



## Appendix B

### Bracknell Forest Staying Put Financial Implications

#### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 From the age of eighteen young people are no longer legally 'in care' or 'looked after' and therefore fostering arrangements and legislation relating to children placed with foster carers no longer apply. Many care leavers move into independent living at this age.
- 1.2 The Children and Families Act 2014 introduced a new duty on local authorities to support young people to remain with their former foster carers once they turn 18, called Staying Put. This came into force from May 2014. Staying Put (SP) can be in place until a young person is 21 years of age. The scheme is for former relevant children who require an extended period of time with their carers due to delayed maturity, vulnerability and / or in order to complete education or training. Where a young person has an on-going cognitive disability and meets the Adult Services Fair Access to care services, Adult Services will be responsible for their plan.
- 1.3 The agreement to stay put should be made by both the existing foster carer and the young person and is a way to extend the transition to adulthood for the looked after young person by continuing to live within the supported environment of a known family and household. Staying Put carers are therefore not recruited but transition into the role.

#### 2 Background

- 2.1 Bracknell Forest currently supports care leavers to live either independently or in a semi-independent arrangement. This might include independent living in private rented accommodation, shared accommodation with other young people, Supported Lodgings or Supported Housing or staying with former foster carers on a room only basis. The Staying Put arrangement extends the type of accommodation to include foster carers becoming SP carers.
- 2.2 The existing budget for foster care allowances is based on projections of foster care up to the age of 18 years. There is no existing funding for Staying Put (SP) providers with relevant young people currently moving into after care, which for 2013-14 had an average weekly cost of support of £125. However, within this average figure the expenditure incurred for individual Care Leavers varies significantly.
- 2.3 The Department for Education has provided a ring-fenced grant to local authorities to provide support towards expenditure lawfully incurred or to be incurred by them, in respect of a young person aged 18 and over to continue to live together in a 'SP arrangement'. BFC will receive £12,820 in 2014-15 with receipts for future years yet to be confirmed but if the current distribution

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of the grant to LAs is maintained, income of around £20,000 in 2015-16 and £26,000 in 2016-17 can be expected.

- 2.4 Various payment options for Staying Put carers have been considered. The overriding principle is that former foster carers should be encouraged to continue to support young people up to the age of 21 years and should not be disadvantaged by doing so. This is balanced against the change in expectations on the carer who will be supporting a young adult to develop life skills and independence and preparing them to move on, rather than caring for a child. There should be equality of opportunity for all young people and a staying put arrangement should not be precluded because the former foster carer cannot afford to enter into the arrangement. It is essential that CSC is both transparent and flexible in its decision-making and that both carers and young people are enabled to make informed decisions about Staying Put.
- 2.5 This paper does not include room only options which are provided by people who have not fostered the young person, previously. It also does not include options for young people with disabilities because SP is for children with delayed maturity rather than on-going disability. However there may be occasions where a carer seeks to continue caring for a child with a disability either long-term or until an adult placement is finalised and this will have to be managed on a case by case basis in co-operation with adult services.
- 2.6 It is fair to assume that not all young people will choose to Stay Put with former foster carers and of those who do, not all will remain under a SP arrangement for the full three years.

### 3 Current Budgets and Expenditure

- 3.1 Bracknell Forest foster carers currently receive an agreed level of payment for caring for children in care. This varies depending on the age of the child and the degree of need or skill of the carer. For young people in care aged 16-18 years old, the rates are set out below.

#### 2014-15 Current Fostering Allowance for 16 – 18 year olds

<b>Allowances paid to Connected Persons * Foster Carers</b>	<b>Weekly Allowance</b>
Core Allowance	£260.70
Core + skill **	£310.70
Core + disability ***	£335.70
Core + skill +disability	£385.70
<b>Allowances paid to Foster Carers</b>	
Core + market supplement -paid to foster carers	£365.70
Core + market supplement + skill	£415.70
Core + market supplement +disability	£440.70
Core + market supplement + skill + disability	£490.70

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\*A “connected person” means a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether full blood or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership), step-parent or friend of, or other person connected with, a Looked After Child. A person in the last category may be someone who knows the child in a more professional capacity such as a childminder, a teacher or a youth worker although these are not exclusive categories.

