

Policies & Procedures:

Financial Support for Children Subject to Special Guardianship Orders

DRAFT

Approach

Shropshire Council (“the Council”) has a commitment to ensure a child’s need for a permanent home is supported.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide information to practitioners, Special Guardians and prospective Special Guardians about the financial support available to support families and individuals offering a permanent home to a child through Special Guardianship. This policy relates specifically to Shropshire Local Authority Foster Carers or Connected Carers who are becoming or have become Special Guardians for a child they previously had in their care as a ‘Child Looked After’ (child who has previously been cared for by the local authority). Financial support may be considered for Special Guardianship Orders in respect of children who would, in the opinion of the Service Manager, otherwise have become looked after if such orders had not been granted.

1.1 Provision of financial support

Carers who are proposing to / caring for a child under a Special Guardianship Order, can request an assessment for support, including financial support. This policy applies where Special Guardianship support has been assessed to be in the best interests of the child or young person.

The payment of financial support is at the discretion of the Council and is subject to an assessment of need which will consider the means and resources available to the Special Guardian / Prospective Special Guardian.

The Department of Work and Pensions has the primary duty to provide a level of income in circumstances where carers are unable to provide an adequate level of financial support to a child who is subject of a Special Guardianship Order. It is important to ensure that Special Guardians are supported to access benefits to which they are entitled. The Council will therefore provide the necessary information and support for Special Guardians or Prospective Special Guardians to ensure they are aware of, and are taking advantage of, all benefits and Universal / tax credits available to them. The Special Guardianship Guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/special-guardianship-guidance>) makes it clear that any other payment available to the Special Guardian or Prospective Special Guardian (e.g. grant, benefit, allowance or resource) in respect of their needs as a result of becoming a Special Guardian of the child must be taken into account when determining the amount of any financial support provided by the Council.

2 Underpinning Legislation and Guidance

Throughout this policy specific reference is made to:

- Special Guardianship Regulations 2005 (“the 2005 Regulations”)
- Special Guardianship (amended) Regulations 2016
- Department for Education Special Guardianship Guidance: Statutory guidance for local authorities on the Special Guardianship Regulations 2005.
- Children Act 1989
- Adoption and Children Act 2002
- The Children and Young person’s Act 2008
- The Children and Families Act 2014

3 Eligibility for Financial Support for Special Guardians

3.1 The central principle for the provision of financial support is set out in Regulation 6 of the 2005 Regulations as being;

“...to help secure a suitable special guardianship arrangement where such an arrangement cannot be readily made because of a financial obstacle”.

3.2 Financial support is payable to:

- a) facilitate arrangements for a person to become the Special Guardian of a child where the local authority consider such arrangements to be beneficial to the child’s welfare; or
- b) support the continuation of such arrangements after a Special Guardianship Order (SGO) is made.

3.3 Financial support may be considered for those carers who are granted Special Guardianship Orders in respect of children who were previously looked after or who would, in the opinion of the Service Manager, otherwise have become or remained looked after if such orders had not been granted.

The following criteria will be used to establish eligibility for financial support.

- a) where it is necessary to ensure that the Special Guardian or prospective Special Guardian can look after the child.
- b) where the child needs special care, which requires a greater expenditure of resources than would otherwise be the case.
- c) where the local authority consider that it is appropriate to contribute to any legal costs.
- d) where it is appropriate to make a contribution to the expenditure necessary for the purpose of accommodating and maintaining the child, including the provision of furniture and domestic equipment, alterations to and adaptations of the home, provision of means of transport, and provision of other items necessary for the purpose of looking after the child.
- e) where assistance with travel costs is required in order to maintain contact between the child and their relatives and/or significant others.

See Regulation 6 in the statutory guidance above for full details.

N.B. Where assistance would normally be provided by another agency (e.g. adaptations to the home for a disabled child) these should be applied for separately by the carers to that agency.

4 Assessment

4.1 Where financial support is being requested an assessment must have identified that such support is required for the reasons set out above.

4.2 An assessment of the Special Guardian's financial means (income and resources) must have been completed *and* indicate that it would be unreasonable to expect them to meet the identified costs relating to the child subject to the order themselves. The assessment will include the need to obtain evidence of the Special Guardian's income and outgoings to support the financial assessment.

