

# CYNGOR SIR CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

**Report to:** Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Date of meeting:** 15/07/2024

**Title:** Special Guardianship Orders

**Purpose of the report:** This project will focus on implementation of the Code of Practice on the exercise of social services functions in relation to Special Guardianship Orders (SGO)

## **Reason Scrutiny have requested the information:**

- Provide scrutiny with details of the proposed SGO Financial Policy (which will support the updated SGO Policy)
- Request scrutiny approval for the policy and delegated authority to the Statutory Director of Social Care to implement the policy.

**Cabinet Portfolio and Cabinet Member:** Cllr. Alun Williams

## **Background**

There are a number of reasons why some children are unable to live with their birth parent(s) and at times these, arrangements need to be made for children to be cared for by others. Some children may live with other members of their family, foster carers, adoptive parents or in residential care placements. A SGO is a Court Order which appoints a specific person(s) to become a child's Guardian until they reach 18. An SGO offers greater security than long-term fostering but does not entail the absolute legal severance from the birth family that stems from an adoption order. It is therefore a good and stable outcome for an increasing number of children and young people.

Reducing Children Looked After (CLA) numbers in a safe and appropriate manner is a national priority for Welsh Government (WG). Safely reducing CLA numbers is also a key corporate priority for Ceredigion County Council, as, when safe, enables a positive outcome for children and young people to live in a permanent home, where possible within their own birth family, or where this is not possible, in a permanent family home.

SGOs were introduced by the Adoption and Childrens Act 2002. The Special Guardianship (Wales) Regulations 2005, were subsequently introduced and amended by The Special Guardianship (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 and Special Guardianship Code of Practice on the exercise of social services functions in relation to Special Guardianship orders 2018.

Currently we have 39 SGO registered through Ceredigion, accounting for in the region of £280k pa Over 50% of these will be 18 in the next 5 years.

Ceredigion County Council have reviewed the Special Guardianship Policy (**Appendix 1**), which sets out eligibility to become a Special Guardian, the application process and the Local Authority's responsibilities in terms of reporting to the Court, Support available to Special Guardians etc. The reviewed and updated Policy have been aligned with the "Guide for the Offer of Special Guardianship Support in Wales 2020 (AFA)" which drew together all relevant statutory guidance.

The review identified that greater clarification was required in relation to the Financial Support that is available to Special Guardians and, in order to do this, a standalone "Special Guardianship Orders Financial Policy" (**Appendix 2**) was required. The aim of this policy is to reduce the potential delay in achieving permanence for children and young people, when Prospective Guardians are uncertain of the Financial Support that is available to them.

### **Current Situation**

Following a comprehensive review of the Policy, a consultation with existing SGOs in relation to the Special Guardianship Order Policy and Financial Policy was undertaken over a 2-week period (22 May 2024 – 5 June 2024). The consultation was shared with existing SGOs, CAFCASS, Ceredigion County Council Staff, Foster Panel members and other key stakeholders. The consultation has also been shared on the Ceredigion County Council website.

We received 7 responses to the questionnaire. These highlighted the following areas of consideration:

- Information relating to specific legislations. Eg: SGO Policy 4.1. SGO Regs 2005 & SGO (Amended) Regs 2018 and SGO Code of practice
- Change of wording from he/she to they
- Change of wording from Looked after children to Children Looked after
- More accessible versions of the documents
- Clarity of who the policies will impact
- Some felt 'undervalued and unsupported by the Local Authority'

We have updated the policies to reflect the responses received. There is an acknowledgment that we as a Local Authority, need to improve our contacts with the guardians and the development of these policies are the first steps in improving the service.