\*\* A skill supplement is paid to the carer who has a specified child care qualification. It is paid with the allowance for one child only. Where the carer continues to foster another child the supplement will attach to that allowance.

\*\*\* Disability payments would cease once a child is 18 years old and SP does not generally apply to adults with disabilities, who meet the adult services Fair Access to Care criteria.

### **4 Financial Options**

- 4.1 SP requires a revision to current allowance payments to carers to reflect the different income opportunities available to the young people either through benefits, including housing benefit, or paid employment. To prevent carers being overpaid, any additional income, such as from Housing Benefit, employed income or other benefits needs to be deducted from future payments from the Council. As these income streams vary from young person to young person, this adds a level of complication to the scheme.
- 4.2 For example, Housing Benefit cannot be paid to close relatives<sup>1</sup>; therefore young people who remain living with closely related former Connected Persons carers under a staying put arrangement will not be able to claim Housing Benefit towards their rent liability and the allowance paid by CSC will have to cover rent. However, numbers in this category are expected to be very small and will have a limited financial impact on the Council.
- 4.3 Furthermore, the Local Housing Allowance 1 bedroom rate varies between £140 and £151 per week. This paper assumes young people in SP will receive the maximum £151 per week. Also, if a young person is working, then income is taken into account in the HB calculation which may result in a reduced payment. This paper assumes there will be no financial impact from this factor.
- 4.4 Wherever possible the HB should be paid direct to the carers as this will ensure providers receive this rent element in the most seamless way.
- 4.5 In addition, it is important to acknowledge that SP arrangements will have an impact on carers who are in receipt of means tested benefits or pension credits. It is a complex process and Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) will need to ensure the SP policy has clear guidance as to how carers who are on benefits will be compensated by CSC for any loss of benefit income.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of Housing Benefit, a ‘close relative’ is a parent, parent-in-law (including a civil partner’s partner), son, son-in-law (including a son’s civil partner), daughter, daughter-in-law (including a daughter’s civil partner), brother, sister, step-parent (including a parent’s civil partner) stepson, (including a civil partner’s son), stepdaughter, (including a civil partner’s daughter), or the partners of any of these. It also includes half-brothers and sisters.

## 5 Options for payments

5.1 There are three options for consideration for in-house fostering all with the following core features:

- the skills supplement, paid to a foster carer who has specific child care qualifications, will be discontinued if the former foster carer only has an adult in a staying put arrangement living with them. Where the carer continues to foster another child the supplement will attach to that allowance.
- There are three elements of income to the carer; Housing Benefit (HB) that the young person would pay directly to the carer; a share of Job Seekers allowance, other benefit or earned income which again, would be paid by the young person to the carer; and a top up contribution from the Council.
- The contribution from the Council is calculated after reducing the carer's weekly cash income (inclusive of the market supplement and/or additional payments where applicable) by the £27.50 weekly payment currently included in foster care allowances to fund personal/pocket money, transport and clothing. Under SP the young person would pay for directly from new income; either income from employment, Job Seekers allowance or Income Support. So whilst the cash income a carer receives reduces, there is a corresponding reduction in weekly expenditure
- Connected persons receive the same level of income under all options.
- Illustrated payments are based on carers who are not receiving any benefits. Additional payments would need to be considered if carers are receiving means tested benefits which are reduced due to the allowance being counted as income

A fourth option has been added to consider and this illustrates a scheme that is designed to have minimal financial effect on the Council.

Separate arrangements are proposed for care leavers in university accommodation (see section 6) and Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs) (see section 7).

A summary of the financial implications of each option is set out on page 9

### 5.2 Option 1.

**Match current allowances, less £27.50 weekly payment for transport, personal/pocket money, and clothing**

**Mainstream Carers Paid Core and Market supplement = £338.20 (was £365.70)**

**Connected Persons Carer (Family and Friends) paid Core Allowances = £232.20 (was £260.70)**

This option demonstrates a clear commitment to ensuring that the staying put provider is not financially disadvantaged compared to when the young person was 17 years old.