4.3 Regulation 13 sets out the key principle in terms of the assessment of need. Financial support paid under the 2005 Regulations cannot duplicate any other payment available to the Special Guardian or prospective Special Guardian

4.4 The Children's Placement Services Social Worker will support the prospective Special Guardian / Special Guardian to access benefits to which they are entitled. Child Benefit and Universal Credit (in respect of the subject child) will be deducted from any financial support provided by the Council (the current Child Benefit rates will be automatically applied).

4.5 The Council will consider the following in respect to decisions about the provision of financial support:

- Any other grant, benefit, allowance or resource available to the person in respect of his needs as a result of becoming a Special Guardian of a child e.g. Child Benefits, Universal / Tax Credits.
- The Special Guardian's income and means, including significant income from any investments, but not their main home. This includes income in respect benefits and tax credits awarded to the special guardian for themselves, the subject child and any other children within the household.
- The amount required in respect of reasonable outgoings and commitments, e.g. housing and transport costs, and daily living expenses (but not outgoings in respect of the child).
- Financial needs that relate to the child (e.g. because of special diet or need for replacement bedding).
- The resources of the child (e.g. a trust fund, maintenance payments received, etc).

4.6 The level of any regular financial support will be calculated based on the Councils fostering allowance rates, less any reduction resulting from the assessment of means. Child Benefit and Child Tax / child element of Universal Credit will be deducted.

4.7 The Council uses the DfE Standardised Means Tested Calculator as the basis for calculating the means of a Special Guardian/s household and the level of financial support provided. This will be used in calculating new entitlements for all SGO allowances.

4.8 In accordance with the 2005 Regulations, allowances cannot exceed the Fostering Allowance Rates. No enhancements or additional payments including festive, holiday and birthday allowances will be payable. The Skills element of the fostering payments will cease two years Post-Order.

4.9 Where the Council decides that special guardianship financial support is to be provided, they must notify the Special Guardian in writing of:

- The basis upon which financial support has been determined;
- The amount of financial support; including any deductions as is set out above;

- When the first payment of financial support is to be made, both for single and ongoing payments;
- The frequency with which the payment will be made;
- When the payment/s will cease;
- The arrangements and procedure for review, variation and termination of financial support.
- Any conditions attached to the payment.

4.10 The basis for the decision should be set out in the Special Guardianship Report or updated Special Guardian Assessment of Need / Review. The payment amounts, details and timescales should be clearly recorded in the Special Guardianship Support Plan and Memorandum of Offer (written correspondence detailing payment arrangements and conditions attached). Payments should be reviewed after 12 weeks to ensure that all entitled benefits have been applied for and SGO allowance has been adjusted to reflect entitlement.

5 Conditions of Receiving Regular Financial Support

5.1 In order to receive regular financial support, the Special Guardian or Prospective Special Guardian must agree to the following conditions:

- 1) that he or she will inform the Council immediately if:
 - a) s/he changes address
 - b) the child dies
 - c) the child ceases to have a home with the special guardian/s
 - d) the child ceases full-time education or training and commences employment
 - e) the child qualifies for Income Support or Jobseeker's Allowance in his own right
 - f) the child attains the age of 18 unless he continues in full-time education or training, when the financial support may continue until the end of the course or training, he/she is then undertaking. Funding will not continue where the child is in a work-based apprenticeship
 - g) there is a change in his financial circumstances or the financial needs or resources of the child which may affect the amount of financial support payable to him
- 2) that s/he will provide an annual statement to the Council of their financial circumstances (as per Section 4 and 5 above). Where information is given orally, the Special Guardian or Prospective Special

Guardian will need confirm the position in writing to the Council within seven days. Advice and assistance can be provided on completing the forms upon request.

- 3) Financial support will cease to be payable where paragraphs 5 'b,c,d,e,f' apply.

6 Disregard of Financial Means

6.1 In accordance with Regulation 13 of the 2005 Regulations the Council may disregard financial means when considering the level of financial support provided in the following circumstances:

- payments in respect of a 'settling-in grant' (not inclusive of adaptations)
 - recurring costs in respect of travel within the UK for the purpose of visits between the child and a related person with whom they have contact where the local authority would want to promote this contact.
 - special care (referred to in regulation 6 (2)(b)) which requires a greater expenditure of resources than would otherwise be the case because of the child's illness, disability, emotional or behavioural difficulties, or the consequences of his past abuse or neglect, where the child has been previously looked after by the Council.
 - where there is an element of remuneration in financial support payments to ex-foster carers for the 'transitional period' (see section 7 below).