## **Wellbeing of Future Generations:**

**Has an Integrated Impact Assessment been completed?** Yes, included in pack

### **Summary of Integrated Impact Assessment:**

- Long term:** Over the next 10 years we would hope to see an increase in the number of SGOs which will reduce the number of children on the looked after register. The key for this to be to ensure that the correct level of support is provided and that the SGOs are supported to take on their new role.
- Collaboration:** Stable SGOs will require a holistic approach based on the needs of the children/young people and these will require collaboration with partner agency. Including health boards, third sector support groups and specialist support as identified and outlined in the court order.
- Involvement:** A key part of the proposal is to consult with the current SGOs and staff and partner organisations through the fostering panel and the Independent Reviewing Officers.
- Prevention:** This will be reviewed post consultation and feedback from the current SGOs, staff and partners.
- Integration:** This will be reviewed following the consultation.

### **Recommendation(s):**

- Scrutiny is requested to approve the Special Guardianship Order Financial Policy and to delegate authority to the Statutory Director of Social Care to implement the new policy and review annually.

### **Reasons for decision:**

- To align with the Special Guardianship (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 and Special Guardianship Code of Practice on the exercise of social services functions in relation to Special Guardianship orders 2018.

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**Designation:** Corporate Manager - Direct Services

**Date of Report:** 25/06/2024

### **Acronyms:**

SGO – Special Guardianship Orders  
WG – Welsh Government  
CLA – Children Looked After



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# **Special Guardianship Orders Policy**

**December 2023**

Document Name and Location	Special Guardianship Orders Financial Policy
Author	Nerys Lewis <b>Corporate Manager Direct Services</b>
Document Owner	Audrey Somerton Edwards <b>Corporate Lead Officer Porth Cynnal and Statutory Director of Social Services</b>
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**Updates, Revisions and Amendments**

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# 1. Special Guardianship Policy - Background

1.1 Special Guardianship Orders were introduced by the Adoption and Children Act 2002. The Special Guardianship (Wales) Regulations 2005, were subsequently introduced and amended by The Special Guardianship (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 and Special Guardianship Code of Practice on the exercise of social services functions in relation to Special Guardianship orders 2018.

1.2 Special Guardianship offers greater security than long-term fostering but does not entail the absolute legal severance from the birth family that stems from an adoption order.

- A Special Guardianship Order gives the Special Guardian, subject to any other order in force with respect to the child under the Children Act 1989, the right to exercise parental responsibility to the exclusion of any other person with parental responsibility for the child (apart from another Special Guardian).
- Unlike adoption, under a Special Guardianship Order, the birth parents remain the child's legal parents and retain parental responsibility, though their ability to exercise this is extremely limited.
- The intention is that the Special Guardian will have clear responsibility for all the day-to-day decisions about caring for the child or young person and for taking any other decisions about their upbringing, for example, their education.
- A Special Guardian may exercise parental responsibility to the exclusion of others with parental responsibility, such as the parents, and without needing to consult them in all but a few circumstances.
- One major purpose of Special Guardianship is to meet the child's need for a legally secure relationship with their carer. To this end, where a Special

Guardianship Order is made, the child will no longer be considered to be looked after by a local authority.

- 1.3 Accompanying the arrangements for the Special Guardianship Order are additional responsibilities for local authorities in relation to the assessment, planning, provision and review of Special Guardianship support services, including financial support. A child who was looked after immediately before the making of a Special Guardianship Order, who would be regarded as a category 3 young person in accordance with the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) (2014) remains eligible for support as care leaver.



## 2. Eligibility

2.1 Before the local authority takes any steps to support an application for Special Guardianship, it must first ensure that the person(s) wishing to become Special Guardian(s) are eligible. A court may make a Special Guardianship Order in respect of a child on the application of the following persons:

- Any guardian of the child
- A local authority foster carer with whom the child has lived for one year immediately preceding the application
- Anyone who is named in a Residence or Child Arrangements Order as a person with whom the child is to live, or who has the consent of all those in whose favour a Residence or Child Arrangements Order is in force
- Anyone with whom the child has lived for three out of the last five years
- A relative of the child with whom the child has lived for a period of at least one year **immediately** preceding the application
- Where the child is in the care of a local authority, any person who has the consent of the local authority
- Anyone who has the consent of all those with parental responsibility for the child
- Any person, including the child, who has the leave of the court to apply

2.2 The court may also make a Special Guardianship Order in any family proceedings concerning the welfare of the child if they consider an order should be made. This applies even when no application has been made and includes adoption proceedings.

