

Report of the Strategic Director of Children's Services to the meeting of the Executive to be held on 21 February 2017.

BK

Subject:

Fostering Allowances Review

Summary statement:

Attached is the report following discussion of the review of Fostering Allowances at the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 31 January 2017

Michael Jameson
Strategic Director Children's Services

Portfolio:

Health & Wellbeing

Report Contact: Jim Hopkinson
Deputy Director (Children's Social
Care) Tel : 01274 432904
Jim.hopkinson@bradford.gov.uk

Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Children's Services

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This Report follows discussion of the review of Fostering Allowances at the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 31 January 2017.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A Report on the review of Fostering Allowances was discussed initially at the meeting of the Executive on 10 January 2017 (**Executive Document AS**).
- 2.2 The decision of the Executive was called in by a Member of the Corporate O & S Committee, Councillor Cooke. The Call-in related to two issues specifically relating to legality and sufficiency. GMB made a written submission on behalf of their Members to Overview & Scrutiny Committee dated 30.1.17 (attached at Appendix 5). The reasons for the call in were addressed in the Report to the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny held on 31 January 2017 (**Document AG**)
- 2.3 Overview and Scrutiny Committee had no further comments to make relating to legality and sufficiency. The Equality Impact Assessment has been updated following the discussion at Overview and Scrutiny (attached Appendix 1). The Committee has referred the matter back to Executive with the following recommendation:

That the decision be referred back to the Executive to reconsider in the light of Executive carrying out further investigation of the Levels across the Local Authorities used in the table on page 5 of Document "AS" to better understand the comparability on a like for like basis on the levels and descriptors used.

- 2.4 Using data supplied to us directly from neighbouring authorities, the Executive has been supplied with indicative figures which compare combined fees and allowances. It is acknowledged that there will be individual circumstances that will differ. In accordance with the recommendation from Overview and Scrutiny, the Council will keep the matter of the levels of fees under review to ensure that Bradford's offer to foster carers remains competitive with neighbouring Local Authorities (so far as we are able to obtain further information from our neighbours).

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 No further information.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

- 4.1 As reported previously.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

- 5.1 As reported previously

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

- 6.1 The Legal position is as indicated in the original report to the Executive on the 10th January and in the Report to the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny held on 31 January 2017.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

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7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

Updated Equality Impact Assessment attached as Appendix 1.

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

No further information.

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

None.

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

None.

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

None.

7.6 TRADE UNION

None.

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

No further information.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None.

9. OPTIONS

No further information.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 That Executive confirms the decision previously taken on 10 January 2017 having regard to all the consultation feedback and the documents attached.

11. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Updated Equality Impact Assessment dated

Appendix 2: Full consultation feedback

Appendix 3: Executive Document AS: Report to the meeting of the Executive held on 10.1.17

Appendix 4 : Document AG: Report to the meeting of Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny held on 31 January 2017

Appendix 5: Submission on behalf of GMB Members to Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee dated 30 January 2017

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None.

APPENDIX 1

Equality Impact Assessment Form

Department	Children's Services	Version no	3.1
Assessed by	Kal Nawaz	Date created	9 November 2016
Approved by		Date approved	
Updated by	Patsy Burrows Patsy Burrows	Date updated	3 February 2017 10/02/2017
Final approval		Date signed off	

The Equality Act 2010 requires the Council to have due regard to the need to

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and
- foster good relations between different groups

Section 1: What is being assessed?

1.1 Name of proposal to be assessed.

Fostering Allowances Review

1.2 Describe the proposal under assessment and what change it would result in if implemented.

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Proposal to align the level of fostering allowances ensuring that payments for all fostering, special guardianship, Child Arrangement Orders (formerly Residence Orders) and adoption are all paid at the same rates as required by law.

The Council has a duty under the Children Act 1989 to ensure it provides a range of suitable and appropriate accommodation to meet the assessed needs of children in care. Local Authorities are responsible for providing fostering services in line with Fostering Regulations, Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations and National Minimum Standards for Fostering.

There are approximately 450 foster carers in the Bradford District who provide a highly valued service in looking after Children in care in Bradford. As at November 2016, there were 243 mainstream fostering households; 158 approved Family and Friends households and 47 approved short breaks households.

The service currently spends £10.1 million on fostering fees and allowances. Proposals for budget reductions identified within Children's Services include a review of fostering allowances to achieve the required budget savings.

A weekly age related allowance is paid to foster carers to cover the child's living expenses (e.g. food, clothing, household, transport etc.). Currently Bradford pays differential rates for Special Guardianship, Adoption and Residence allowances compared to Fostering allowances. Those providing care through Special Guardianship, Adoption and Residence Orders are paid allowances at the national minimum allowance rate while the fostering allowance is higher. The law requires that there should be very clear justification for differences in payments. The national minimum allowance is paid to foster carers in some authorities

Additionally, foster carers can be paid a 'fee' as a 'reward'. There is no legal entitlement to a fee. The fee structure rewards foster carers for their skills and experience. Carers are asked to evidence their skills and experiences against a set of competencies in order to progress. This proposal does not affect the payment of fees to foster carers.

The preferred option to meet statutory requirements in Bradford is to reduce the allowances paid to foster carers to the national minimum allowance in order to achieve parity across all care arrangements, regardless of the legal order deemed appropriate to the child's needs. The proposal to bring allowances in line with statutory requirements will ensure equity and achieve a saving of £454k over 2 years between 2017-2019.

Section 2: What the impact of the proposal is likely to be

- 2.1 **Will this proposal advance equality of opportunity for people who share a protected characteristic and/or foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those that do not? If yes, please explain further.**

The proposal will achieve parity across all care arrangements and will advance equality of opportunity for children who are no longer looked after by the local authority but have been assessed as having ongoing support needs which the local authority has agreed to meet through the payment of Special Guardianship, Adoption or Child Arrangement allowances. The proposal means that looked after children and non-looked after children for whom the local authority is responsible for paying an allowance, will receive the same rate of allowance according to their age, as required by law.

- 2.2 **Will this proposal have a positive impact and help to eliminate discrimination and harassment against, or the victimisation of people who share a protected characteristic? If yes, please explain further.**

N/A

- 2.3 **Will this proposal potentially have a negative or disproportionate impact on people who share a protected characteristic? If yes, please explain further.**

The proposal aims to standardise payments to all carers. Service data on foster carers by household type and gender indicates that 35% of our 446 foster carer households are single women carer households. Currently available data indicates that approx. 34% of children in foster care are aged between 11-15yrs whilst 11% are 16-18yrs. Although the proposal brings foster carer allowances in line with Special Guardianship, Adoption and Residence allowances and removes any risk of legal challenge in relation to the payment of differential rates, it will impact more significantly on older children between the ages of 11 to 17 years with payment differences of between £21 to £34 per week but the proposal does create parity for children in those age groups in whatever the care arrangements.

- 2.4 **Please indicate the level of negative impact on each of the protected characteristics?**

(Please indicate high (H), medium (M), low (L), no effect (N) for each)

Protected Characteristics:	Impact
Age	M
Disability	N
Gender reassignment	N
Race	N
Religion/Belief	N
Pregnancy and maternity	N
Sexual Orientation	N
Sex	M
Marriage and civil partnership	N
Additional Consideration:	
Low income/low wage	N

2.5 How could the disproportionate negative impacts be mitigated or eliminated?

(Note: Legislation and best practice require mitigations to be considered, but need only be put in place if it is possible.)

The Local Authority's policy relating to fostering payments needs to be clear, equitable and transparent. The criteria for calculating allowances must be applied equally to all foster carers whether related to a child or not.

The proposal is to reduce fostering allowances to the Government minimum allowances over a two year period. This option aligns payment in all care arrangements thereby ensuring compliance with the legal requirements and has the added potential to reduce impact on carers of older children by giving them time to adjust as it would be introduced over 2 years.

Plans are in place for ongoing consultation with stakeholders at all stages in order to minimise disruption to looked after children. Consultations will provide opportunities to explain the options and the rationale for the proposals. Carers will be offered advice on entitlement to work and benefits.

Section 3: Dependencies from other proposals

- 3.1 Please consider which other services would need to know about your proposal and the impacts you have identified. Identify below which services you have consulted, and any consequent additional equality impacts that have been identified.**

Neighbourhood Services and Targeted Early Help to be consulted on potential to ensure links with targeted youth provision to promote access to opportunities for LAC

Section 4: What evidence you have used?

- 4.1 What evidence do you hold to back up this assessment?**

Bradford's allowances have been benchmarked against neighbouring local authorities.

The Government's national minimum allowance is applied in some Local Authorities and is the basis for the Bradford proposal.

Currently available Service data on foster carers and children in Bradford in addition to financial data has been utilised in undertaking the assessment.

- 4.2 Do you need further evidence?**

Consultations have been held to ascertain the views of foster carers about the proposal to reduce the fostering allowance to the National Minimum Allowance rate.

Section 5: Consultation Feedback

- 5.1 Results from any previous consultations prior to the proposal development.**

N/A

5.2 The departmental feedback you provided on the previous consultation (as at 5.1).

N/A

5.2.1 Feedback from current consultation following the proposal development (e.g. following approval by Executive for budget consultation).

While some foster carers do not think that the proposal is fair, they accept that the reduction in the rate of the fostering allowance is necessary and that the impact for the children they care for and themselves will be low. However, many foster carers are understandably anxious about the impact of reducing the fostering allowance to the National Minimum Allowance rate. A number of single foster carers commented that they will be disproportionately disadvantaged by the reduced rate because they are single income households. Many were also concerned that older children would be disproportionately affected compared with younger children for whom the reduction in allowance would be significantly lower. Some carers also highlighted a specific impact for disabled children. A number of Family and Friend foster carers living in other areas where the cost of living is higher than in Bradford raised a concern about receiving a reduced income.

5.4 Your departmental response to the feedback on the current consultation (as at 5.3) – include any changes made to the proposal as a result of the feedback.

No changes have been made to the proposal to reduce the fostering allowance to the National Minimum Allowance rate as a result of the feedback as it relates to achieving equity in the payments to all children for whom the Council has a financial responsibility, regardless of the legal order in place.

With regard to the impact for older children, while the level of concern expressed by foster carers is acknowledged, the proposed rate is in line with the rate set by the government and the request is for consideration to be given to reducing the fostering allowance over 2 years to give foster carers time to adjust to the new rates. It will also be important to communicate with children and young people about the changes to the fostering allowances and ensure that their social workers provide support around any anxieties they may have. Looked after children and young people also have access to an independent advocacy service.

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Support for disabled children and young people is prioritised for review by the Fostering Service, regardless of the outcome of this review of the fostering allowance. This will be undertaken in partnership with foster carers and will focus on the support available to ensure the stability of the children.

With regard to single foster carers of older children, the Fostering Service proposes to remove any barriers to those carers seeking paid employment to supplement their income, provided this fits with the needs of the children and young people in their care. For those carers who are unable to work, the Fostering Service will reissue the guidance about the benefits foster carers are eligible to claim which was previously provided to foster carers. Foster carers also have individual membership of Foster Talk, a government-funded support agency, and can access support around finances and their eligibility for benefits. In addition, supervising social workers will be available to discuss any concerns about financial hardship with foster carers and to help them to access support.

For carers who live in London and the South East where the cost of living is higher, it is proposed that the weighted rates specified by the government for those areas are adopted should the Council Executive agree the proposal to reduce the fostering allowance to the National Minimum Allowance rate. This may be particularly relevant to the carers of looked after children in Family and Friends placements.

APPENDIX 2

Bradford Council Foster Carer Consultation on Allowances Autumn 2016 – summary of results

Foster carers and fostering staff were invited to attend a presentation and take part in the consultation on Thursday 24 November at Margaret McMillan Towers / Friday 25 November at Victoria Hall, Keighley and then online for 4 weeks from Tuesday 29 November to Wednesday 28 December 2016.