For mainstream carers, the Council's contribution would be £157 per week, on average around £32 more than alternative after care arrangements. For connected person carers, the Council's contribution would be £51 per week, on average around £74 less than alternative after care arrangements.

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After taking account of reduced spend on transport etc, there is no change in the overall financial position of carers.

### **Advantages**

- This option provides a realistic expectation of the young person to taking responsibility for contributing to their keep.
- All young people would be responsible for the same elements e.g. clothing, pocket money, transport etc
- Furthermore the provider would be motivated to encourage the young person to be fiscally responsible, with the implication of termination of the agreement without their co-operation.
- This arrangement would have the benefit of maintaining the status quo for foster carers, which would be beneficial and ensure equality of opportunity.
- All foster carers regardless of their status e.g. connected persons or not would see the same reduction.
- For mainstream carers the overall cost to the Council, taking into account Housing Benefit (HB) and payment from the young person, would be reduced by approximately 15% per week.
- It assumes we will continue to pay the Market Supplement to mainstream carers' which is deemed remuneration.

### **Disadvantages**

- It relies on young people paying the element of earnings / JSA or other benefits to carers. The young person would be required to sign on or be in employment. Where they do not do so, and do not therefore have the income to pay their carer the Personal Advisor would be available to support the carer in reinforcing the SP agreement.

### **5.3 Option 2. Standard allowance paid to provider at the current average cost of alternative aftercare arrangements. The young person would make direct payments to the provider**

**Mainstream Carers Paid Core and Market supplement = £306.20 (was £365.70)**

**Connected Persons Carer (Family and Friends) paid Core Allowances = £232.20 (was £260.70)**

This option limits the Council's contribution to a carer to no more than the average cost of alternative after care arrangements, which for 2013-14 was £125 per week. For connected persons, the Council's contribution would be capped at £51 to prevent the carer receiving more income than under their current arrangements.

For mainstream carers, the Council's contribution would be £125 per week, which is the same as alternative after care arrangements, so no financial effect. For connected person carers, the Council's contribution would be £51 per week, on average around £74 less than alternative after care arrangements

For mainstream carers, there will be a weekly reduction in disposable income of £32 with no change for connected persons.

### **Advantages**

- This option would provide a realistic expectation of the young person to take responsibility for contributing to their keep.
- All young people would be responsible for the same elements e.g. clothing, pocket money, transport etc
- Furthermore the provider would be motivated to encourage the young person to be fiscally responsible, with the implication of termination of the agreement without their co-operation.
- Common payment value is clear and easy to understand and efficient for the Council to administer.

### **Disadvantages**

- This does not allow the variation in elements of foster carer's current allowances and could disadvantage some whilst paying more to others.
- The young person would be required to sign on or be in employment. Where they do not do so, and do not therefore have the income to pay their carer the Personal Advisor would be available to support the carer in reinforcing the agreement.
- It relies on young people paying the element of earnings / JSA or other benefits to carers. The young person would be required to sign on or be in employment. Where they do not do so, and do not therefore have the income to pay their carer the Personal Advisor would be available to support the carer in reinforcing the SP agreement.

#### **5.4 Option 3. Decrease market supplement over three year period**

**Mainstream Carers Paid Core and Market supplement = £338.20 year 1, £312.20 year 2, and £286.20 year 3 (was £365.70)**

**Connected Persons Carer (Family and Friends) paid Core Allowances = £232.20 (was £260.70)**

All carers with the exception of connected person's carers are eligible for a £105 weekly market supplement (MS) which is deemed remuneration for the care offered. This option reduces the market supplement paid in option 1 above by 25% at the beginning of the second year and a further 25% at the start of the third year. Given the growing independence of the young adults, the need for remuneration to carers would reduce as less direct care would be required.

For mainstream carers, for year 1, the Council's contribution would be £32 per week more than average after care arrangements, reducing to £6 extra in year 2 before making a saving of £21 in year 3. For connected person carers, for each year, the Council's contribution would be on average around £74 less than alternative after care arrangements.