2.3 Applications for a Special Guardianship order may be made by an individual or jointly by two or more people. Joint applicants do not need to be married or in a civil partnership with each other. Special guardians must be 18 or over. The parents or step-parent of a child may not become that child's Special Guardian.

2.4 In all circumstances, the child care social worker within the local authority will need to provide a report for the court. The court and local authority must consider the whole range of options available.

### **3. Applications**

- 3.1 An applicant must give three months written notice to the local authority that is looking after the child, (in the case of a child who is fostered) or to the local authority where the applicant is ordinarily resident (if the child is not looked after) of their intention to apply for a Special Guardianship Order.
  
- 3.2 The only exception to this is where a person has the leave of the court to make a competing application for a Special Guardianship Order where an application for an Adoption Order has already been made. This is in order to prevent the competing application delaying the adoption order hearing.

## **4. Local authority reports to the court**

- 4.1 In the three month notice period, the local authority child care social worker must complete a report as prescribed or arrange for someone else to do this on its behalf. The schedule to the [Special Guardianship \(Wales\) Regulations 2005](#), [The Special Guardianship \(Wales\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2018](#) and [Special Guardianship Code of Practice](#) detail what the report should include.
- 4.2 A report must be prepared for the court by the local authority for both looked after and other children. The report covers all the necessary information about the child, the child's family, the wishes and feelings of the child, the prospective Special Guardian, information about the local authority that completed the report and recommendations about whether an order should be made, contact arrangements and support services proposed, including financial support.
- 4.3 There is a statutory duty to undertake Enhanced DBS checks on prospective Special Guardians and any adult members of their household in accordance with The Special Guardianship (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2018.
- 4.4 In order to ensure that the service complies with the standards of good practice set out in the statutory guidance, which should be referred to, the social worker who prepares the report for the court should be suitably qualified and experienced. However, where this cannot be achieved, social workers who do not have suitable experience will be supervised by someone who has.
- 4.5 When the local authority receives notice from either the applicant or court it must send written information to the prospective Special Guardian and the parents of the child, setting out the steps it proposes to take in preparing the report.

4.6 Where an application for SGO is received for a child who has an allocated Social Worker within the local authority, there must be regular meetings between the Social Workers to ensure accuracy of information and a robust analysis.

## **5. Special guardianship applications in the context of permanence planning for children looked after**

- 5.1 When the local authority receives a notification of intention to apply for a Special Guardianship Order in relation to a child who is looked after, the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) should be informed at the earliest opportunity and the application discussed within the child's Looked After Review.
- 5.2 The local authority will consider notifications from eligible carers who may wish to apply for a Special Guardianship Order in the light of the welfare checklist in the Adoption and Children Act 2002. The child's welfare will be the paramount consideration. The views and wishes of the child and the carers, and the carers' suitability, including whether they fully understand their roles as Special Guardians, will be fully considered. Where a child will cease to be looked after as a result of a Special Guardianship Order being made, the applicants must fully understand how they will take responsibility for the child's upbringing, perhaps without the same level of involvement of the local authority. Permanency planning documentation and or case recordings should reflect any discussions/ agreements with the relevant Team Manager or Corporate Manager where independent legal advice has been provided to the foster parents.
- 5.4 The prospective applicants will be advised of the role of the local authority in reporting and making recommendations to the court, including their duty to consider and report on what other options the court may wish to consider.
- 5.5 For information relating to financial support for Special Guardians, please see the Ceredigion County Council SGO Financial Support Policy.