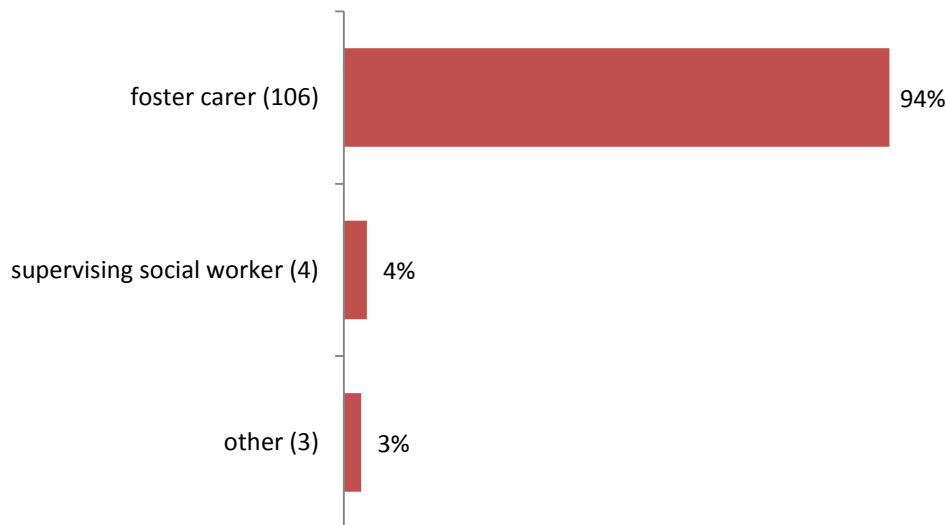
The online consultation was developed using Snap Surveys – a dynamic online questionnaire service, and was hosted on the Council’s website. The URL (web address) was emailed to all foster carers, including family & friends carers, who have registered an email address with the fostering service. All supervising social workers were also invited to take part, alert their carers to the online consultation or take out a paper copy of the consultation to carers who are not online.

The marketing officer added all fully (or largely) completed handwritten consultation forms to the online consultation, but did not enter any questionnaires that were only slightly completed. All respondents’ comments were added.

This report was generated on 09 January 2017.

Overall, 113 respondents completed this questionnaire. The report has been filtered to show the responses for ‘All Respondents’.

Respondents’ roles:

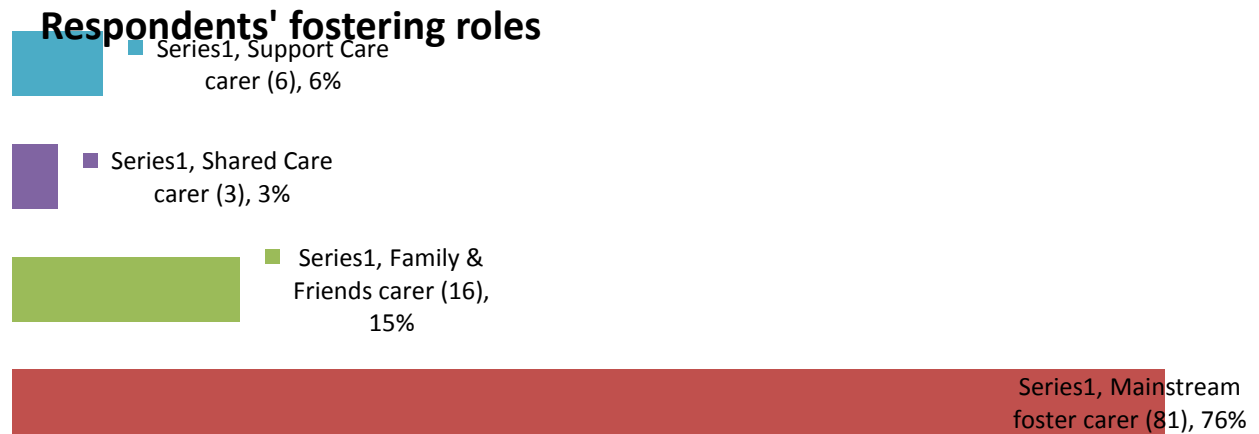


Responders who chose to specify their role:

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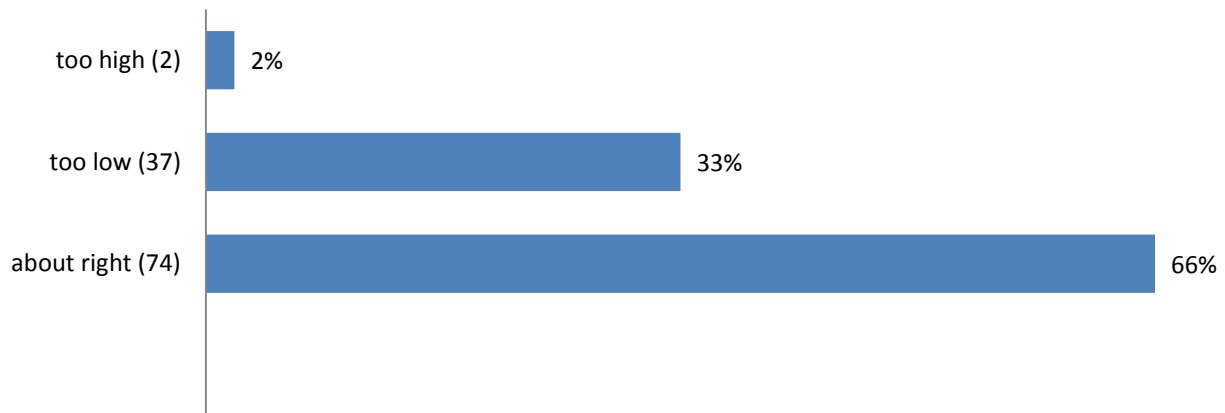
- carer to 11yr old twin boys, attachment issues, dyslexia and assessment for autism
- Family & Friends carer (x6)
- Foster carer or partner of (x4)
- Long term foster carer (x4)
- level 3 carer caring for 1 x 13 year old and 1 x 16 year old with severe learning difficulties
- marketing officer
- respite foster carer (x 3)
- Shared Carer
- Short term sibling groups of three
- Special needs carer
- Supervising and assessing/recruiting carers
- Support Carer

Q2 - foster carers were asked to specify which scheme they were on:



Q3 - I think the fostering allowance currently paid in Bradford is:

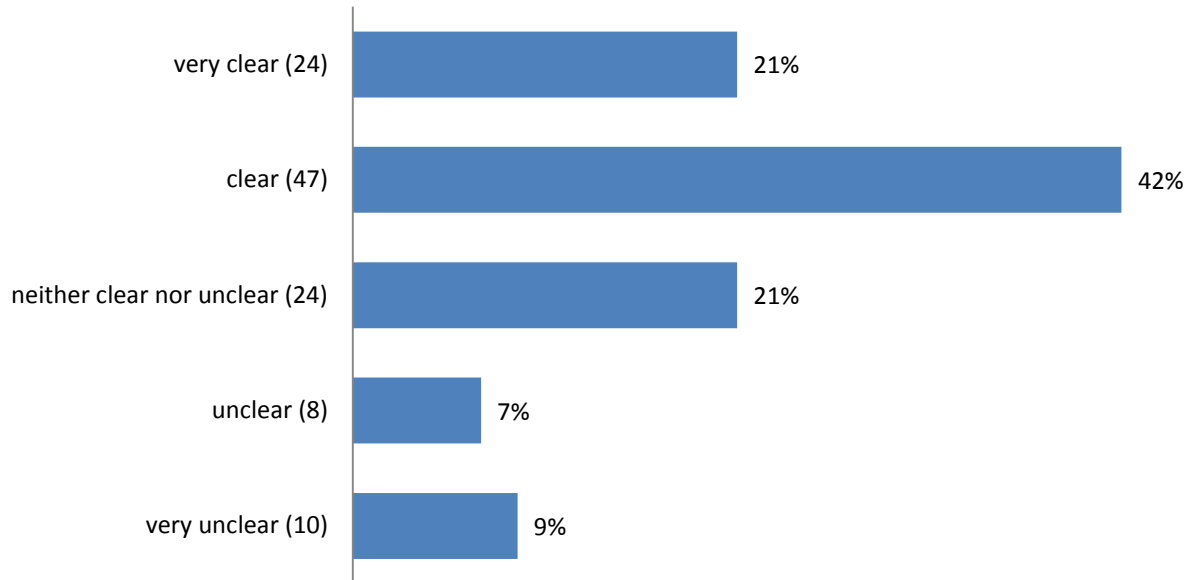
Respondents' thoughts about the current fostering allowance paid in Bradford:



For comments from respondents about the fostering allowance that is currently paid in Bradford, please see Appendix A.

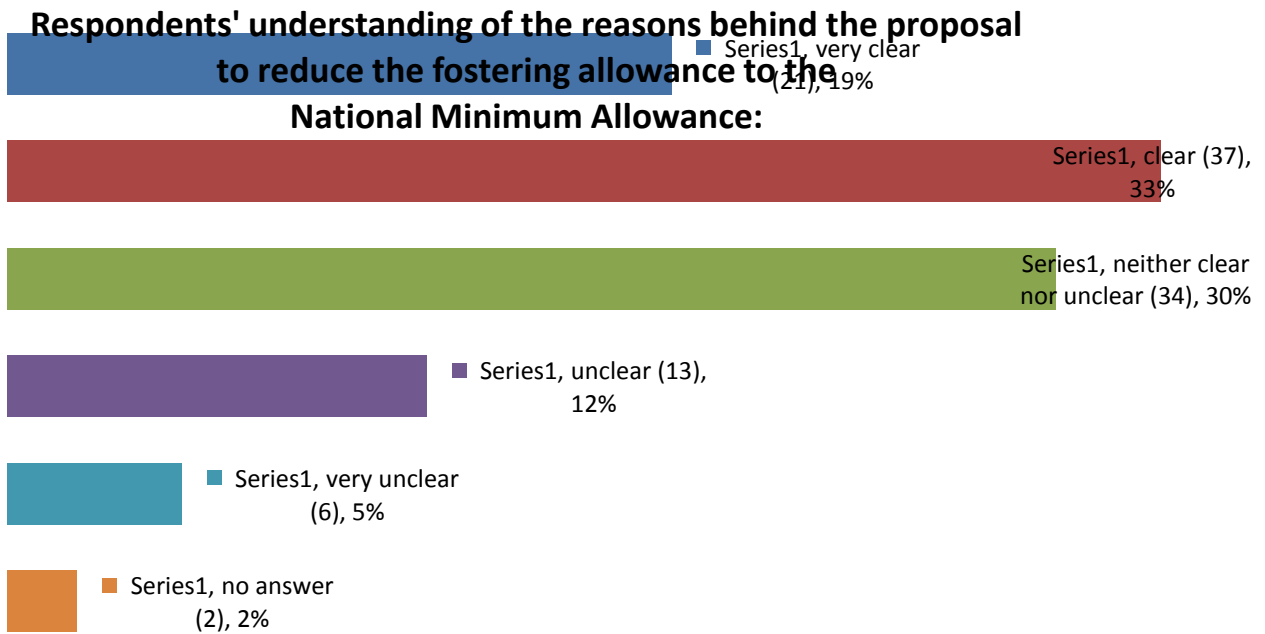
Q4 – I think the explanation of the options being considered are:

Respondents' assessment of the clarity of the presentation regarding the options being considered:



For comments from respondents on the clarity of the options being proposed, please see Appendix B.