6.2 The Council will **always** disregard means when considering providing financial support in respect of legal costs (NOT legal representation), including fee payable to a court, where;

- a Special Guardianship Order is applied for in respect of a child who is 'Looked After' by the Council, and;
- the Council supports the making of that order, or;
- an application is made to vary or discharge a Special Guardianship Order in respect of that child.
- At the time of the policy being implemented the financial support for legal costs is capped at £250. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the cost of their legal advice up to £250 is agreed in writing by the allocated child social worker. Any costs incurred above this amount must be met by the applicant/s.

6.2 The Council will cover the court fee incurred by Foster Carers and Connected Carers making an application for a Special Guardianship Order, where the Council is in agreement with the application and, where the child would otherwise become or remain Looked After, and where legal aid is not available. Payments will only be made on submission of receipts.

6.3 The Council will *not* meet the legal costs of a Special Guardianship Order where they oppose an application in respect of a child they previously looked after or in non-looked after cases. Advice may be offered to prospective Special Guardians in relation to the possibility of obtaining help with legal costs from the Legal Aid Agency.

7 Arrangements for Former Foster Carers

7.1 Specific provision is made in regard of financial support for Special Guardian(s) who were formerly foster carers for the specific child or young person. The general principle underpinning this is that financial support should not include any element of remuneration (skills payment) but former foster carers are exempted from this for a period of up to 2 years. This principle is to allow for a period of financial adjustment following the making of the SGO. Regulation 7 of 2005 Regulations provides for this where:

- the Special Guardian or prospective Special Guardian previously fostered the child immediately prior to their application for a Special Guardianship Order and they received an element of remuneration in the financial support paid to them as the child's Foster Parent.
- the eligibility criteria (as set out in section 3 above) are met.
- the arrangements are being made as part of the Council's plans to secure the long-term permanence of the child in their best interests.
- that element of remuneration (skills payment) ceases to be payable after the expiry of the period of two years from the making of the Special Guardianship Order unless the Council consider its continuation to be necessary having regard to the exceptional needs of the child or any other exceptional circumstances.

7.2 The purpose of the two-year transitional provision of the skills element is to enable local authorities to maintain 'skills' payments to Foster Carers and Connected Carers who become Special Guardians, at the same rate as they received when they were fostering the child. This should give the family time to adjust to their new circumstances

7.3 Where it is considered that the 'Skills element' is required for longer than the two-year period this must be authorised by the relevant Strategic Manager (ADM / Service Manager). Any such arrangement must be clearly defined in the Special Guardianship Support plan and will be subject to annual review as per the 2005 Regulations. A significant change in the Special Guardian's/child's financial circumstances will require a review (in accordance with the conditions set out in Section 4).

7.4 The Council will also maintain the Fostering Allowance element for a period of two years post order. This will be reviewed annually. At the first annual review, unless there has been a significant change in financial circumstances or any of the criteria in Section 5 have not been met, the allowance will continue to be paid. Thereafter, annual reviews will include a financial means test where allowances may remain unchanged, reduce or cease. The needs of the child and the resources of the Special Guardian to meet these needs will be considered. In addition to these financial reviews annual contact will be made to offer a review of the Special Guardianship Support plan.

7.5 There may be cases where the applicant is a mainstream foster carer and intends to continue to foster. In these circumstances the income received from being a mainstream foster carer is disregarded for the purpose of the means tested SGO financial allowance.

8 Arrangements for Private Applications (Children not previously Looked After by the Local Authority)

Financial support may be considered for Special Guardianship Orders in respect of children who would, in the opinion of the Service Manager, otherwise have become looked after if such orders had not been granted.

Financial support will only be awarded following an Assessment of the Child/ren needs and will be means tested. Any allowance will be paid for a maximum of 12 months and will then be subject to a review; this will include a means tested assessment. This will consider the needs of the child and all resources available to the family. Upon review the allowance may remain unchanged, reduce or cease.