For connected persons carers, there is no overall financial impact from this option. For mainstream carers, there is no overall financial impact for the first year, with a weekly loss of £26 in the second year, rising to £53 in the third year

### **Advantages**

- Lowers cost to CSC after first year.
- Acknowledges the reduced role over time as the young person matures.
- No differences to connected persons carers.

### **Disadvantages**

- This would financially disadvantage the SP carer after the first year, most of whom view their role as a professional one. The MS and allowances are paid as one amount. Some carers would not differentiate between the two elements of the allowances and therefore see this as a loss.
- Potentially the MS element would continue to be eligible for tax (as it is currently) which if remains in full could potentially disadvantage carers.
- Could be more complicated to process.
- It relies on young people paying the element of earnings / JSA to carers. The Young person would be required to sign on or be in employment. Where they do not do so, and do not therefore have the income to pay their carer the Personal Advisor would be available to support the carer in reinforcing the SP agreement.

## **5.5 Option 4. Set contribution from the Council at £51, which is estimated to result in a net nil overall cost**

### **Mainstream Carers and Connected Persons Carer (Family and Friends) both receive £232**

All carers receive the same amount of weekly income of £232, including a £51 contribution from the council. This is £74 per week less than the average after care arrangements. The rate from the council has been set at a level designed to result in no overall financial effect on the Council from the policy, after taking account of payments to IFAs.

For connected persons carers, there is no overall financial impact from this option. For mainstream carers, there is a weekly loss in income of £106.

### **Advantages**

- Expected to result in nil overall cost to the council.
- Common payment value is clear and easy to understand and efficient for the Council to administer
- Meets the requirements of the legislation.

### **Disadvantages**

- Significant financial disadvantage to in-house carers who would receive £106 per week less.
- The levels of reduction are expected to result in very few, if any in-house foster carers agreeing to a staying put arrangement. There is a risk that young people move into after care arrangements before they are ready.
- The financial burden of achieving a net nil effect policy falls on in-house carers with less impact on carers from IFAs which is considered inequitable and counter productive to recruiting and developing long term in-house foster carers.

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- It relies on young people paying the element of earnings / JSA or other benefits to carers. The young person would be required to sign on or be in employment. Where they do not do so, and do not therefore have the income to pay their carer the Personal Advisor would be available to support the carer in reinforcing the SP agreement.

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**Financial Implications from Staying Put proposals for in-house fostering and connected persons**

Item	Note	Option 1		Option 2		Option 3						Option 4	
		Match payment to carer to existing amount for 16-18 year olds		Uniform payment at average cost of after care capped to current income		Phased reduction in £105 Market Supplement						No financial effect on the Council	
						Year 1		Year 2		Year 3			
						Full Supplement		75% Supplement		50% Supplement			
		Foster Carer	Connected Person	Foster Carer	Connected Person	Foster Carer	Connected Person	Foster Carer	Connected Person	Foster Carer	Connected Person	Foster Carer	Connected Person
<b><u>Financial impact under Staying Put for the carer:</u></b>													
Housing Benefit	1	£151	£151	£151	£151	£151	£151	£151	£151	£151	£151	£151	£151
Job Seekers Allowance / Earned income	2	£30	£30	£30	£30	£30	£30	£30	£30	£30	£30	£30	£30
Contribution from BFC	3	£157	£51	£125	£51	£157	£51	£131	£51	£105	£51	£51	£51
<b>Total income to carer</b>		<b>£338</b>	<b>£232</b>	<b>£306</b>	<b>£232</b>	<b>£338</b>	<b>£232</b>	<b>£312</b>	<b>£232</b>	<b>£286</b>	<b>£232</b>	<b>£232</b>	<b>£232</b>
Carer's saving on spending	4	£28	£28	£28	£28	£28	£28	£28	£28	£28	£28	£28	£28
<b>Net financial impact</b>		<b>£366</b>	<b>£260</b>	<b>£334</b>	<b>£260</b>	<b>£366</b>	<b>£260</b>	<b>£340</b>	<b>£260</b>	<b>£314</b>	<b>£260</b>	<b>£260</b>	<b>£260</b>
Current income for caring for 0-17 year olds		£366	£260	£366	£260	£366	£260	£366	£260	£366	£260	£366	£260
<b>Weekly gain (+) / loss (-) to carer</b>	5	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>-£32</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>-£26</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>-£53</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>-£106</b>	<b>£0</b>
<b><u>Financial impact under Staying Put for BFC:</u></b>													
Current average cost of after care		£125	£125	£125	£125	£125	£125	£125	£125	£125	£125	£125	£125
New cost (note 3)		£157	£51	£125	£51	£157	£51	£131	£51	£105	£51	£51	£51
<b>Weekly gain (+) / loss (-) to BFC</b>	6	<b>-£32</b>	<b>£74</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£74</b>	<b>-£32</b>	<b>£74</b>	<b>-£6</b>	<b>£74</b>	<b>£21</b>	<b>£74</b>	<b>£74</b>	<b>£74</b>