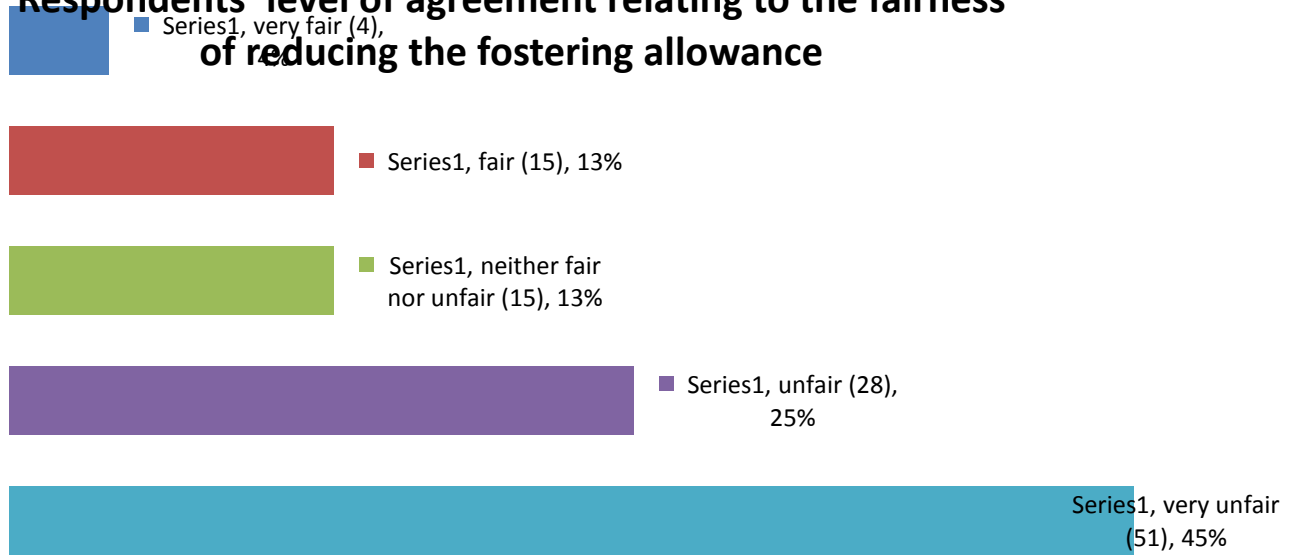
Q5 – I think the reasons behind the proposal to reduce the fostering allowance to the National Minimum Allowance are:



For comments from respondents on the clarity of the proposal to reduce the fostering allowance to the National Minimum Allowance, please see Appendix C.

Q6 – I think the proposal to reduce the fostering allowance to the National Minimum Allowance is:

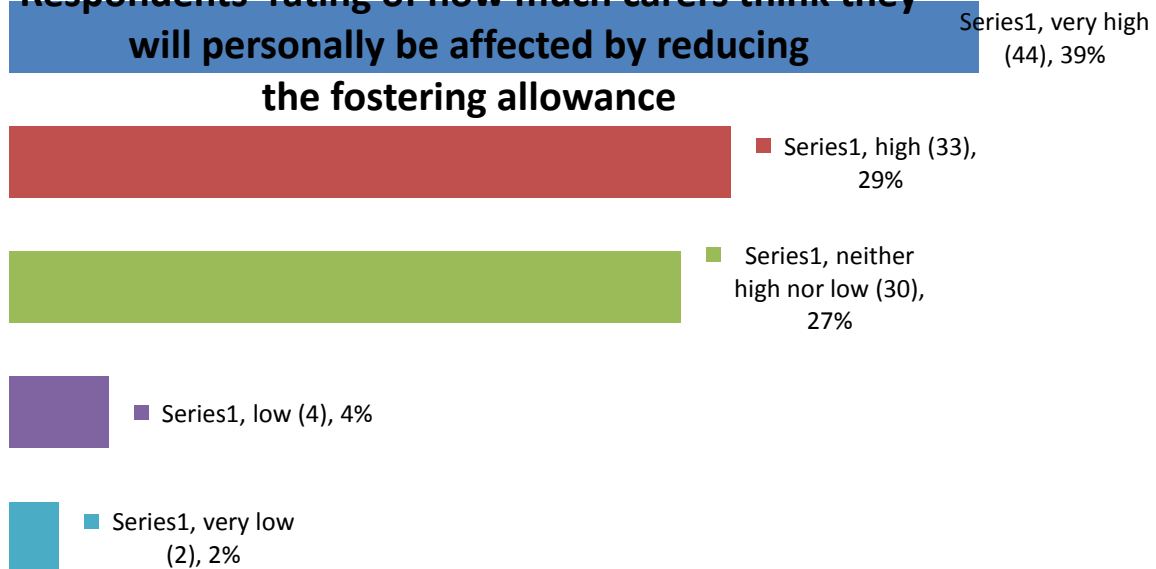
Respondents' level of agreement relating to the fairness of reducing the fostering allowance



For respondents' comments on the fairness of the proposal to reduce the fostering allowance, please see Appendix D.

Q7 – The impact of reducing the fostering allowance to the NMA on me will be:

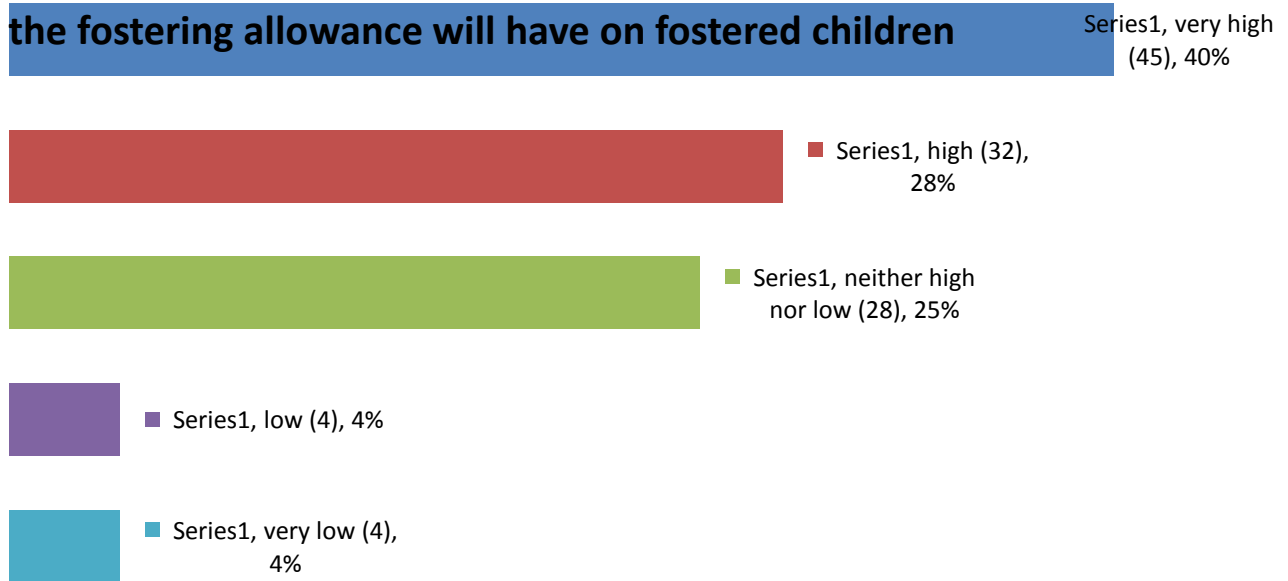
Respondents' rating of how much carers think they will personally be affected by reducing the fostering allowance



For respondents' comments about how they will be personally affected by the reduction of the fostering allowance, please see Appendix E.

Q8 – The impact of reducing the fostering allowance to the NMA for my foster child/ children will be:

Respondents' rating of the level of impact that reducing the fostering allowance will have on fostered children



For respondents' comments on the effects of reducing the fostering allowance on the children they foster, please see Appendix F.

Please note, of the handwritten questionnaires not all were completed Q10 and Q11 in full. Therefore, there are less than 113 replies to the subsequent questions and the answers cannot be assigned percentage values. In addition, when first uploaded to SNAP, Question 10 was incorrectly assigned on the system and 11 respondents were unable to answer this question as a multiple choice.

Q 10 I think the risks associated with the proposal to reduce the fostering allowance to the National Minimum Allowance are:

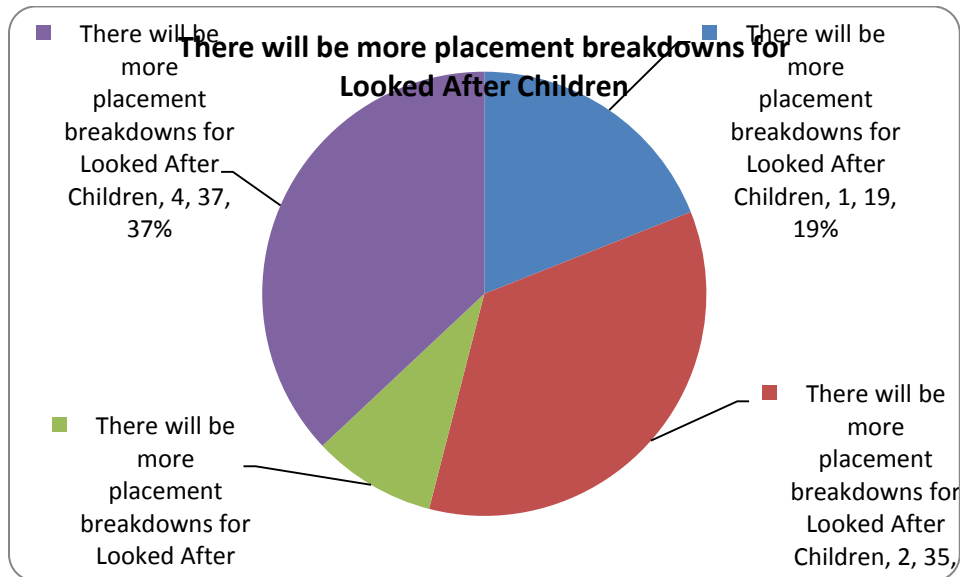
Number of respondents that agreed with risk statements associated with reducing the fostering allowance

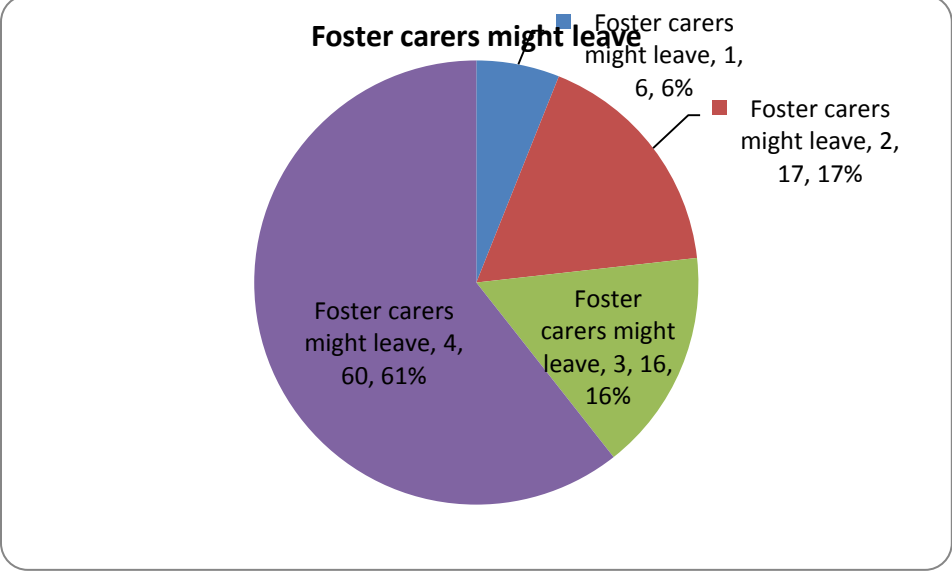
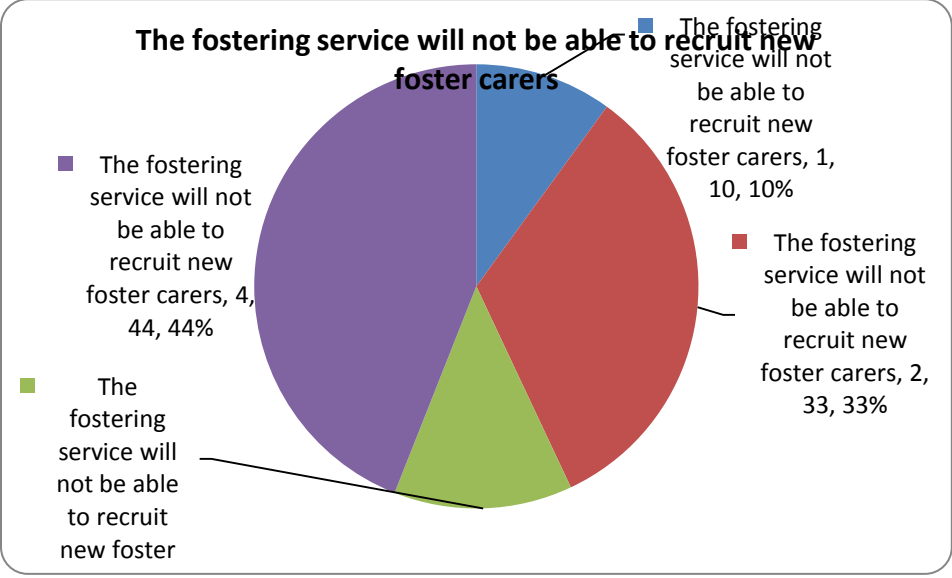
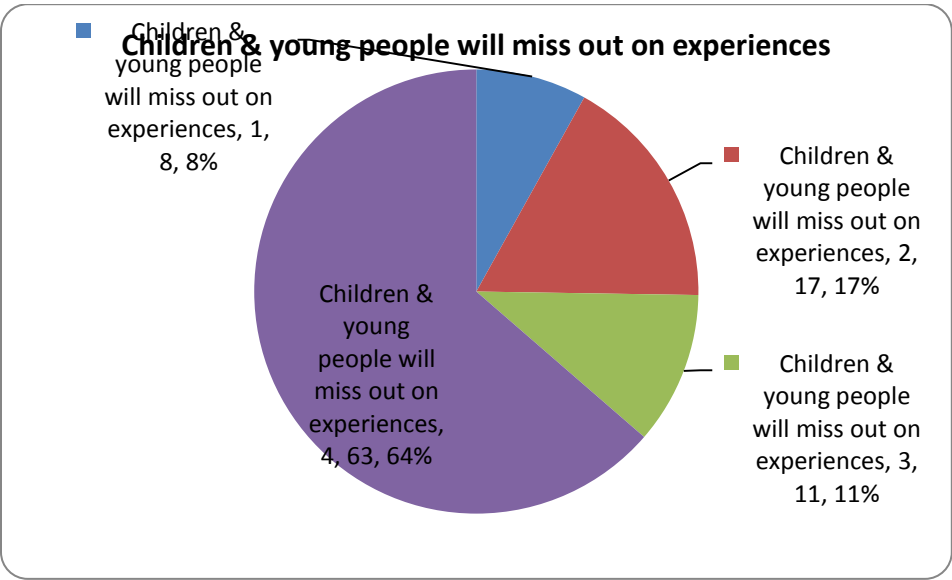