## **6. Special guardianship applications in the context of permanence planning for children not looked after**

- 6.1 Where the child is not looked after, the local authority has the same responsibility for reporting to the court and carefully assessing its recommendations. As for a looked after child, every effort will be made to consider fully with the prospective applicants and the child the reasons for making an application, whether it is advisable to do so, and what the other options might be. The prospective applicants will be advised of the role of the local authority in reporting and making recommendations to the court, including their duty to consider and report on what other options the court may wish to consider.

## 7. Special Guardianship Support Services

- 7.1 The Local Authority has a duty to assess the need for and provide support services to support Special Guardianship arrangements. An assessment of need for a particular service (both financial and non-financial) does not automatically result in the provision of that service.
- 7.2 A Guide for *The Offer of Special Guardianship Support in Wales 2020* (AFA) draws together statutory guidance relating to support service requirements as outlined within The Children Act 1989, the Special Guardianship (Wales) Regulations 2005 (as amended in 2018) and the Special Guardianship Code of Practice on the exercise of social services functions in relation to Special Guardianship orders 2018. The Local Authority is required to make arrangements for the provision of the following services:
- Information, Advice and Assistance (including web-based information for child/ young person; prospective Special Guardians)
  - Financial support
  - A named support worker
  - Contact
  - Therapeutic services
  - Assistance to promote relationship stability
  - Mediation
- 7.3 The assessment may be limited to the need for a particular Special Guardianship support service if the person requesting the assessment has requested a particular service, or, it appears to the local authority that the needs of the person may be adequately assessed by reference to a particular support service. However, the assessment should be widened should it become apparent that there are additional support needs. The local authority does not need to prepare



a support services plan where special guardianship support services are being provided on a single occasion, as in this case notice will be provided will include all the necessary information.

- 7.4 It is important to acknowledge that housing, education and health may play a large part when assessing the needs of Special Guardianship families, but needs identified under these headings may not, of themselves, lead to a Special Guardianship support service.
- 7.5 The support plan for a Special Guardian is developed by the child's social worker, who knows the child, in conjunction with the assessing social worker from the Fostering Team who knows the prospective Special Guardians and has expertise in identifying the factors which promote permanence.
- 7.6 In preparing the plan, the Social Workers will consult with the intended recipient of the support services, or if the recipient is a child who is not of sufficient age and understanding, with the Special Guardian or other appropriate adult. If it is necessary for services to be provided by the Local Health Board or other partner agencies, they will also be consulted. If the recipient lives in another local authority area, that local authority may also be consulted as appropriate.
- 7.7 The completed support plan must be agreed by the social workers and team managers within both the relevant Safeguarding and Fostering Teams. The prospective Guardian must be provided with the Support Plan in writing, along with a copy of their completed assessment and given opportunity to make representation to the local authority if there are areas of disagreement. If no representations are received within 28 days (unless particular circumstance require a shorter or longer period) it will be assumed the contents are agreed. The prospective Guardian must also be provided with the opportunity to obtain independent legal advice on the assessment and support plan before any application is made.

- 7.8 Where the subject of the assessment is a child of sufficient age and understanding, they must be notified of the outcome of the assessment, unless the specific circumstances of the case mean that it would be inappropriate to do so – for example, because it would be potentially harmful to the wellbeing of the child.
- 7.9 Where the person to whom the plan relates lives in the area of another local authority, the local authority that prepared the plan must provide a copy of the plan to the area local authority, unless the authority considers it unnecessary.
- 7.10 Regulation 5 of The Special Guardianship (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 sets out the list of people who are entitled to request an assessment for Special Guardianship support services. Local authorities do not have to provide these services directly, but can arrange for them to be delivered in partnership with other agencies, as appropriate.
- 7.11 The code of practice imposes additional duties on the local authority to make those identified below aware of their entitlement to request an assessment for SGO support services at every appropriate stage i.e. when an application is made and again once the SGO is in place following the first three years. This list includes:
- a child subject to a Special Guardianship order or a parent of such a child;
  - a child in respect of whom a person has given notice to a local authority of his or her intention to apply for a Special Guardianship order or a parent of such a child;
  - a child in respect of whom the court has required a local authority report or a parent of such a child;
  - a child who is the subject of, or is named in, a local authority report for the court;

- a Special Guardian or prospective Special Guardian;
- a child of a Special Guardian or prospective Special Guardian;
- a relative of a child falling within the first three bullet points providing contact arrangements were in place before the request for an assessment.