**Notes:**

- 1 Based on maximum Local Authority Housing Allowance 1 that young people will be eligible to receive.
- 2 Minimum affordable payment by young person from Job Seeker Allowance or income from job.
- 3 Weekly cost to BFC
- 4 Young person now to pay for personal / pocket money, transport and clothing from own income rather than carer funding from BFC allowance.
- 5 Weekly loss (-) or gain (+) to carer
- 6 Weekly loss (-) or gain (+) to BFC

All figures are weekly amounts

## **6 Care leavers in University accommodation**

- 6.1 The Leaving Care Policy details Provision for Care Leavers in Higher Education. Currently financial support is provided for vacation accommodation for Care leavers in Higher Education to a maximum of the single person rent level for the area where the young person wishes to spend their vacation. In exceptional circumstances a room retention fee is paid for the first year to a previous foster carer when both the young person and carer wish to retain the link. There is discretion to extend this. This will be reviewed and updated in line with the Staying Put Policy when financial decisions are finalised.
- 6.2 It is proposed that £50 per week retainer be paid to carers during the University term, plus additional payments made during holidays given the whole cost of vacation falls to CSC under The Leaving Care Act 2000. Therefore we would be required to pay the full weekly allowance for those weeks the young person is living with their carer. For a 30 week course this amounts to £1,500 per annum. An additional £30 per night would be paid when the young person returns for weekends and short breaks. The full fostering allowance would be paid for the remaining 22 weeks.
- 6.3 For a mainstream carer, the expected average weekly cost to the council would be around £190 (£8,045.40 in allowances and £1,500 room retainer). For a connected person, the average weekly cost would be around £150 (£5,735.40 in allowances plus £1,500 room retainer). These are around £65 and £25 a week more than alternative after care arrangements.

## **7 Independent fostering agencies (IFA's)**

- 7.1 Some young people are in foster placements with IFA's. These placements cost the Local Authority more as a carer rate plus the agency fees need to be paid. Typically this can vary between £750 - £950 per week. All IFA's are expected to have a SP policy in place regarding their role for their carers who agree to become SP carers. This could include a joint Staying Put Protocol where consortium arrangements are in place. This will form a considered element of the future commissioning decisions on suitability of placements. In order to prevent delaying implementation for our in-house carers it is proposed that this policy be implemented in two phases. The first will be in regard to in house foster carers and the second with regard to IFA's where the costs will have to be negotiated individually.
- 7.2 Where the IFA's form part of the South East Regional Consortium from which Bracknell Forest commission most of their IFA foster carers, there is a draft protocol denoting the roles and responsibilities for a young person and SP carer and how they are divided. However all IFA placements, where there is a possible SP arrangement proposed, will need to have the financial details agreed and these potentially will vary from agency to agency but at this stage it is estimated that payments would be calculated from around 50-70% of existing rates, less £151 per week Housing Benefit and £27.50 per week for personal / pocket money et. Clearly, this is subject to change and will vary depending on the individual needs of the young person, and at this stage, the costing model assumes the Council will pay an average 60% of the current rate, less the discounts. Due to the high cost of IFA placements, whatever is agreed here will be the single most significant factor on the financial implications of the policy.