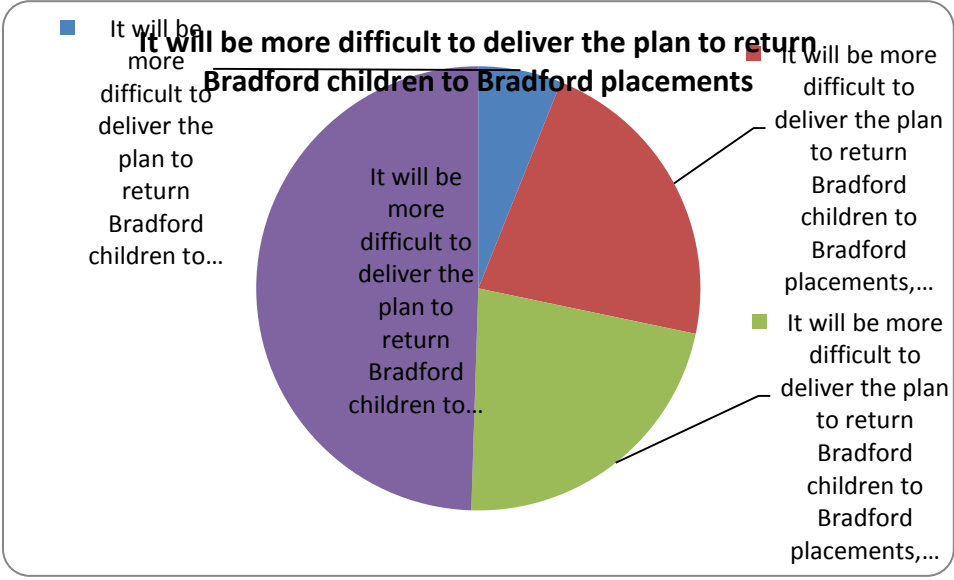
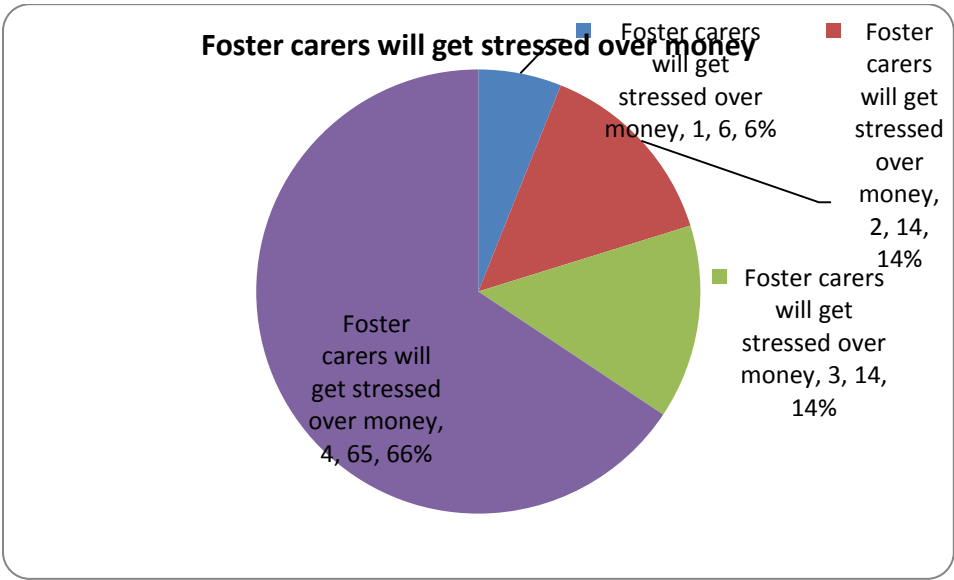
For respondents' ideas about other risks not listed on the consultation, please see Appendix G.

Q11 – Please rate the risks associated with the proposal to reduce the fostering allowance to the National Minimum Allowance by giving each statement a score from 1 to 4, where 1 is low risk and 4 is a high risk.

Please note that this question did not work as a multiple choice question when first uploaded on SNAP and 11 respondents were unable to select more than one answer. This may have skewed the results and the comments recorded in Appendix H.

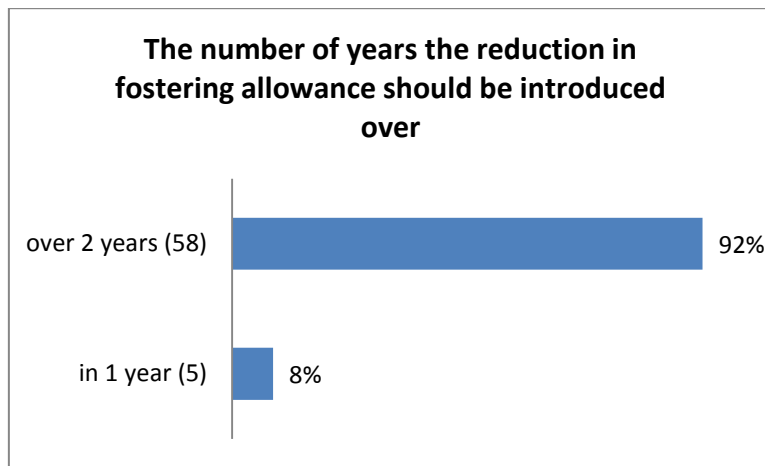






For respondents' ideas about additional risks to those listed above, please see Appendix H.

Q12 – If the proposal to reduce the fostering allowance to the National Minimum Allowance is accepted, I think the reduction should be made:



Please note in all the appendices and Q12a all comments have had spellings corrected, but are otherwise unchanged. Therefore, any answers that are incomplete were recorded as such by the software.

Q12a – Respondents own ideas for how savings can be found:

- reduce council pensions; reduce take home pay of council high earners; stop any annual salary rises for council employees; tackle benefit fraud better; stop spending on any glitzy ceremonies; freeze councillor allowances; stop providing free food and drink any meetings; cut any mileage to HMRC levels; increase school absence fines on regular offenders.
- 1) reduce the number of MP's and Councillors in the district. 2) reduce the number of directors in the department.
- Admin - 2 lots postage. Remittances - most people now have email. Equipment S/W - child / carer long term same worker. i.e. 3 long term children same worker i.e. (3 visits, 3 children = 1 visit - 1 house - 1 carer -) saves money, time, fuel. I am approx. £3400 per year worse off.
- Management team.
- Are social workers taking a pay cut? reduce the paid time of sick pay. Recruit more foster carers on a fair wage, and stop sending our children out to private agencies.
- At the risk of being controversial maybe look at cutting pay for SSW and cutting out sick pay. As for fc, we have to look after these children in a safe secure home. They do not want to come into a house where the carers are not sure if they can make the next mortgage payment because they have been without a child for the previous six weeks. (The child might have come into care for a similar reason). As a fc we do not get sick pay and struggle to get one week's holiday (to recharge our batteries) let alone four weeks holiday and we are expected to live with the child 24/7, not going home at 5/6 o'clock. We provide a comfortable home and experiences and opportunities that many children only dream about. To cut our pay we might find it difficult to keep up this lifestyle. We are to treat the children as our own on less pay than a regular job.

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- Be more strict in assessments of asylum seekers claiming to be 'children'
- carer goes on holiday without the foster child they should not be paid as they are not working the carer that takes the child on holiday is still working and does not get holiday pay .
- carers of siblings to share journeys to contact (fewer taxis) in one car. Put back foster carer support groups based locally (helps reduce stress).
- cost efficiency in Department and wider council. There is a culture of waste and zero accountability in council. You have spoken about cuts but not improving your own efficiency. Sickness and absence pay, half to 13 weeks. Bring in a LEAN champion so you can reduce waste. Allow us to use bus lanes, saves us time. Send pay / allowance slips in one envelope or email them out.
- Cut birthday and holiday allowances. Cut visits down for stable placements.
- Cut down on multiple taxi journeys (reports of 3 taxis being used when only one is needed). Interpreters often attend when parents don't; then they are obviously paid but this is not cost effective...
- Cut down on wastage by putting fees and allowances on one piece of paper and in one envelope.
- Sending out pay slips, send allowance and fee together in one envelope instead of sending 2 separate letters, alternatively look at sending wage slips out via email, or have electronic payslips. 2. Look at internal processes for managing staff sickness. The young person I had didn't have a social worker for nearly 12 months due to sickness. Talking to other carers they have had the same experience of having no social worker, which I appreciate can't always be helped. However managing this properly will reduce costs instead of taking from the carers who provide the front line service. 3. When arranging contact with families and children to reduce the expenses that families can claim, I was surprised when I heard that parents get
- Do not reduce allowances for looked after children. Not to be disrespectful but my opinion is there are too many managers, directors etc in LAC departments which do not deal directly with looked after children. It's the social workers and carers support social workers that are the most important to a child and a carer.
- Firstly stop paying all your employees full sick pay as that is why social workers are off sick a lot and management are the worst I think you should monitor that if they just got statutory sick pay they then couldn't afford to be off sick so much also if you sign up to carers and employees to do their DBS on line this costs 13 pound a year which currently you're paying 60 pound person so really if all this is all put into place you would save a fortune it's not rocket science to work this out
- Foster Talk? How much do we pay them? I do not feel I need this.
- I don't want the reduction, I don't think foster carers will take looked after children on holiday. Give them the experiences needed.
- I feel that although also not popular, it would be fairer to take an equal amount of allowance from all ages of children if this had to be done, although this does not address

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the equity issue. I felt maybe this could be done by the same amount being reduced for all ages of children, in payments such as holiday, birthday, religious festivals payments - although I do not know if this would generate the necessary financial savings.