7.12 The Local Authority will put in place arrangements to keep in touch with children where a SGO has been made, both the original Local Authority and the Local Authority where the Special Guardian and child(ren) live following the first three years via the Fostering SGO support worker. As a minimum, contact must be made with the Special Guardians at least once a year- **the financial assessment review does not count as the contact**. The Special Guardian can choose not to engage with the contact, however, the LA must evidence that the annual contact has been offered and that the Special Guardian has either accepted/declined to engage for the three years post the order being granted.

7.13 Reviews of the SGO support plan are undertaken by the Fostering Team who will then coordinate with the appropriate teams, agencies or services to meet the assessed needs of the family,

7.14 Where the Special Guardianship support is provided as part of a Care and Support Plan this Review will be subject to the reviewing requirements under SSWB (Wales) Act 2014

## **8. Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014**

- 8.1 In accordance with the Part 6 Revised Code of Practice, achieving ‘permanence’ will be a key consideration from the time a child becomes looked after, and the Part 6 care and support plan should set out from the outset how this is to be achieved. One of the key functions of the care and support plan is to ensure that each young person has a plan for permanence by the time of the second looked after child review.
- 8.2 The Code of Practice links Special Guardianship in with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. A table setting out the links between UNCRC articles, national well-being outcomes and “welfare of the child” Children Act Principles is included within the code of practice.
- 8.3 Professionals must ensure advocacy duties have been met in relation to children looked after who are entering a Special Guardianship arrangement. The local authority must also ensure that the Special Guardian/s are referred to sources of independent advice and advocacy, as appropriate.
- 8.4 Where a child in a Special Guardianship arrangement has needs being assessed under Part 3 of the Act the Local Authority should also assess the need for Special Guardianship support services at the same time. Where the child has a care and support plan under Part 4 of the Act any Special Guardian support services should be included within this plan.

## 9. Local authority responsibility for Special Guardianship allowances

- 9.1 For children looked after, the local authority who last looked after them retains responsibility for the assessment and provision of Special Guardianship support services for three years from the date of the making of the order. In all other situations, including where the initial three year period has expired, responsibility for assessing and providing support services is with the local authority where the Special Guardian lives.
- 9.2 The provision of an allowance agreed before the Special Guardianship Order is made remains the responsibility of the authority who originally agreed it, indefinitely, regardless of where the family live.
- 9.3 When the three year period, which starts from the time of the making of the SGO, is about to expire, the original LA **must**, not later than three months before the expiry of the three years, undertake a review, notify the relevant local authority of any continuing need for services and refer the Special Guardian to relevant local information, advice and assistance. The code of practice (chapter 11) also imposes some additional duties/ guidelines in relation to the three year ruling relating to case management:
- If the child is to live in another Local Authority area from the date of the order the original Local Authority must inform that Local Authority that the SGO has been made (11.3)
  - Local Authorities should co-operate to establish which services are to be provided locally (although the original Local Authority will finance for three years) (11.4)
  - There will need to be agreement on who provides any Part 4 SSWB service (it is expected that the original Local Authority will continue to meet any ongoing

needs, including those over and above prescribed Special Guardian support services for the three years) (11.5)

## 10. Special Guardianship Orders and Leaving Care

10.1 Children who were looked after by a local authority immediately before the making of a Special Guardianship Order may qualify for advice, guidance and assistance under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. Section 104 of the 2014 Act defines six categories of young people in respect of leaving care, and a 'category 5 young person' is defined as a person between 16 and 21 who is subject to a special guardianship order (or was when they turned 18), and who was looked after immediately before the Special Guardianship Order was made.