7.3 Fees shall be calculated by using the following formulas:

***Staying Put Price paid by LA = Tendered Price x 60% (estimate) – minus YP Allowances applicable to the placing Borough***

***Payment to Carer = to be determined by each agency as appropriate***

The example below looks at the formula applied in practice for a tendered price of £750 with a placing borough where a young person's Allowance is £27.50:

*Price Charged by IFA = £750 x 60% = £450.00*  
*Less £27.50 allowances = **£422.50 weekly cost to the Council***  
*Payment to carer = to be determined by each agency as appropriate*

The example below looks at the formula applied in practice for a tendered price of £750 minus deductions from a YP's contribution and Housing Benefit:

*Price Charged by IFA = £750 x 60% = £450.00*  
*Less £27.50 allowances = £422.50*  
*Less £151 Housing Benefit\* = **£271.50 weekly cost to the Council***  
*Payment to Carer = to be determined by each agency as appropriate*

\*Housing Benefit to be paid directly to Carer

## **8 Taxes and benefits**

8.1 As set out above specifically for Housing Benefit, the general taxes and benefits system adds a layer of complexity to the policy and the following issues may also impact on the 'Staying Put' Scheme to some extent

8.2 Carers who are not in receipt of any means tested benefit where setting a commercial rent and young people claiming Housing Benefit **would not** have an impact on the, 'Staying Put' carers. In these circumstances young people claim Housing Benefit as a contribution towards the 'Staying Put' arrangement for the rent element. The fact that this is a commercial arrangement and the 'Staying Put' carers receive part of the payment from section 23C and part from the young person, via contributions, or housing benefit is immaterial as the carer is not claiming any benefits.

8.3 Carers who are receipt of Pension Credit where income from 'Boarder' arrangements are disregarded in calculating their entitlement to Pension Credit and Housing Benefit. In these circumstances young people claim Housing Benefit as a contribution towards the 'Staying Put' arrangement for the rent element. The fact that there is a commercial arrangement is immaterial as those in receipt of Pension Credit have any income from a 'Boarder' arrangement ('Staying Put') disregarded.

- 8.4 Carers who are in receipt of a means tested benefit where Children's Services continues to pay the entire allowance to the 'Staying Put' carer from section 23C. This is not therefore deemed a commercial arrangement and as the payment is wholly from section 23C it **does not** affect or have any impact on the carer's own benefits.
- 8.5 Carers who are in receipt of a means tested benefit where young people claim Housing Benefit as a contribution towards the 'Staying Put' arrangement for the rent element and Children's Services provide the remainder from section 23C, and an additional compensatory payment from section 23C equivalent to the amount of benefit lost by the carers. Whilst this does become a commercial arrangement and carers lose an element of their means tested benefits, the payment made by Children's Services to compensate for the lost amount of benefit will, itself, be disregarded if it is made from section 23C.
- 8.6 Young people aged 18 to 25 in receipt of Income Support, income based Jobseekers Allowance and income related Employment and Support Allowance are unlikely to have a Non-dependent Deductions applied to their 'Staying Put' carers Housing Benefit claim.

Therefore consideration will need to be agreed as to whether BFC pays the difference. Again numbers who fall into this category will be small.

## **9 Council Tax**

- 9.1 Since April 2014 a council tax reduction scheme has been administered by local authorities.
- 9.2 Where a young person is living in a 'Staying Put' arrangement with two or more adults who are not in receipt of Council Tax Benefit (reduction scheme) and who pay full Council Tax a 'Staying Put' young person's will have no impact on the Council Tax liability.
- 9.3 In circumstances where a 'Staying Put' carer is working and not claiming any Council Tax Benefit and in receipt of the 25% single person discount. The discount may continue where a 'Staying Put' young person aged 18 is living in the arrangement. If the young person is a student they are counted as 'invisible' so will not affect the 'Staying Put' carer's 25% discount. If the young person reaches the age of 18, or moves in and not counted as invisible, then the carer will lose the 25% discount. It should be noted that these circumstances should always be checked with the Revenues Service in advance.