9 Review of Regular Financial Support

- 9.1. Regular reviews enable the Council and Special Guardians to reassess the effectiveness of any services provided and consider whether it is appropriate to continue that service or change the provision in some way
- 9.2. Where the Council provides regular financial support, it is a requirement of the 2005 Regulations that it must review the financial support:
- annually (on receipt of the annual statement from the Special Guardian) Financial support will be reviewed after the first 12 months, see section 7.4 above.
 - if there is any relevant change of circumstances that the Special Guardian is required to notify the local authority about (see section 5 above)
 - at any (other) stage in the implementation of the plan that the Council considers appropriate
- 9.3 The continuation of the provision of regular financial support will only be agreed where:
- a) the eligibility criteria in Section 3 continues to be met; and
 - b) The financial assessment paperwork is completed and returned to the Council upon request. This must include the Special Guardian providing evidence of any income or expenditure which is dated within the last three months of the review date (it is recognised that there may be instances where this is not possible e.g. for loan agreements still in place taken out longer than three months ago).
 - c) following re-assessment (as per section 4) the Special Guardian's means are such that they still require financial support .
 - d) The review evidences that any needs identified for the child remain, or an updated assessment identifies new needs requiring financial support;
 - e) where continued financial support was agreed pre-order due to exceptional circumstances and is detailed in the Special Guardianship Support Plan.
- 9.4 The outcome of a means tested financial review may mean that financial support remains unchanged, decreases or ceases. Financial allowances will not exceed Fostering Allowance Rates. Where a review indicates the need for finance remains; payments will be based on the Fostering Allowance Rates payable for that age child at the time the review is undertaken, and that rate will apply up until the next review.

N.B Where the annual review indicates that the need for financial support remains; payments will be linked to the fostering rates and age bandings payable at the time the review is undertaken.

10 Reduction or Termination of Support

10.2 Where, as a result of the review, there is a proposed reduction or termination of financial support, the Council will notify the Special Guardian/s of the decision. If they disagree with the decision, the Special Guardian/s should make a formal representation to the Service Delivery Manager for Family Placements Service within 28 working days. Team Manager / Service Delivery Manager may decide to suspend payments pending the decision if this is deemed appropriate.

10.3 The Service Delivery Manager / Panel will consider any representations in line with the needs and circumstances of the child and the resources of the Special Guardian to meet these needs. Following which the final decision will be provided.

10.4 The Council may suspend financial support where:

- Special Guardian/s fail to provide an annual statement. In such case a final notice will be sent. Where the statement is not received within 10 days of the final notice the council will take steps to suspend, terminate or seek to recover financial support after 28 days have expired from the date the initial notice was sent.
- any other specific conditions have been agreed in relation to the provision and these have not been complied with, the Council may suspend or terminate payment of financial support and seek to recover all or part of the financial support they have paid.

Appendix A

Finance Examples

Payment for Skills – 01/03/2020

The Children's Allowances

Level	Weekly Fee (1 Child) £'s	Weekly Fee (2 Children) £'s	Weekly Fee (3 Children) £'s	Weekly Fee (4+ Children) £'s	Age of Child	Weekly Rate £'s
Level 1	80	100	120	140	0-4	129.09
Level 2	140	170	200	230	5-10	147.18
Level 3	250	280	320	360	11-15	190.05
Care Plus	500				16+	225.39

Example 1.

I am a family and friend's foster carer approved under Regulation 24 temporary approval and have been receiving a level 1 skills payment. I am going to take an SGO in relation to my 2-year-old nephew. Neither me or my partner work and we have 2 children of our own. What payments will I receive from the Local Authority?

For the first 2 years, unless there is a significant change in your financial circumstances, you will receive the same payment as you are getting as a foster carer (£129.09) and a skills payment (£80). Child benefit and any other child related benefits that you claim for the child subject to the order will be deducted.

In this example child benefit claimed is (£13.95) and the child element of Universal credit (£58.41) which results in an allowance payment of £56.73. Note: with the allowance and the child benefit payments together the total weekly amount you receive for the child remains at £129.09.

The skills payment (£80) will end 2 years after the order is granted.

The allowance rates will change in line with changes to Shropshire Council fostering allowances. Changes in line with fostering allowances will usually take effect from 1st April.

A general review of support needs will take place annually alongside a financial assessment using the Standard Means test tool to determine any amount you will continue to be paid. When the child you are caring for moves through one of the payment age bandings your allowance will increase accordingly upon the annual review. The first age related increase will occur upon the annual financial review when the child is 5 years old (£147.18 plus any amendment that was put in place on 1st April). The amount you receive will depend on the outcome of the any means test, and any child benefits / child element of Universal Credit you receive for the child subject to the order will be deducted from the maximum amount payable.