10.2 The full duties of a local authority towards a 'category 5 young person' are set out in section 114 of the 2014 Act. Further details are set out in the Code of Practice relating to Part 6 of the Act (Looked After and Accommodated Children), chapter 5 ('Leaving care').

10.3 The local authority must consider whether the young person needs support of the kind set out in section 114. If the local authority is satisfied that the person who was looking after the young person (the special guardian or former special guardian) does not have the necessary facilities for advising or befriending them, the local authority must advise and befriend the young person, and support them or her as necessary in the following ways:

- in kind
- contributing to expenses incurred by the young person in living near the place where they will be employed or seeking employment
- contributing to expenses incurred by the young person in living near the place where they will be receiving education or training
- making a grant to enable them to meet expenses connected with education or training
- providing accommodation if support may not be given in the above ways
- in cash.

10.4 Where appropriate, the local authority should provide the young person with a personal adviser.

10.5 The local authority may also give support in certain circumstances up to the age of 25, where the young person is completing a course of education or training as set out in the plan agreed with the young person.

10.6 These provisions recognise that some young people who left care under a Special Guardianship Order may be as vulnerable, and have very similar needs to, young people who left care at 16 or 18. This is particularly important because the Special Guardianship Order comes to an end when the young person turns 18. They place a duty upon local authorities to respond adequately to these young people's individual needs.

10.7 Where a local authority is satisfied that a 'category 5 young person' has a need for advice and support, it must assess his or her needs and decide how best to meet them. Where the authority concludes that the young person will need support over a period of time, it should draw up a plan in partnership with the young person, outlining the care and support to be provided. The plan should follow the same format as a 'pathway plan' for a young person preparing to leave care (as set out in chapter 5 of the Part 6 Code of Practice).

10.8 The local authority must inform young people who have left care under a Special Guardianship Order of their entitlement to an assessment for care leaver support. It is good practice to do this when the child is about to turn 16.

10.9 It should be noted that young people in special guardianship arrangements are not eligible to enter into post-18 living arrangements under section 108 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (the 'When I am Ready' scheme), even if they are living with their former foster parents. Local



authorities must ensure that foster parents who are considering becoming special guardians, and the children and young people placed with them, are fully aware of this before a special guardianship order is made. Where appropriate, local authorities should consider alternative ways of supporting former children looked after who wish to continue living with their special guardians once they turn 18, such as supported lodgings.

10.10 Regulation 13 of The Special Guardianship (Wales) Regulations 2005 provides that the relevant local authority in relation to the provision of advice and assistance is the one that last looked after the child.

10.11 There may be times when it is not clear which authority is responsible for giving advice and assistance regarding special guardianship – for example, where the child moved between placements in different local authority areas. Regulation 13 of The Special Guardianship (Wales) Regulations 2005 states that the relevant authority shall be the local authority which last looked after the person. Similar arrangements apply to young people who were formerly looked after by a local authority in England, where the relevant authority for the purposes of providing advice and assistance will be the local authority in England which last looked after them.

## **11. Complaints and Representations**

11.1 Complaints and representations about special guardianship support services must be handled in accordance with the local authority's complaints procedures.

11.2 Regulation 14 of The Special Guardianship (Wales) Regulations 2005 specifies that complaints and representations may particularly be made in relation to the following services:

- financial support for special guardians
- support groups for children
- assistance in relation to contact
- therapeutic services for children
- assistance to ensure the continuation of the relationship between the child and their special guardian or prospective special guardian.

11.3 Local authorities must ensure that children subject to special guardianship arrangements, special guardians and potential special guardianships, and parents, receive information on how to make complaints and representations.