- I wouldn't propose any cuts to be made to fees and allowances. I went to the xmas do and spoke to 3 different couples of foster carers, out of those three two had already set up appointments with other foster agencies as they were very unhappy and felt underappreciated, the third was awaiting to see if it goes ahead before enquiring elsewhere. Maybe there are cuts that can be made in other areas not directly affected to foster carers.
- If carers were made to account for expenditure of certain categories such as activities then it could be distributed more fairly to those using it for the children and encourage those who aren't to do so. Also as having more than 2 foster children in the home rarely leads to additional transport or household costs. So homes with more than 2 foster children could have a cap placed on certain aspects of the allowance for additional children, unless for instance they could evidence a need for the additional transport and household costs. That could halve the allowance required for looking after a 3rd or 4th child. Having 2 children in my home allows me to pool the allowances enabling me to undertake all the activities etc that I do. Having a 3rd child however would mean I would have quite a large sum of additional allowance that I would not need to use on transport and household costs and could spend elsewhere.
- If it still goes ahead I think you can take off festival money. We don't have any holiday money anyway.. if that helps, then just keep everything the same..
- It would be better to stop birthday money and Christmas money. Savings would be spread over all ages then. Go back to the Council and say it can't be done. No more money can be saved through Children's Services. Go overdrawn. Fail. I won't be taking these children abroad at my expense next year.
- Less admin wastage - notification of fees and allowances could both come in one envelope rather than in two.
- Less paper used for payments every 2 weeks. I think consideration on how much we pay a parent to have contact...
- Look at the other spending. Some training could be delivered on line instead of face to face. Ask whether family and friends carers feel they need a social worker in addition to the children's social worker and if they don't respect their view. Focus on how much is spent on social workers visiting out of area placements and reach a national agreement with other authorities to supervise children in their areas thus reducing travel costs and social worker time. Review the way LACs reviews are carried out - is a face to face meeting for every child necessary? Look at the costs of funding family contact and consider other ways of reducing this. Full budgets for the department would have been useful to look at and spends on different areas. The only option we are being asked to comment on is a reduction in allowances hitting the most vulnerable. Would any of the Directors like a

£1,800 reduction in salary I guess not, so why start with a reduction in allowance for our most vulnerable

- Look into the work some social workers actually do for their families, are they fulfilling everything they are paid for, could this be reduced if not being met. Parties etc are great for the children but if they are no longer able to stay in placements would the money spent on them really be worthwhile? Do not reimburse parents travel money to see their own children. Look at the amount of management and the level of pay they receive.
- look to curbing MPs expenses and other services which do not impact directly on vulnerable children
- make it ten years are you joking or what !!!!!
- more internal efficiency
- My answer to question 12 is neither 1 nor 2 years it is NEVER but I am forced to answer by the system. The proposal states that it is necessary not to save money but because SGOs etc should be paid at the same rate. I propose that any loss from carers allowances is added onto fees instead. This way the alleged extra bill of some £500k to bring SGO allowance rates up to foster carer rates is non-existent but foster carers and the children whom they care for will not suffer any financial loss.
- No more letters all info by email - this will not be able to be done in all cases. 600 foster carers - 450 take email and no more snail mail using just wage slips. 1 per child and 1 per carer ever 2 weeks. estimated cost £1 / wage slip. 2 wage slips / 2 wks = 52/yr @£1 each = £52 / carer x 450 carers =£23700/year. This is an example of what can be saved not just FC wages. Transport all elements to be evaluated The above including birth family transport etc All mail where possible to go by email
- parents to see their own children, and in some cases paying them to keep their own children, stop using hire cars for social workers, if more than one social worker is attending a meeting use car share.
- Postage to be sent out weekly per foster carer. Wages to be posted in one envelope. Personal paperwork can be emailed not posted.
- Put up Council Tax
- Recruit more foster carers, so children do not have to be placed with private agencies, or in residential care. Also encourage experienced foster carer's to deliver some training sessions, instead of paying for trainers to deliver them from outside agencies.
- Reduce admin costs - eg stamps used to send out payslips - do it online - sometimes £1-2 per FCs used in stamps
- Reduce some bosses wages as well.
- Reduction in social work salaries. Reduction in social work expenses. Reduce wastage and inefficiency within Council services.
- Remove the birthday and Christmas allowance for LA foster carers; as from my experience this promotes a perverse incentive around these periods. As in some cases money is being put before the quality of care given to children at a precious time where they may be better being placed with their kinship family and the opportunities gained from taking part

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in activities with the wider family, celebration/gatherings etc during Christmas and birthdays .

- review money being spent on transport i.e. recruiting carers who cannot drive. The amount being spent on taxis and escorts to and from school and appointments. funding parents to attend contact.
 - Sick pay for social workers to be looked into! Training courses to be run by experienced foster carers rather than outside agencies! Use the foster carers you have rather than recruit more!
 - Stop birthday & Christmas payments for long term carers. They can budget for those (and they are all too high!)
 - Stop sending payment slips out in 2 envelopes , costing twice as much on posting and stationary. Every bit on saving would help , this cost would be more than my reduction on my allowances for my age range.
 - Take money from those who get more money from people higher up the ladder. Why should the children suffer!
 - That's not my job although I think there is a misbalance between carers of only 1 child compared to those that care for 2 or 3 where the overall remuneration becomes far more significant. How many other of your staff are having their pay cut by over 5%? This whole issue makes me feel completely sick and if I wasn't committed to the young person in my care I would happily tell Bradford council where to stick this job. My sincere hope is that Foster Carers organise and consider taking industrial action.
 - the main concern is transport - taxis, carers not being able to drive, escort, paying parents money, taxis, bus fare to see their children.
 - Transport for parents. Taxis for school / contact. Carers that don't drive / do transport should lose the transport element from boarding out. Stop social workers taking children out for McDonalds/ pizza.
 - Swap shops for toys, clothes, books, equipment. Discounted group trips.
 - wage slip out in two different envelopes. Send by email.
 - We feel the reductions do not have much of an impact on us personally. Also additional savings may come from placing at least 2 children with a family. This will save on wages also save time for social service visits/reviews etc
-

Appendix A - Comments from respondents on the current fostering allowance arrangements:

- 24/7 employment
- All teenagers are going to be penalized over the cuts more than anybody.
- allowances don't rise as much as costs of caring
- As a single parent, there is no other money to depend on. Reducing the amount paid will result in hardships.
- As children become older, everything becomes more expensive
- Considering what other local authorities pay I think the allowance is about right.
- Current fostering allowance in Bradford should be higher due to a Looked After Child needing a good life and they deserve one due to their past history. The allowance is at the moment manageable and every penny counts for these children. A reduction would not be acceptable
- Currently barely covers costs and needs of children so should not be reduced.
- Fair for mainstream but does not take into account very specific and demanding needs of those children and young people with severe learning disabilities
- Family and Friends carers should be paid the same as foster carers.
- FCs work 24/7 there is no allowance made for this i.e. not reflected in the payments
- Happy with current allowance
- I am of the view that the current fostering allowance arrangements do not take into account costs of living in different regions for example as a kinship foster carer I live in the West Cheshire area where the cost of public and private transport, school lunches and access to after school and holiday clubs etc are significantly higher than for similar services in Hull, Grimbsy, Bradford, Huddersfield, Leeds and other parts of England and Wales
- I believe that transport and activity allowances could be more fairly distributed. A number of carers receive activity allowance and do not do much of any activities with the children in their care. Likewise transport allowance, some children walk to school and other like mine live over 3 miles from school and incur additional costs which are not paid. Furthermore the school they attend requires 2 PE kits for each child and 2 pairs of sports footwear. Plus a number of additional costs such as fund raising.
- I cannot believe we are once again been chopped ? and to think this time it's not our fees it's the children allowances!!!! beggars belief
- I do not find it easy with the amount I get for the child and young person I care for. I take them on holidays which are very expensive and the amount I get for holiday payments does not cover the spending money
- I feel currently the fostering allowances are very low. Social Services are making cutbacks what impact will it have on looked after children. Especially teenagers they have more needs.
- I feel we live a comfortable life as a married couple with one lac.
- I find it ample and give my children a good service.
- I think the allowance at the moment is very fair

- I'm a grandmother who has looked after my granddaughter for 3 years I get 290 every two weeks and in the end I was so exhausted I had to give my job up after working there 23 years if I ever needed help financially I had to fight for it from social services I think it's disgusting.
- It does not cover the cost of caring for a disabled child.
- It doesn't allow for increases in food and fuel over the next two years.
- It doesn't include enough for a child to do after school hobbies more than once PW. On a pragmatic level, if the cuts happen, please ensure more financial help like the max card is available.
- It doesn't reflect children with special needs & teenagers have more needs
- it's about the children and they come first, the current allowances don't quite cover the living expenses for the children. Also if you wish them to have the opportunities that other children receive, such as clubs, decent birthday parties and presents, and decent holidays these allowances need to be raised. I only would like for the children to get the same opportunities as the average family do in this day and age.
- It's acceptable of the moment it allows for extra activities - a reduction in this will be detrimental to this.
- much too low
- okay
- Payments could be made together to save money - administration.
- People only get by on present allowances. Proposed reductions will cause more problems i.e. carers leaving the system because there is not enough money to give the same quality of care previously supplied.
- Some points raised, that affect other carer more than us. We foster 0 -2 and the allowances will affect people foster 16+ and specially those fostering under friends and family.
- Teenagers do cost a lot more to look after than a 3 year old.
- The allowance is about right for the children at this age but as they get older will obviously need more.
- The amount of foster fee its ok..but you need to remember it's our allowance..
- The current allowance arrangements cover the basics to allow the child to be cared for and enables the 'looked after' child to do the same things as children who are not 'looked after'.
- The current allowance enables us to provide a decent level of care for the children, fund their football, swimming and social activities so they are not disadvantaged in comparison to children who are not looked after. They stand to lose around 1800 per year at a time when things are going up and Brexit is causing further uncertainty.
- The current allowance helps fund school trips and after school activities, which help our children to feel like "regular" kids.

- The current arrangements make it difficult for carers of single children whilst potentially overpaying where there are 2 or 3 children placed with one carer. Single child carers have difficulty managing on the payments made.
- The higher allowances for older children are important because they need it more. Clothing is more expensive, activities are more expensive.
- They're not reflective of the cost of living or in line with national minimum water...
- You're having a laugh!
- Considering what other local authorities pay I think the allowance is about right.
- The allowance is about right for the children at this age but as they get older will obviously need more.
- I find it ample and give my children a good service.
- allowances don't rise as much as costs of caring
- I think the allowance at the moment is very fair
- It doesn't allow for increases in food and fuel over the next two years.
- It doesn't include enough for a child to do after school hobbies more than once PW. On a pragmatic level, if the cuts happen, please ensure more financial help like the max card is available.
- Although I think the allowance is about right, there is clearly room for manoeuvre. Cuts are occurring across the spectrum and we all need to play a part in working smarter and never forgetting to keep the young people in line of sight.
- fine
- Fostering in whatever form I think is seen as an "easy" job sometimes in the eyes of those unaware of the demands. As I operate with my wife in Shared Care we do get the more challenging young people, normally on the autistic spectrum. It's an obvious answer, but do feel we are not rewarded enough in payment.
- Fostering teenagers means there are extra costs for all manner of things related to their age & specific needs. Payment is well earned and at the right level now.
- Having had to pay for a solicitor to stop Social Services forcing us onto an SGO when we demonstrably couldn't afford it, and having discovered we were being underpaid anyway for two years, the idea of the allowance dropping when we've only just started getting what we deserve is frightening and deeply alarming.
- I am a long-term carer of a 14yr old & 17yr old. Reducing the boys allowance will cause financial difficulties for these boys their clothes are expensive for starters because they are classed as Adults because of the sizes & you pay the price for that.
- I believe my salary and boarding out fees are what they should be. I have been a foster carer for many years and enjoy my work. I think I deserve what I am being paid. I work 24/7 for 365 days a year.
- I feel as the child gets older, there is more expense involved
- I feel the amount of money given is right as it allows me to give the children I look after many opportunities such as going on schools trips abroad, girl guiding adventures and having family holidays.