Example of allowance to be paid upon the review held 3 years post order:

SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP FINANCIAL SUPPORT MEANS TEST MODEL

All figures should be calculated on a **monthly** basis

1) PROJECTED FAMILY INCOME

i) Pay	Parent 1	Parent 2
Basic net monthly pay		
Drawings if self employed		
Total subsection 1i	0	

ii) Benefits and pensions (parents)	Parent 1	Parent 2
Employers' sick pay (after compulsory deductions)	0	0
Incapacity benefit	0	0
Statutory maternity, paternity and/or adoption pay and/or maternity allowance	0	0
Bereavement benefit	0	0
Working tax credit (if paid directly and not as part of pay and excluding any childcare element paid)		0
All pension payments being received	0	0
Other benefits		0
Total subsection 1ii	0	

iii) Benefits (family/children)	
Income Support/Jobseeker's Allowance per household	594.04
Child tax credit per household	788.91
Child benefit for each child, excluding child/children who are the subject of this assessment application	35
Total subsection 1iii	1417.95

iv) Other sources of income	
Income from capital, savings and investments - net monthly interest	0.00
Income from boarders/lodgers (see guidance for details of calculation)	0
Income from unfurnished properties	0
Income from furnished properties	0
Maintenance payments received for any child in household	0

Existing adoption or special guardian 'allowances' (including any enhancements or specific payments for special needs) paid for any child	
Total subsection 1iv	0.00

v) Income relating to child(ren) being adopted or becoming a special guardian child	
Any regular interest on capital and/or income in which the child(ren) has a legal interest and entitlement e.g. trust fund, property or other type of legacy. Do not include payments from Criminal Injuries Compensation Awards	0
Any other income	0
Total subsection 1v	0

TOTAL PROJECTED FAMILY INCOME	1,417.95
DISREGARD FIRST 20%	283.59
FAMILY INCOME FOR PURPOSES OF TEST	1,134.36

2) PROJECTED FAMILY EXPENDITURE

i) Home	
Mortgage payments (capital and interest) including any endowment payments linked to mortgage	
Rent (after any housing benefit payable)	0
Council tax (after any council tax benefit payable)	46
Total subsection 2i	46

ii) Other outgoings	
Loan repayments for essential purposes (see guidance notes)	
Maintenance payments	0
Court orders	0
Private pension contributions	0
National insurance if self employed	0
Reasonable child care costs including nursery fees (after any childcare element paid as part of the working tax credit)	0
Total subsection 2ii	0

iii) Core regular family expenditure	
Based on 125% income support allowances per household	1397.40
Total subsection 2iii	1397.40

TOTAL PROJECTED FAMILY EXPENDITURE:	1443.40
--	---------

CALCULATION	
Total projected net family income (per month):	1134.36
Total projected family expenditure (per month):	1443.40
Disposable income (per month):	-309.04

Local Authority Maximum Payment ENTER MANUALLY:	560.90
Amount of payment to adopters or special guardian	560.90
Minus child benefit for child/children who are subject of this application ENTER MANUALLY:	314.44
Final payment to adopters or special guardian:	246.45

56.73 Fee per week

56.73

As stated, deductions have been made for Child Benefit and the child element of Universal credit. Therefore, with these benefits factored in the total amount the family receive for this child remains at £129.09. This figure does not include the skills payment which is paid for 2 years post order. The next age-related increases to the allowance rate would be applied upon the annual review when the child has reached 5,11 and 16 years of age.

DRAFT

Example 2

I am a Level 3 foster carer with a monthly income and would like to take an SGO in relation to my 10 year foster child who has been living with me for the last 3 years. How will my payments be structured? I work part-time and my partner is retired. We have children of our own, but they are over 18 years of age.

For the first 2 years unless there is a significant change in your financial circumstances you will continue to receive the amount you were getting as a foster carer (£147.18) minus any child related benefits. In this example: child benefit (£21.05) and the child element of universal credit (£64.72) are deducted resulting in an allowance of £61.41. Note: with the allowance and the child benefit payments together the total weekly amount you receive for the child remains at £147.18.

Upon annual review age related allowances will be applied to the maintenance element of the allowance. Where the child is aged 11 at the time of the review the rate will increase to £190.05, the next age-related allowance increase will occur on the review following the child's 16th Birthday. The amount you receive will depend on the outcome of the means tested financial assessment; this assessment takes account of any child benefits and the child element of universal credit you receive for the child subject to the order, these benefits will be deducted from the maximum amount payable. The skills element of your payment (£250) will end 2 years after the order is granted.