Therefore whilst some carers may be in a position where they will be disadvantaged by this scheme BFC will need to consider discretionary payments to those affected. However we anticipate very low numbers will fall into this category.

## **10 Income tax and National Insurance**

- 10.1 There are clear rules regarding the qualifying criteria for SP carers. They will be covered by the Qualifying Care Relief system, which outlines the amount SP carers are allowed to earn from 'caring'. SP carers may well be able to claim Working Tax Credits as it is counted as work.

## 11 Management of the SP Scheme

- 11.1 The Department for Education has provided a grant to local authorities, the purpose to provide support towards expenditure lawfully incurred or to be incurred by them. BFC will be paid a grant of £12,820 in 2014-15 in four equal instalments. Receipts for future years have yet to be confirmed but if the current distribution of the grant to LAs is maintained, income of around £20,000 in 2015-16 and £26,000 in 2016-17 can be expected.
- 11.2 Allowances to SP carers will need to be monitored, processed and reviewed to ensure BFC provide the correct amount and overpayments are avoided. Young people's circumstances can change i.e. they can move from education and take up employment. If they do this, they will need to contribute a higher amount of money to carers. This will require both the Leaving Care and Family Placement Teams to work together to ensure carers are supported and allowances reviewed regularly. The SP scheme itself will require reviewing and monitoring to ensure it is 'fit for purpose'. If a young person is unable to successfully manage over time the staying put arrangement may cease.
- 11.3 Dedicated hours to manage this service option will be required to ensure that staying put arrangements are set up accurately and monitored and these can be managed within existing resources.

## 12 Potential financial implications

At this stage it is not possible to accurately predict the costs arising from Staying Put as it will be dependent on decisions taken by young people and their carers. The table below sets out the maximum estimated financial effect from Staying Put should all young people take up this option and stay in place for the full 3 years. Due to the high costs involved, the number of young people staying put in IFAs has the biggest influence on future costs.

### Maximum costs if all those leaving care stayed on in their placements

Year	Maximum number staying put arrangements			Additional costs				Estimated Grant
	In-house	IFA	Total	Option1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	
14/15	3	0	3	£2,165	£0	£2,165	£-5,053	£12,820
15/16	6	4	10	£48,289	£42,090	£46,486	£27,590	£20,000
16/17	12	8	20	£126,270	£113,142	£119,359	£82,447	£26,000
17/18	12	8	20	£95,785	£81,421	£83,380	£47,815	£26,000

The above scenario is highly unlikely to occur and a more realistic outcome is set out below. This reflects a review of relevant young people by CSC which has assessed that around 70% of young people will stay put as not all young people will want to remain in their placements.

Anticipated costs if only those expected to remain do stay put

Year	Maximum number staying put arrangements			Additional costs				Estimated Grant
	In-house	IFA	Total	Option1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	
14/15	2	0	2	£1,390	£0	£1,390	£-3,245	£12,820
15/16	5	2	7	£8,526	£3,984	£7,368	£-6,647	£20,000
16/17	10	4	14	£61,622	£51,442	£56,721	£27,629	£26,000
17/18	10	4	14	£62,029	£50,196	£52,151	£22,500	£26,000

The allocation of grant funding to LAs to support staying put is through a specific grant which is based on the outcomes of a pilot study – *Evaluation of the Staying Put: 18 Plus Family Placement Programme; Final report, September 2010* - conducted at 11 LAs between July 2008 and March 2011. However, not all of the LAs provided financial information and the report acknowledges a number of issues with data quality. Of the 5 LAs that provided information relating to the number of young people staying put, the average was 23%, with the highest rate at 56% and the lowest 15%. Should the rate at BFC move to the average in the pilot, there would be reductions to the forecast costs set out above.

