland County Council carers receive a fostering allowance for each child in placement. This is paid to carers to cover all costs in relation to looking after children and young people. This allowance is based on the National Fostering Network recommended rates.

In most cases the allowance will enable carers to meet every day needs of foster children and connected children at the standard of an average family. In certain circumstances, other exceptional costs may be met – with the Service Manager’s agreement.

Connected carers will receive this allowance for each child placed in their care whilst they are assessed as connected foster carers. Connected carer will always be encouraged and supported to seek a Special Guardianship Order should this be the right care plan for the children they are caring for.
The allowance rates are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Weekly Basic Allowance</th>
<th>Festivity Allowance</th>
<th>Birthday Allowance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-4 years</td>
<td>£145</td>
<td>£145</td>
<td>£145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10 years</td>
<td>£165</td>
<td>£165</td>
<td>£165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 years</td>
<td>£206</td>
<td>£206</td>
<td>£206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16+ years</td>
<td>£249</td>
<td>£249</td>
<td>£249</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Breakdown of allowance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Clothing</th>
<th>Transport</th>
<th>Personal Allowance</th>
<th>Household</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-4 years</td>
<td>£49.30</td>
<td>£31.90</td>
<td>£11.60</td>
<td>£8.70</td>
<td>£43.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10 years</td>
<td>£52.80</td>
<td>£42.90</td>
<td>£11.55</td>
<td>£13.20</td>
<td>£44.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 years</td>
<td>£65.92</td>
<td>£53.56</td>
<td>£22.66</td>
<td>£20.60</td>
<td>£43.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16+ years</td>
<td>£74.70</td>
<td>£64.74</td>
<td>£22.41</td>
<td>£42.33</td>
<td>£44.82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB: The personal allowance includes at least £5 per week to be saved in a bank account for the child

3.5 Fees

Fees are paid to carers recognising their skills, experience and qualifications in caring for children and young people based on an assessment by the Fostering Team. They are only payable once carers are approved and have a child (children) in placement. Fees are payable to all carers. Carers will receive a weekly fee based on their fostering level when a child is in placement. Carers will receive the additional child fee for each subsequent child in placement.

Connected carers, once assessed as connected foster carers, will receive a weekly fee, however connected carers will be encouraged and supported to seek a Special Guardianship Order where this is considered to be in the child/ren’s best interest; only in exceptional circumstances would connected carers remain connected foster carers once any court proceedings have been concluded, and in these circumstance they will be supported if they wish, to progress through the levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fostering Level</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Weekly Fee</th>
<th>Weekly Fee 2nd child</th>
<th>Weekly Fee 3rd child</th>
<th>Weekly Fee 4th Child and subsequent children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>Family and friends who are looking after a child and have had a viability</td>
<td>£0 (but child allowance)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Framework Providers & Fees

3. **What additional payments are provided to carers, and for the additional payments that are provided, what are the standard costs for each additional payment split by age range?** (Examples of additional payments are included below)

   a. Clothing;
   b. Holiday;
   c. Christmas/festival;
   d. Birthday;
   e. Equipment/furniture

   **Answer:** See answer to Q2.

4. **Who is responsible (local authority or carers) for ensuring that children and young people (CYP) are receiving pocket money and savings?**

   a. What is the weekly pocket money amount provided to children and young people
   b. What is the weekly savings amount provided to children and young people

   **Answer:** See answer to Q2.

5. **Are carers entitled to paid respite? If yes, how many days?**

   **Answer:** See answer to Q2.

### Assessment but are not approved connected foster carers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>All newly approved carers when a child is in placement</th>
<th>£124.74</th>
<th>£93.56 (75% of wkly fee)</th>
<th>£83.58 (67% of wkly fee)</th>
<th>£62.37 (50% of wkly fee)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>All carers with one year experience, a minimum of 20 overnight stays and completion of the TSD standards</td>
<td>£172.80</td>
<td>£129.60 (75% of wkly fee)</td>
<td>£115.78 (67% of wkly fee)</td>
<td>£86.40 (50% of wkly fee)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4</td>
<td>All carers with at least two year experience and on completion of the TDS (experienced level) and a minimum of 20 overnight stays (in the preceding year)</td>
<td>£218.81</td>
<td>£164.11 (75% of wkly fee)</td>
<td>£146.60 (67% of wkly fee)</td>
<td>£109.41 (50% of wkly fee)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Level 2: All newly approved carers when a child is in placement

- **Wkly fee:** £124.74
- 75% of wkly fee: £93.56
- 67% of wkly fee: £83.58
- 50% of wkly fee: £62.37

### Level 3: All carers with one year experience, a minimum of 20 overnight stays and completion of the TSD standards

- **Wkly fee:** £172.80
- 75% of wkly fee: £129.60
- 67% of wkly fee: £115.78
- 50% of wkly fee: £86.40

### Level 4: All carers with at least two year experience and on completion of the TDS (experienced level) and a minimum of 20 overnight stays (in the preceding year)

- **Wkly fee:** £218.81
- 75% of wkly fee: £164.11
- 67% of wkly fee: £146.60
- 50% of wkly fee: £109.41

In relation to any Frameworks you currently operate with Independent Fostering Agency Providers, please provide the following information (including Provider name) about the number of CYP placed with Independent Fostering Provider Foster Carers, the average weekly fee paid for these placements, per age bracket and any applicable discounts agreed with said Provider.
Answer: In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 this email message acts as a Refusal Notice.

Under Section 43 of the Act - commercial interests: that disclosure of the information may prejudice the commercial interests of another person as the information could provide the recipient with an unfair advantage. This is because the Council believes that disclosure of this information would prejudice the commercial interests of the provider, as it would harm the provider’s ability to compete in the market. The public interest test has been applied and in all the circumstances of the case, the Council considers that the public interest in maintaining the exemption is greater than the public interest in disclosure.

7. As per question 6, please provide the same information using the format below; however, this time in relation to Non-Framework Providers i.e. where the Local Authority (LA) has placed with Independent Fostering Agency Providers using a Spot Purchase mechanism because the Provider is not on a Framework with the LA.

Answer: In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 this email message acts as a Refusal Notice.

Under Section 43 of the Act - commercial interests: that disclosure of the information may prejudice the commercial interests of another person as the information could provide the recipient with an unfair advantage. This is because the Council believes that disclosure of this information would prejudice the commercial interests of the provider, as it would harm the provider’s ability to compete in the market. The public interest test has been applied and in all the circumstances of the case, the Council considers that the public interest in maintaining the exemption is greater than the public interest in disclosure.

Caseloads

8. What is the average No of LAC cases your social workers are expected to hold at any one time:

Answer: The average is 5 per social worker.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request please contact the Data Protection Officer, Rutland County Council, Catmose, Oakham, Rutland LE15 6HP
You can also complain to the Information Commissioner at:

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House, Water lane
Wilmslow, Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Tel: 01625 545700

Yours faithfully

FOI Administrator
Business Support Team
Rutland County Council