The allowance rates will change in line with changes to Shropshire Council fostering allowances. Changes in line with fostering allowances will usually take effect from 1st April.

A general review of support needs will take place annually alongside a financial assessment using the Standard Means Test tool as a basis to determine any amount you will continue to be paid.

Upon review 3 years post order, based on the figures detailed in the spreadsheet below, the allowance would be £104.28 (relevant child benefits/ Universal Credits have been deducted).

The maximum allowance payable will be the standard fostering allowance for the age of the child. Usual benefits will be deducted. The outcome may be further

reduced if the household income is high; this will be determined by the means test assessment.

Example of allowance to be paid upon the review held 3 years post order:

SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP FINANCIAL SUPPORT MEANS TEST MODEL

All figures should be calculated on a **monthly** basis

1) PROJECTED FAMILY INCOME

i) Pay	Parent 1	Parent 2
Basic net monthly pay	1102	
Drawings if self employed		
Total subsection 1i	1102	

ii) Benefits and pensions (parents)	Parent 1	Parent 2
Employers' sick pay (after compulsory deductions)	0	0
Incapacity benefit	0	0
Statutory maternity, paternity and/or adoption pay and/or maternity allowance	0	0
Bereavement benefit	0	0
Working tax credit (if paid directly and not as part of pay and excluding any childcare element paid)		0
All pension payments being received	761	0
Other benefits		0
Total subsection 1ii	761	

iii) Benefits (family/children)	
Income Support/Jobseeker's Allowance per household	
Child tax credit per household excluding child/children who are the subject of this assessment application	
Child benefit for each child, excluding child/children who are the subject of this assessment application	
Total subsection 1iii	0

iv) Other sources of income	
Income from capital, savings and investments - net monthly interest	0.00
Income from boarders/lodgers (see guidance for details of calculation)	0
Income from unfurnished properties	0
Income from furnished properties	0
Maintenance payments received for any child in household	0
Existing adoption or special guardian 'allowances' (including any enhancements or specific payments for special needs) paid for any child	

Total subsection 1iv	0.00
-----------------------------	------

v) Income relating to child(ren) being adopted or becoming a special guardian child	
Any regular interest on capital and/or income in which the child(ren) has a legal interest and entitlement e.g. trust fund, property or other type of legacy. Do not include payments from Criminal Injuries Compensation Awards	0
Any other income	0
Total subsection 1v	0

TOTAL PROJECTED FAMILY INCOME	1,863.00
DISREGARD FIRST 20%	372.60
FAMILY INCOME FOR PURPOSES OF TEST	1,490.40

2) PROJECTED FAMILY EXPENDITURE

i) Home	
Mortgage payments (capital and interest) including any endowment payments linked to mortgage	600
Rent (after any housing benefit payable)	0
Council tax (after any council tax benefit payable)	143
Total subsection 2i	743

ii) Other outgoings	
Loan repayments for essential purposes (see guidance notes)	
Maintenance payments	0
Court orders	0
Private pension contributions	0
National insurance if self employed	0
Reasonable child care costs including nursery fees (after any childcare element paid as part of the working tax credit)	0
Total subsection 2ii	0

iii) Core regular family expenditure	
Based on 125% income support allowances per household	1516.93
Total subsection 2iii	1516.93

TOTAL PROJECTED FAMILY EXPENDITURE:	2259.93
--	----------------

CALCULATION	
Total projected net family income (per month):	1490.40
Total projected family expenditure (per month):	2259.93
Disposable income (per month):	-769.53
Local Authority Maximum Payment ENTER MANUALLY:	825.77

Amount of payment to adopters or special guardian	825.77
Minus child benefit for child/children who are subject of this application ENTER MANUALLY:	372.71
Final payment to adopters or special guardian:	453.06

104.28 Fee per week

104.28

In this example the child moved up to a new age bracket. The maintenance allowance rate will be £190.05. Deductions have been made for Child Benefit (£21.05) and the child element of Universal credit (£64.72). Therefore, the SGO Allowance is £104.28. The total amount the family receive for this child when benefits are included is £190.05.

The next age-related increase will occur when the child reaches 16 years.

This figure does not include the skills payment as it would have ended.

Example 3

I am a level 2 foster carer with a total household income of £4,500 per month and would like to take an SGO in relation to my 15 year old foster child. We have no other children.