Anticipated cost if 23% of young people stay put:

Year	Maximum number staying put arrangements			Additional costs				Estimated Grant
	In-house	IFA	Total	Option1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	
14/15	2	0	2	£3,306	£0	£3,306	£-7,717	£12,820
15/16	2	1	3	£25,401	£22,653	£24,602	£16,226	£20,000
16/17	3	2	5	£39,960	£35,719	£37,727	£25,801	£26,000
17/18	3	2	5	£30,925	£26,894	£27,443	£17,463	£26,000

## 12.2 Implications

SP arrangements, whilst a positive plan for young people up to the age of 21, will have implications for potential 'bed blocking' and reduce available resources. It is a complex subject and we need to offer a process that enables a crossover of both the FPT and Leaving Care team to ensure a transparent process. It will also raise anxiety levels in carers who do need to agree to be a SP carer.

Therefore it is recommended that:

- SP forms part of the on-going transition planning for young people approaching 18.
- The level of involvement of CSC professionals in monitoring and intervening to review the money paid by the young person to be held by the Personal Advisor (PA) and reviewed as part of the Pathway Plan. This will be a formally documented process.

- Where a carer is a SP and a foster carer for other looked after children under 18 years old, the supervising SW will work to support the carer and liaises with the PA. This should be written into the SP agreement
- That it be recorded as part of the management information in the Green book.

### 12.3 Neighbouring Authorities

In terms of our neighbours it should be noted that:

- RBWM propose paying allowances as we are but no fee
- Reading is paying the Supported Lodgings rate
- Buckinghamshire County Council to make payments directly to the carer
- Oxfordshire County Council to make payments directly to the carer
- Wokingham is paying the supported lodgings rate
- West Berks is to pay the same as Bracknell regarding allowances and fee
- It is unclear at this stage what Slough is to do

## 13 Recommendations

- 13.1 **Option 3** is the preferred choice but would see some reduction in income to the provider if a SP arrangement continues beyond the first year. However given that independence in young people is to be encouraged and the SP carer's time would be required less, year on year, this is a reasonable adjustment to make. The payments will reflect that the level of care and responsibility for an 18+ year old is less than that for a looked after child, thus the market supplement element will decrease in the second and third year of an arrangement.

## 14. Next steps

**This action plan highlights the work needing to be undertaken to ensure that the Staying Put arrangements are fully understood and implemented.**

Issue	Who	When	Comment
Awareness raising workshops for Over 11's, DCT, corporate parents, foster panel members, IRO's and FPT	Hos, FPT TM,	Beginning March 2015	



<b>Issue</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Comment</b>
format completed.			
Have a clear SP agreement which needs to be ratified by our legal department.	HoS, Over 11's TM	March 2015	Draft in place. Needs to be reviewed by legal
"Staying Put" expectations should be incorporated into the 'Fostering Agreement' that foster carers sign on initial approval and then on a yearly basis following a successful review of their terms of approval.	TM FPT	November 2014	
SP carers who will also remain as foster carers will need to go to foster to panel regards their approval. Update panel members and handbook.	FPT TM Panel chair	From March 2015	
All SP arrangements to be reviewed as part of the Pathway Plan.	Hos Leaving Care ATM	From March 2015	Review Pathway Plan format. Policy updates required
PA's will need further support, training to fully understand the implications of	Leaving Care ATM	From March 2015	

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Comment</b>
SP arrangements.			
The FPT Recruitment Strategy and Duty of Sufficiency will need to be reviewed in view of potential 'bed blocking' for children requiring foster placements.	HoS, FPT TM, Policy officer	From March 2015	Strategy and policy updates required
To consider a joint working protocol between teams and a co-ordinating post based in FPT to support this and develop commissioning for 0-21 year olds.	HoS, FPT TM	From March 2015	
SP carers will need to remain as part of the 'pool' of carers and be invited to, training and possibly support / social functions.	FPT TM/ Leaving Care	30 March 2015	
Require clear process for payments as these will continue via our current payment system in FPT.	TM FPT/ Admin support	From March 2015	Will need to ensure 'Softbox' payment scheme compatible
Finalise policy and procedures and get approval	Policy Officer, Hos	February 2015	

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Comment</b>
from Legal Services.			
Council tax changes - need to review the new local system and to ensure SP carers are not disadvantaged by the new rules.	Policy Officer	From March 2015	

Heather Brown  
Interim Head of Service, LAC

Kim Harris  
Team Manager Family Placement Team