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- I feel the rates at the moment are fair. We incur costs that we can no longer claim for due to cut backs incurred last year.
- No account is being taken into consideration for disabled young people who need more out of their personal allowance Bradford do not recognise carers who look after disabled or challenging young people as any carer can get to level three in time
- The allowance we receive at the moment just covers what teenagers need nowadays.
- The current allowances do not take into account that as Shared Carers all of the young people are on their 'first visit' of whatever repeat cycle they are on. We have to plan for each visit even if it doesn't happen. The young people that we care for are predominantly those with an Autistic Spectrum condition.
- There should be an extra allowance available to buy school uniform and games kit when a child has been moved to another area, especially when the child has been out of school for 8mths and everything has to be bought through expensive school suppliers.
- TO THE AMOUNT OF WORK THAT IS INVOLVED WITH A YOUNG CHILD THE ALLOWANCES ARE NEEDED TO MEET EXTRA COSTS.
- We are able to offer our children a range of opportunities and experiences using the funding we receive.
- We get by but surely the kids deserve more than just getting by!
- When you break down the current allowance and the fact that the job is 24/7 the remuneration works out at below the minimum statutory wage
- You need to remember some foster carers including me are at home to care for the young person and the £600 a month I get covers the costs of me having to care for a child.

Appendix B - Comments from respondents on the clarity of the options being proposed:

- All the options are aimed at foster carers and the children. Why are there no other options? Or is targeting foster carers the easy option?
- All the options are appalling, Social Services not thinking of the impact.
- Already decided It's just a tick box exercise going through the motions
- Appeared clear initially however other carers/ attendees displayed discrepancies.
- Budget cuts are inevitable but the impact of FCs along with SSWs who cannot commit time to support them will have far reaching consequences on the children in placement
- Clear but not liked!
- Don't think this proposal has been really thought out.
- Easy to understand as in table format
- Hit and miss at best
- I didn't feel there was enough explanation for each option, but for the option you are looking at it is clear as there is more information for that option.
- I don't agree with it.
- I don't think the proposal is too bad and I have a teenager who will be affected (not really)!
- I personally think the reductions were not too bad.
- I think a lot of children will miss out if the allowance is cut
- I understand the proposals
- I understand.
- I'm not sure you can say you need more older children carers and yet make their allowance the bigger cut
- in option 1 increasing the rates would cost £582k and all children would receive the same payment yet in option 2 increasing all allowances to Fostering Network rates would mean cutting carers fees by £2m to achieve the same outcome the figures do not add up???
- It is clear that you see foster carers as any easy target for saving your service money
- It is not clear at all, is it all about cutting costs ?
- It would appear that we were misled as to the legalities of having parity between mainstream foster carers and those on SGO's etc.
- Just very difficult to consider the proposed proposals
- Looked after children should not even be thought of in respect of reducing fostering allowance as they are vulnerable
- no details for how this affects respite carers
- Not enough transparency - unclear options
- Out of the three options you have only gone into depth with option c and not provided information on the other 2 options
- Rubbish - ridiculous - we get less than minimum wage already how low do you expect us to go!
- Saving money as you have overspent on your budget to me that means that we have suffer.

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- Teenagers are difficult to place. Many carers will now go for a younger child.
- The information is not accurate
- The options being proposed are clear- unfair on the children, but clear.
- The proposals do not state that allowances for SGO's are means tested and are reviewed every 2 years - SGO allowances are not mandatory A national rate for each child would need to be set at the current rate for 11-16 year olds and not at the 0-5 year olds rate. The options do not propose whether there would be an annual increase in line with inflation
- There is only one option being offered
- Very clear, although I think that to bring allowances down to SGO rates is wrong. People that take children on an SGO fully understand that the allowance will be less.
- Very unfair with other councils nationally
- Was very clear to me. Some confusion on table from carers re parents / adoptive parents expenses - I clarified for them this comes from LAC budgets not from fostering service one.
- We are being told this is a proposal but feel it has already been decided like before.
- we have no idea how it affects respite carers
- What you propose is clear but I would have liked to see figures for how much it costs for out of area placements, social worker travel to these, training costs and couldn't this be run on line, different ways of conducting LAC reviews, transport and contact costs etc. It would appear that the only option you have focussed on is the reduction of the allowances for looked after children, in my view a proper consultation would have looked at all costs across the whole department.
- Why compare to other local authorities why not pay what agencies pay.
- Easy to understand as in table format
- I understand.
- in option 1 increasing the rates would cost £582k and all children would receive the same payment yet in option 2 increasing all allowances to Fostering Network rates would mean cutting carers fees by £2m to achieve the same outcome the figures do not add up???
- I think a lot of children will miss out if the allowance is cut
- It would appear that we were misled as to the legalities of having parity between mainstream foster carers and those on SGO's etc.
- I'm not sure you can say you need more older children carers and yet make their allowance the bigger cut
- Clear, if worrying. The slide of the cartoon cat strikes a very odd and clashing tone given the serious and shocking nature of the rest of the slides, in my personal opinion.
- I can't understand how it is worked out with the fees included
- I could not attend meeting due to ill health
- I do not think that children and Foster carers should have their allowances reduced.
- I expect at the end of the day the proposals will go through. I am happier with the way this consultation has been set out rather than calling it a consultation with not one of our ideas brought forward.
- I fully understand and accept these changes, there doesn't appear to be an alternative.

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- I understand why the proposal has been put forward however people are living to their means and to suddenly have to cut out so much will be very difficult.
- If the allowance is reduced you will find it even harder than you do now place this age group everyone will want the younger end children.
- Inadequate detail in the presentation
- It is clear about the reasons to cut but hard on family's to change their outgoings
- It is clear but you are taking money from the wrong people.
- It's clear enough though there's obviously going to be an impact on carers and especially on me as a single carer of teenagers
- The clarity is not the point, who is thinking of the children, it's time to look elsewhere for cuts !
- The cynical part of me has noted that the biggest cuts are being made in payments for older young people. They are the biggest group needing placements so the cumulative saving is greater than if the balance was weighted with younger children. Also, although it doesn't affect me I think that getting all foster Carers to agree to take 0-18 placement
- The proposal is fairly clear but does not mean it is the right thing to do.
- Unnecessary- I thought the idea was to attract carers not put them off
- You need to reduce the overall spending on the council, so you are hitting the very people you are supposed to be looking after, you've given them a standard of living up to now, and now you are cutting it back, you know that we as carers won't let our children suffer, so the money will ultimately come out of our wages money

Appendix C - comments on the clarity of the proposal to reduce the fostering allowance to the National Minimum Allowance:

- Would like a bit more information relating to the NMA. In social care recently there have been some test cases around whether staff should be paid the NMW for the whole time they are at work even if they are asleep
- As the allowances for foster children being paid at the Fostering Network levels was originally funded by cutting the fostering fees for carers a few years ago why are they now in danger of being reversed.
- Again, clear, if upsetting and annoying. All three options make it obvious that the 'pros' are in favour of the kids in care across the borough, whilst the cons are all about saving money.
- Clear enough
- From Shared Care the proposals were not at all clear at the meeting on 25 November. The figures proposed have since been added. Why were these not available for the consultation meeting?
- Gobble-de-gook by the back door.
- I'm unclear on which part of the allowances it's being taken from, according to your latest printout of current allowances, it's portioned out as follows, level 3, that's me, 16/17 me again, Weekly allowance £217.68
- In all honesty as things stand at the moment I will manage of these proposals. I will be hit harder because I look after teenagers
- not sure how it will work out
- They clearly stink !
- ...as mud. Too many increments / allowances to be able to understand the financial implications.
- again I don't agree with it
- Although clear they are a very long way from fair.
- As the allowances for foster children being paid at the Fostering Network levels was originally funded by cutting the fostering fees for carers a few years ago why are they now in danger of being reversed.
- clear
- Clear but flawed. Targeting the wrong age group. Why not reduce birthday and holiday allowances?
- Clear but not acceptable to reduce a child's allowance. Friends and Family carers are already treated unfairly as they do not get a fee. I believe a child is better with family carers and we do put a lot of work into a child for the future.
- Confusing arguments as to why it is necessary to cut already low paid employment i.e. fostering is 24/7 which equates to approx. £3.30ph if a 12 hour/7 day week is used to calculate the hourly rate.
- despite funding cuts it's not justified
- don't agree!

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- Will there be a date when the NMA comes in force? Will there be an annual increase in the NMA Has any consideration been given to Bradford looked after children who fostered in areas outside of Bradford where the cost of Living is significantly higher, especially for an older child, and the impact that any proposed reduction in fostering allowance will have on the child and carer?
- I am very disappointed about the proposal.
- I do understand the proposal...it's a shame we have to do it.
- I don't understand why looked after children are to be punished in the name of cutting costs. Its morally wrong.
- I feel that proposals are extremely fuzzy! I also feel that I am being baffled by facts and figures that are very contradicting
- I think it is wrong. It has become a race to the bottom and you are cutting the allowances to the most vulnerable children without a proper look at the costs of the whole department.
- It doesn't make sense
- It is clear cuts need to be made
- I've found that the NMA is different to the National minimum wage
- Just think it is wrong.
- my understanding is the budget has been reduced. This comes at a time when you are urgently needing new carers and wanting to hang on to the new and experienced carers you already have.
- The facts given are not valid
- The figures on option c do not equate to my current status, so according to those figures I am going to take a drop in pay which I would not be happy about.
- The proposals are clear.
- There is only one proposal being made as two others have been ruled out.
- Understandable at best
- unreal
- What you are proposing is below other councils. You have not been honest with your figures
- Why should we have to suffer because you can't budget right
- Would like a bit more information relating to the NMA. In social care recently there have been some test cases around whether staff should be paid the NMW for the whole time they are at work.

Appendix D - comments on the fairness of the proposal to reduce the fostering allowance:

- 0 - 4 has lowest reduction yet arguably costs least anyway. The NMAs are skewed.
- 16+ children £34.86 too much take more of a percentage of the other three!
- 3 children in our care at the moment - 1 in 5-10 and 2 in 11-15 brackets reduction in allowances by £50 per week means I as husband am subsidising council looked after children by £200 per month to give them same quality of care,, these reductions will mean some carers will give up their job.
- A lot of children will miss out on activities if the allowance is reduced
- Allowing carers children to be allowed to exist comfortably should be paramount. Full time carers with working partners will in essence be subsidising the service.
- Any reduction in the allowance would have a detrimental effect on the children.
- As a carer for a teenager to reduce the allowance and the fee I find this very unfair. I feel we are not valued for the work and service we provide to the young person and the local authority. As carers we have commit
- As I have already said as a married couple we have can back each other up. Not sure how I would cope as a single carer.
- being realistic it's inevitable
- Bradford's 'level payments' are clearly higher than other LA payments so Bradford carers still on higher salaries.
- Clearly it is more equitable to children in all types of placements, however the current proposal does make a much bigger difference to older children in foster placements and given the difficulties recruiting carers for this age group, in particular, I feel that if this were to have a detrimental effect on recruitment or retention of carers for this age group, the effect of this would be more costly than the money saved by doing so, i.e.. by having to use more external placements.
- Especially teenagers they have greater needs. Try explaining this to looked after children about the budget. They will not listen.
- Friends and Family carers only receive an allowance
- Has any consideration been given to Bradford looked after children who fostered in areas outside of Bradford where the cost of living is significantly higher, especially for an older child, and the impact that any proposed reduction in fostering allowance will have on the child and carer?
- I am a new carer I gave up my job to focus on the children 100%, money was not and is not top of my list the children are, however as this cut will affect the children's opportunities in life I am perturbed by this proposal and I also feel underappreciated as I am a new carer.
- I do not receive a wage from fostering, and the allowance is about right, if this is reduced then the council is taking money directly from my own daughter who I provide for. I would personally have to cover the shortfall and don't know if I would be able to do this, because my daughter should not suffer things like not been able to go on school trips etc.