For the first 2 years unless there is a significant change in your financial circumstances you will continue to receive the amount you were getting as a foster carer (£190.15) minus any child related benefits to which you are entitled. In this example child benefit is deducted (£21.05) resulting in a payment of £169.10.

In this example upon the review following the child's 16th birthday the final age-related allowance increase will occur; this means the allowance rate of £225.39 will be applied. The amount you receive will depend on the outcome of the means tested financial assessment. This assessment takes account of any child benefits and the child element of universal credit you receive for the child subject to the order. These benefits will be deducted from the maximum amount payable.

The skills element of your payment (£140) will end 2 year post order.

The allowance rates will change in line with changes to Shropshire Council fostering allowances. Changes in line with fostering allowances will usually take effect from 1st April.

A general review of support needs will take place annually alongside a financial assessment using the Standard Means test tool to determine any amount you will be paid.

In this example of a review held 3 years post order the standard mean's test model determined that no further allowance would be payable. This is because of the level of household income. Should your financial circumstances change e.g. through redundancy or retirement, you can request for a new financial assessment.

Example of allowance to be paid upon the review held 3 years post order:

SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP FINANCIAL SUPPORT MEANS TEST MODEL

All figures should be calculated on a **monthly** basis

1) PROJECTED FAMILY INCOME

i) Pay	Parent 1	Parent 2
Basic net monthly pay	2000	2500
Drawings if self employed		
Total subsection 1i	4500	

ii) Benefits and pensions (parents)	Parent 1	Parent 2
Employers' sick pay (after compulsory deductions)	0	0
Incapacity benefit	0	0
Statutory maternity, paternity and/or adoption pay and/or maternity allowance	0	0
Bereavement benefit	0	0
Working tax credit (if paid directly and not as part of pay and excluding any childcare element paid)		0
All pension payments being received	0	0
Other benefits		0
Total subsection 1ii	0	

iii) Benefits (family/children)	
Income Support/Jobseeker's Allowance per household	0
Child tax credit per household (excluding child/ren subject to SGO)	0
Child benefit for each child, excluding child/children who are the subject of this assessment application	0
Total subsection 1iii	0

iv) Other sources of income	
Income from capital, savings and investments - net monthly interest	0.00
Income from boarders/lodgers (see guidance for details of calculation)	0
Income from unfurnished properties	0
Income from furnished properties	0
Maintenance payments received for any child in household	0
Existing adoption or special guardian 'allowances' (including any enhancements or specific payments for special needs) paid for any child	
Total subsection 1iv	0.00

v) Income relating to child(ren) being adopted or becoming a special guardian child	
Any regular interest on capital and/or income in which the child(ren) has a legal interest and entitlement e.g. trust fund, property or other type of legacy. Do not include payments from Criminal Injuries Compensation Awards	0
Any other income	0
Total subsection 1v	0

TOTAL PROJECTED FAMILY INCOME	4,500.00
DISREGARD FIRST 20%	900.00
FAMILY INCOME FOR PURPOSES OF TEST	3,600.00

2) PROJECTED FAMILY EXPENDITURE

i) Home	
Mortgage payments (capital and interest) including any endowment payments linked to mortgage	500
Rent (after any housing benefit payable)	0
Council tax (after any council tax benefit payable)	137
Total subsection 2i	637

ii) Other outgoings	
Loan repayments for essential purposes (see guidance notes)	
Maintenance payments	0
Court orders	0
Private pension contributions	200
National insurance if self employed	0
Reasonable child care costs including nursery fees (after any childcare element paid as part of the working tax credit)	0
Total subsection 2ii	200

iii) Core regular family expenditure	
Based on 125% income support allowances per household	804.13
Total subsection 2iii	804.13

TOTAL PROJECTED FAMILY EXPENDITURE:	1641.13
--	----------------

CALCULATION	
Total projected net family income (per month):	3600.00
Total projected family expenditure (per month):	1641.13
Disposable income (per month):	1958.87
Local Authority Maximum Payment ENTER MANUALLY:	979.32
Amount of payment to adopters or special guardian	-0.12

Minus child benefit for child/children who are subject of this application ENTER MANUALLY:	91.46
Final payment to adopters or special guardian:	-91.58

-21.07666858 Fee per week
Allowance as per plan
-21.07666858

The skills allowance ended 2 years post order.

Due to level of income, the outcome of the means test assessment is a negative amount therefore no further payments are to be made by Shropshire Council.

Families who have a high income may experience a reduced allowance or may no longer be eligible.

DRAFT