- I find it very unfair especially when you have an emotional disturb child that puts holes in your walls.
- I think it is a reasonable place to try to make adjustments when we know they have to be made.
- I truly can't believe it's happening again. You say we're valued but don't follow through with how we get paid.
- I would be paid at least £500 per month more in other local authorities and inflation is set rise sharply in the coming year further reducing the amount we have to spend. I care for children with complex needs and already cover costs out of my own pocket as the allowance does not cover everything.
- is there any point?!
- It appears that the carers of the most difficult children to place are now going to be penalised the most. I think you will lose a lot of carers if you proceed with these proposals.
- It impacts on teenagers the most and impacts on them at a time when having parity with their non-looked after friend is important.
- It impacts on the very children the council should be caring for.
- It will affect the children
- It's not just hitting the fostered children's quality of life (which, let's face it, is pretty dire pre-fostering), but it hits the whole fostering family and their children
- Many foster carers give up previous employment therefore rely solely on fostering income to live - single carers will be badly affected as it is their sole income
- Many of these children have come from homes with nothing and now you want to take even more away from them! Extremely cruel
- My children will be worse off because of this. Why can't the council increase Council Tax by a couple of pounds?
- Necessary but very unfair. Hearing the FCs on my table discuss their issues and the impact of further cuts is very demoralising for all
- Not fair at all
- Not happy with the cut backs. We work very hard as a foster carer and it's unfair
- Not happy with what is being proposed in particular with the older children and the amount jumps much higher
- not justified in line to inflation
- Stop foster carers level 4 will save money
- The allowance is to benefit the child and provide for their needs. Less money can only have a negative impact on the children for whom we care. I suggest savings be made to politicians wages and allowances.
- The children will not suffer as carers will make up the difference and subsidise out of their own pockets.
- The proposals are going to hit hard on those fostering older children; this would not benefit anyone especially as you are seeking carers for older children.

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- The proposals are very unfair! The council has provided a breakdown of where the finances are needed and how much, yet are now claiming that it is able to be reduced. The children will end up missing out on activities and clubs etc because the money will just not be there to cover them.
- They are a disgrace. Effectively they represent a 12% reduction in the allowance and a 5% reduction in the total remuneration received as a level 3 carer. Far more for a level 1 or 2 carer - how are they meant to manage?
- This treats all children the same.
- This will affect people who foster 16+
- To reduce the children's allowance is very unfair. The money makes a big difference to the lives of looked after children in many ways.
- Totally unacceptable as I have been a Friends and Family carer for my granddaughter for 11 years and over all these years I have not been paid a fee for myself or been able to claim Family Allowance, school uniform grants, free school meals or any tax credits. The fostering allowance is the only money I get for my granddaughter and that pays for her things.
- Unfair. Costs at least twice as much to feed and clothe a 15 year old as a 5 year old
- Way unfair. I have 3 teenagers. My hit is £3900 per year. Do not propose this.
- We have older children who do lots of activities; the last thing that we want is for the cuts to impact on this.
- What about the national minimum wage? What we're paid is not a reflection of cost of living.
- You cannot be serious
- You want carers to look after teenagers but pay less for it
- As a carer for a teenager to reduce the allowance and the fee I find this very unfair. I feel we are not valued for the work and service we provide to the young person and the local authority.
- Any reduction in the allowance would have a detrimental effect on the children.
- I think it is a reasonable place to try to make adjustments when we know they have to be made.
- It appears that the carers of the most difficult children to place are now going to be penalised the most. I think you will lose a lot of carers if you proceed with these proposals.
- A lot of children will miss out on activities if the allowance is reduced
- It impacts on the very children the council should be caring for.
- It's not just hitting the fostered children's quality of life (which, let's face it, is pretty dire pre-fostering), but it hits the whole fostering family and their children if you want to be inclusive in how you do thin
- It will affect the children
- As a support care worker, after paying for car insurance, outings such as ice skating, swimming, then the fostering allowance money has been spent.

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- As I have already said above. There may be a national average, but this still varies from different authorities. I would suggest within Bradford as a whole the young people are potentially more challenging
- As mentioned above, as a Friends and Family Carer the allowance is the only safety net between the children and the no doubt more expensive option of going into care homes. I know this reflects National Government policy
- Don't think there is any choice, money has to be saved.
- How can it be fair, we didn't get a holiday this year and it looks like we won't get one next ! How unfair can that be when all the class mates get holidays.
- I am a single carer and so the only wage earner in the house. I will find it very difficult if there are any more cuts
- I think the children will lose out the allowance has already been cut.
- I think this particular proposal has been chosen because it is unlikely to be rejected rather than because it is the correct or fair thing to do
- I worry that older children are already the hardest to find homes for. That these cut backs will make it harder for 16+ children
- Isn't it about having quality care?
- It's a difficult time, cuts seem inevitable....but it doesn't feel fair though.
- It's unfair as it's going backwards in time and it isn't going to work.
- not fair as I've said there have been too many cut backs already, and we still have to maintain the same standards as before.
- People have signed become carers based on these allowances and now have to make major cut backs, in the end the children will be the ones who suffer.
- people will use private agencies.
- Please comment on the fairness of the proposal to reduce ...
- These should be the last cuts that foster carers have to endure though.
- This is going to affect children, the very children you have sworn to look after and protect, you've given them a standard of living, now you're taking it away, tell me how that's fair, then you go and tell them, the teens
- We are supposed to bring the children into our family & treat them as such but reducing the allowance will mean they won't be getting everything they should eg school trips ,after school activities, new clothes which cost
- We look after these children 24 hours a day my child has complex health issues You could not even pay enough the hours I have spent in hospital away from my own family I am a single carer so any drop in pay will effect
- Where is the money saved going.[I wonder]
- Why should the children lose out.
- With the general climate of price increases across the board this suggestion is made worse. When you add the increased requests for payments from parents/carers towards school activities the situation looks even worse.

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Appendix E - comments on the effects of reducing the fostering allowance on you:

- Affect will be low
- As all of the fostering allowance that we receive goes to the children, if there was a reduction we would have to try to make up the difference from our own income. We already spend a good bit of our money on the children
- As I foster 2 children age 13 & 16 I would be losing £226.48 per 4 weeks from my allowances this can only have a detrimental effect on the care we could provide for them, and would have a direct impact on things
- as respite carers we don't know the effect
- As stated above I have committed to a number of activities for the children in my care. I already pay a portion of my wage on the children, as any 'parent' would, however I will need to find an extra £160 out of my wage to meet these cutbacks which can only mean I will have to cutback all round. In many foster families that money is in essence the child's pocket money, haircuts and activities money each month. How can that not fail to have a negative impact?
- because I foster babies the impact will be low for me.
- being a single carer, with 3 long term, I will struggle.
- Certainly will be high, especially if you do your working out over a month that is a high impact financially.
- Don't know yet - but may lead to less carers for older children - see above.
- Don't think it will affect us greatly.
- Everything for teenagers costs more.
- Fostering income is my only income therefore the child will inadvertently be affected by the cuts
- I am a single parent, it will make it very difficult to make ends meet.
- I don't expect it to be a problem for me.
- I feel that I may not be able to continue to do my job
- I have massive bills to keep this house running and took this roll to care for young people a long time ago? I cannot believe that both myself and spouse are been forced back into full time work to meet the high bills that are now the norm every week, hence now I feel the pressure to meet the needs of my young looked after children are far above my expectations.
- I may not be able to afford to continue supporting the three teenage girls with severe disabilities that I do
- I may struggle to save especially towards birthdays, Christmas and holidays .
- I only receive an allowance
- I pay for term time activities due to working and to reduce the allowance will have a significant financial impact on my as an individual as the young person I care for even though they are a teenager require 24/7 support
- I rely on the income it is my main income. I dedicate my time and energy to fostering.
- I will have less money to pay for activities for children; the child's quality of life will be greatly affected.

FINAL

- I will have to put my granddaughter back into care
- I will have to rethink whether I want to continue fostering for Bradford.
- I will lose around £280 per month as I foster teenagers. this is too great a loss and I will be forced to transfer my services to an Independent Fostering Agency.
- I would have to think about starting new activities
- I'd like to do more with child eg horse riding and guitar lessons once pw - like my own son did when younger, but the suggested personal allowance is too low.
- In effect it should make no difference to me as technically is a reduction of the child's allowance.
- it will cut down the opportunities I can offer the children and as I've commented in previous answers this is my only job as I wish to focus on fostering to make sure I am the best foster carer I can be. I am already using my own wage to subsidise the allowances.
- It will mean that we will have to think about how much we can put aside for college trips which are an integral part of the course he is on. And also we will find it difficult to fund any equipment he is going to need for his course.
- It's not in line with inflation
- Looked after children are expensive to bring up and I need all the money for my granddaughters upbringing it will leave a big impact on her material things in life though all the love, care, security and attention she gets from me is totally free.
- No difference to me really as I have 2 young children.
- not known
- Over £1,000 a year! Who else working for Bradford Council has had such a pay cut?
- subsidising the deficit
- The council, as with last year's cuts, haven't factored in the cost impact of foster carers resigning and retiring which will cause you to break your promise not to implement any further cuts over the next two years.
- The effect of reducing the allowance could possibly result in my having to say that I, unfortunately, can no longer continue to foster. I work by the breakdown given to me when I started fostering and cannot afford to alter that.
- The fostering allowance that I receive contributes towards school lunches £2.20, snacks £0.50 daily, after school clubs £10 each session; gymnastics £9.50 each session; swimming £7.50 each session - these are essential to help absorb my foster child's energy and keep him focused as he suffers from ADHD and foetal alcohol syndrome school and any surplus energy is often transformed into destructive energy which can lead to additional costs of replacing broken and ripped personal items i.e. TV's DVD players, CD's books, games, light fittings, clocks
- The older they are is the more expensive they are.
- Two teenagers expensive trainers clothes, all want phones, we are their taxis, fuel costs money, cinema trips and days out with friends aren't cheap.... also they have bottomless stomachs, and the price of living and food is going up not down. The chances of saving for holidays will be very low.
- We can't expect the children to have less. It's truly unfair. they will suffer in the end!

FINAL

- We have 2 children aged 12 and 13 that we have had for 10 years. They will have a reduction of around £1800 per annum, which is significant.
- We have to take and pick-up our niece every day from school due to child protection issues. The school is at the other side of Bradford and we don't get a mileage allowance or wear and tear of our vehicle. Our niece is coeliac and food is more expensive than the average person. This will impact the money we provide for our own daughter's needs, due to covering the shortfall. Our daughter shouldn't have to suffer maybe not been able to go on school trips or doing any extra activities. Me and my partner already provide more money than we receive from
- We were put in a position last year with cuts to go long term but had to reduce placements from 3 to 2 reducing our income by a great deal, further cuts may put us in a position where we can no longer foster.
- When full force of cuts hit I will be nearly £160 worse off per month due to adopting a child with complex health needs from Bradford who spends a lot of time in hospital and who's prognosis is poor I will not be able to make this money up by taking on extra work
- When you have several children with special needs, no extra allowance for them, then to reduce fees/allowances again it's not acceptable.
- Yes it will affect us all.. it's our income.. A lot of things will change not happy at all
- I pay for term time activities due to working and to reduce the allowance will have a significant financial impact on my as an individual as the young person I care for even though they are a teenager and require 24/7 support
- As all of the fostering allowance that we receive goes to the children, if there was a reduction we would have to try to make up the difference from our own income. We already spend a good bit of our money on the children
- I don't expect it to be a problem for me.
- As I foster 2 children age 13 & 16 I would be losing £226.48 per 4 weeks from my allowances this can only have a detrimental effect on the care we could provide for them, and would have a direct impact on things
- I would have to think about starting new activities
- The council, as with last year's cuts, haven't factored in the cost impact of foster carers resigning and retiring which will cause you to break your promise not to implement any further cuts over the next two years.
- I'd like to do more with child eg horse riding and guitar lessons once pw - like my own son did when younger, but the suggested personal allowance is too low.
- being a single carer, with 3 long term, I will struggle.
- Again as it stands at the moment I am ok with these proposals
- As a single carer of teenagers it will impact on me financially ... morale is already low in the fostering community...we are getting less while being asked to do more...training etc...I see carers unwilling to go that far
- As an example £19.11 is currently paid for one session for a 11-15 year old person. The proposal is to reduce this to £16.81. Over any given week a number of people in this age range mounts up and the reductions in payment

FINAL

- At the moment, with three children under the age of ten, pretty low. But this is the second time the allowance locally has been dropped, and with three more years of Tory rule and an economy in tatters (and after two ye
- cut back
- Family and friends foster carers receive less than other foster carers as it is.
- Having done this particular role for another provider I suffered a 50% reduction in payments in the first year. (£28k to £14k) In addition my husband supports me and we provide care as a couple. We are thinking that we m
- Having to find ways to cut back when the cost of living is rising and children need food, new clothes etc. This has not changed.
- I don't aim to make money at this and I don't think many people are highly influenced by monetary considerations, but it's an insult to even suggest it. The work I do with my fostered child is not even acknowledged never
- I may have to move house
- I was informed I would be made a level 3 carer last April. Due to no fault of my own I am still waiting to receive this. Therefore to reduce my level 2 allowance will be will be upsetting for me. If I was being paid as
- I will just shop smarter and encourage young people to do the same.
- I WILL NO LONGER BE ABLE TO TAKE THE CHILD ON HOLIDAY AND THIS WILL BE A CERTAINTY IF THE CUT GOES AHEAD, I WILL BE BOOKING FOR MYSELF
- Impact on me would be No holiday, Less new clothes, No School Trips, No after School Activities.
- Losing over £3000 per year as the children I care for are in the age range 10 years to 15 years
- My placement has nearly come to an end and I will not want to take on any more children
- Older children harder to find homes for
- our allowance will be reduced by £80 a month. both carers work for the NHS and have not had a wage rise in 7years.
- Please comment on the effect of reducing the fostering al...
- The children have done without already they deserve to have the same as children not in care.
- The reduction will have to be absorbed. If cuts of this nature continue it will have a negative impact on provision for children.
- This will have an impact on been able to provide things like going on holidays, having a parent home full time, having a warm home and other essentials.
- trying to maintain what the children are used to.
- We are in a more fortunate position than a lot of other carers, and though it may mean a minimal reduction in allowance it isn't as bad for us personally.
- When I took up fostering you told me to give up my job, now you are responsible to at least pay the starting fee which has already been reduced by the holiday allowance.
- Will have to tighten my belt.

FINAL

- you are cutting the children's money, this means there is less money coming into the household, as I pay for everything whilst shopping etc, except for clothing, I shall have to use my own money to make up the difference

Appendix F - comments on the effects of reducing the fostering allowance on your foster children:

- A lot will change.. children will miss out too.
- as per my previous comments. also as I would like to focus on the fostering still 100% as I am new, we may need to look at stopping some clubs or not going on holiday of which I do not want to do but I will have to find ways to be able to meet living costs.
- As respite carers we don't know
- As stated above any shortfall in the allowance would be almost impossible to find ,therefore the children would have to miss out on certain activities that cost eg Cubs, brownies, swimming etc. I feel that if we couldn't
- At present I foster younger children. So the impact is not as much.
- Because children don't understand about financial (budget). They want money for expenditure - transport- meals out - pocket money. They will not understand they have to have a limit.
- Children do not understand, eg teenagers need more money to buy the 'in' clothes social lives etc same as their peers.
- Do you really expect foster carers to start directly withdrawing £1,000 a year from what they spends on the child? If so, please let us know where - Scouts and sports clubs, days out, holidays? Obviously it will be the cares that are hit directly in their pockets.
- Due to the ages of my foster children I have explained to them the proposals and how it will affect them and they are not happy.
- Holidays, I will have to go by myself as I always put something away each payment towards the holiday funds.
- Holidays, treats, and maybe some luxuries.
- I don't think it will cause any problem to them. I will still be able to take them out swimming, walking, visiting places of interest etc.
- I feel that looked after children are going to feel socially excluded. They will miss out on school trips and after school clubs where they can mix with their peers and gain social skills and confidence.
- I worry that my foster child will miss out
- Impact on the amounts spent on holidays, clothes, care and holiday. Also lack of SSW due to cuts will be huge and the children will suffer ultimately.
- It may reduce after school / in school activities
- Less available resources to allow for essential extracurricular activities/ holidays etc which are necessary for my child's wellbeing
- Less fosters carers = more out of area and residential placements = a poorer quality of life for children in care and less money to improve it on a daily basis.
- myself as a full time worker will have to subsidise the difference
- N/A personally due to role
- not able to start new activities , not able to go on school trips etc

FINAL

- Not much social trips
- Not so many days out and cheaper holidays.
- Our niece would not be able to have contact with her family as much because we would have to limit our car usage for school use, because it's vital she remains in this school due to the support network she receives. She will be emotionally impacted by not seeing her family as much, and may fall back into the routine of running away, and we have had issues of child sexual exploitation. She currently has fantastic attendance at school, and has what she considers good access to family across the district. She has extra provisions
- Teenagers want the same as their peers which the reduced allowance and increased inflation will not cover.
- The affect it will have on my granddaughter is high. If her allowance is less its less money for all her needs.
- The children I care for are just going into the higher band of cuts and with both girls now wearing adult size clothes and shoes which cost more than children losing that amount will have a negative impact on both children fostering is a 24 hr 7 day a week job which at times can be very stressful the extra stress and worry the financial implications these cuts will have on our fostering family will affect every aspect of our lives As losing the money last year did we always take the girls away with us and are bound to school holiday breaks
- The children wouldn't be able to have the treats there used to.
- The effect on the child could be great as they potentially could have to adjust to a new home. They would not be able to attend clubs etc and therefore would be no benefit in them staying with myself as I would not be ensuring they have the same opportunities as non-looked after children, I cannot afford to pay for this out of my own pocket.
- The local authority will have to find alternative care for the child during school holidays as I will not be able to afford to pay the surplus for child care costs or take the time off work as I am a single parent i.e. sole income provider. The local authority may also have to find alternative care for the child when we go on our family holiday
- they are now being penalised for no reason! they did nothing wrong????
- They may not receive the care or may have a less well tailored to their wants/needs experience
- They will no longer have what they truly deserve. Holidays will be less available.
- They will not get all they get now they are already 'different' so then they can be part of the less well off
- We feel restricted enough on what, where, how we spend - luckily we've always been careful but no further reductions.
- We get a low allowance as family and friends if the allowance I get now goes down I will have to put my granddaughter back into care as I have a 10 year old son I cannot have any more stress as this will have a knock on effect on our life's I will not put my son threw anymore it's unfair

FINAL

- We have been trying our best to get our children to believe that they are with us until they are of an age to be able to go out in the world on their own. If we have to give up fostering due to more cuts, this will traumatise them even more than they are already. They will see it as a further rejection. Even if we manage to carry on we won't be able to afford to offer them opportunities that are of any cost
- We will have to make up the shortfall
- We will not allow their quality of life to be impacted.

Appendix H – respondents’ own comments / ideas about additional risks to those listed in Question 10:

- 16+ to take so much allowance away when this age group generally need more funds would be a mistake.
- A foster carer who feels undervalued having received such a massive reduction in remuneration is going to be demotivated and may struggle both emotionally and financially. This is not a good place to be in when caring for challenging young people. It's a serious slap in the face for foster carers.
- all the above will apply. Some carers have only the allowance and fee as their income and carers will become stressed having money worries. It will result in carers looking for other providers
- Children and young people not receiving respite will become isolated and frustrated and behaviours will impact negatively on their families
- Children may feel less valued. There may be greater conflict with carers who may have to say no to some activities, particular clothes etc. The costs of Brexit have yet to be felt and may mean food, holidays, clothes etc are all more expensive at a time when the allowance is being reduced.
- Costs will actually increase for the council in the end due to more placement falling through, which will demand more from already overworked social workers who may be inclined to go on long term sickness due to the high demand. More stress on public services like the police due to more children running away and child exploitation. If the council go down this route they will be undoing all the good work been done in Bradford at present and may see a downwards spiral they wish they had never started.
- Councillors and Susan Hinchcliffe refused to have their own allowances reduced and should not expect foster carers to have theirs reduced
- Due to lack of carers the costs will increase because they will need more agency carers
- Friends and family carers will be stressed if a reduction in allowance goes ahead. It is unfair for the child as the children will suffer and miss out on vital things in their lives.
- I brought up my own three children on a very small income and now being involved with bringing up grandchildren and support care children, I really feel throwing money at things is not the answer and much can be done
- I also feel for the older children this may cause stress between them and the carers.
- I would like to have ticked all the above boxes, however the system will not allow me to do so
- click all the risks but the survey would not let me
- id tick more boxes if you offer them!
- I say it again I will have to place my granddaughter back in care if my allowance reduces we get not a fraction of what foster carers get and we do a lot of work for pittance
- It will be even harder to find placements for older children, because people just will not be able to afford to take them in. Will cost Bradford council more as could result in the need

for more children's homes, which also never benefit the children! This could also result in more social care assistance in the children's future (adult life) because of the lack of safe, caring and secure home life.

- it will reduce foster carers if they do it for the right reasons and that's not the money . But I do think that the children might miss opportunities
- Local services for eg holiday and after school clubs will close due to reduce income generation as a direct result of families not being able to afford to use these services. The local authority will end up paying more for the care of its looked after children as there will be undoubtedly a shortage of foster carers, in particular Kinship foster carers, and residential homes will be used as a means care and agency foster carers will also be used as a means of care; both these methods of care can costs anything from £300 to £1000 weekly
- Lose experience carers. Children moving as carers need to return to main employment before fostering.
- May generally have an effect on the goodwill of carers towards the fostering service, which may in turn affect children and young people.
- Only allows me to tick one option above, I think all except the first option are probably very real risks. The most important thing in all of this should be the children's wellbeing
- The form does not accept multiple ticked answers. All of the above bar the first one.
- POVERTY!
- The children will be made to feel socially excluded, different, and will have a real sense of unfairness. This could cause resentment towards their foster carers, which in turn will cause tension within the placement, which could put the placement at risk of breaking down, especially if the foster carers and the placement are new.
- The fostering of teenage children will become more difficult as they incur the most cost and they are getting the biggest reduction = foster carer will not take these children.
- The well-being and stability of all involved in the family
- There will be an emotional risk to the children who will feel uncared for and of less value than they already do.
- There will be problems.
- You make cuts , we will have to make cuts.

Appendix F – Additional risks as listed by the respondents

- transfer to private/alternative providers will the council not have to pay for out of area placements resulting in more financial costs to the authority?
- As I said earlier the costs of Brexit. The self-esteem of looked after children. conflict with caterers who have to say no to some activities, choice of clothes etc
- Calderdale Council have had the sense to dramatically increase payments to foster carers, making their new rates hundreds of pounds better than Bradford as they recognise that retaining and recruiting foster carers whom save them a fortune compared to residential and IFA fees makes good financial sense. Penalising and alienating your best value resource will only lead to massively higher external costs as carers are entitled to transfer to IFAs with their current placements remaining in place and carers will do so.
- Children in IFA or residential placements were placed there for a reason. Bringing them back to Bradford carers for less money is not an incentive.
- Consequences will be detrimental to the service overall. More placement breakdowns, more children in care. More staff sickness / stress.
- executive may deem management ineffective and seek a new direction.
- Foster carers will not pass on the reduction to the children in their care. As a result of a significant loss of income some foster carers could face significant financial problems not just a bit of stress as referred to above.
- Harder than it already is to find placements for older children.
- How can I explain to my little ones that there no more money left for out of school hobbies? Tell me that? The attention-length of one of mine is so bad that if the child has nothing to do for more than 30 mins the child is in a state of despair !!!!!
- I may look elsewhere if I can't afford to live.
- I think the reduction in allowances will have such a profound negative effect on looked after children and their life chances.
- Job satisfaction and worth. I'm new and I do feel under appreciated by this proposal.
- Mental and emotional stresses for parents and carers and foster carers
- Not happy but fostering / council will do what they want.
- re of a problem for some people, but I do think we have to remember why we do it. Pooling resources.
- SEE ABOVE plus frequent placement moves
- The love these children receive is vital for their development to a well-rounded adult and by reducing the allowance you may deny a child a chance at future success and happiness with family values.
- There may be placements breaking down due to financial stress and that puts vulnerable children in a more vulnerable situation and foster carers, especially friends and family may think twice on taking family children on board. We do not get a fee just the allowance.