## 12. Appendices

### Appendix 1 – SGO Support Plan - First



sco-support-plan-first.pdf



sco-support-plan-welsh-1.pdf

### Appendix 2 – SGO Support Plan - Review



sco-support-plan.pdf



sco-support-plan-welsh.pdf



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# **Special Guardianship Orders**

**Financial Policy**

**December 2023**

Document Name and Location	Special Guardianship Orders Financial Policy
Author	Nerys Lewis <b>Corporate Manager Direct Services</b>
Document Owner	Audrey Somerton Edwards <b>Corporate Lead Officer Porth Cynnal and Statutory Director of Social Services</b>
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# 1. Introduction

This policy should be read in conjunction with the CCC Special Guardianship Policy which outlines the legislative framework of Special Guardianship Orders. This policy relates only to financial support and reviews of financial support for Special Guardians.

Support to Special Guardians, including financial provision is outlined in the Special Guardianship (Wales) Regulations 2005, amended by The Special Guardianship (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 and Special Guardianship Code of Practice on the exercise of social services functions in relation to Special Guardianship orders 2018.

In accordance with, a Guide for The Offer of Special Guardianship Support in Wales 2020 (AFA), which draws together statutory guidance relating to support service requirements as outlined within The Children Act 1989, the Special Guardianship (Wales) Regulations 2005 (as amended in 2018) and the Special Guardianship Code of Practice on the exercise of social services functions in relation to Special Guardianship orders 2018. The Local Authority is required to make arrangements for the provision of financial support to Special Guardians.

In order for special guardians to receive a financial allowance, they must fulfil the requirements for assessment and review, in line with the financial procedure outlined in this document.

## 2. Financial Support for Prospective Special Guardians

2.1 The Special Guardianship Order (SGO) regulations state that financial support should be provided where it is necessary to ensure that the arrangements for a Special Guardianship Order can be secured. Financial support should not be the sole reason for a Special Guardianship arrangement failing to survive. This applies to both looked after and non-looked after children.

2.2 Financial support can be provided as:

- A single lump sum payment to meet a specific assessed need
- A series of lump sum payments to meet a specific assessed need
- A periodic or regular payment payable at intervals to be determined by the local authority to meet a specific assessed ongoing need.

2.3 In accordance with the Special Guardianship Code of Practice on the exercise of social services functions in relation to Special Guardianship orders (2018), the local authority may begin providing financial support in the following circumstances:

- (a) A child subject to a special guardianship order is living with the special guardian and the local authority consider that financial support is necessary to ensure the guardian can continue to look after the child.
- (b) A child in respect of whom a special guardianship order is sought, or in respect of whom a court has required a report, lives with a prospective special guardian and the local authority considers that:
  - i. It would be beneficial for the child for a special guardianship order to be made
  - ii. That financial support is necessary to ensure the prospective special guardian can continue to look after the child pending the court's decision.

This provision allows for financial support where the local authority supports the making of a special guardianship order, but considers that the long-term success of the child's relationship with the prospective special guardian is in



doubt without the provision of such support while the application is still being considered.

- 2.4 In all cases, financial support can only be provided after an SGO financial assessment has been undertaken to determine the amount to be paid and to ensure that the applicant is making an informed decision regarding SGO.
- 2.5 In accordance with SGO Regulations financial support to Special Guardians must complement and not duplicate financial support available through the benefits and tax credits systems. All Special Guardians are therefore obliged to apply for child benefit and child tax credit to which they are entitled. This sum will be deducted from the overall SGO allowance payment to be made.
- 2.6 Financial support must not include any element of remuneration for the care of the child, however, Regulation 7(4) (The Special Guardianship (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2018) allows Local Authorities to provide financial support above the usual level to a previous foster carer. This is not an automatic entitlement.

### **3. Overview of the financial assessment process**

3.1 Financial assessments will be conducted either:

- Following a decision that a full assessment for a SGO will proceed,
- As part of a Connected Persons Assessment or
- Where a potential eligible applicant requests a provisional assessment to inform their decision making.

3.2 In order to complete the financial assessment, the SGO carer will receive a financial request form to return to Ceredigion County Council which will be recorded on the data management system. The Ceredigion County Council Finance Team will verify the required financial information and documentation for the assessment. Should any issues relating to the above process arise, they will be shared with the Assessing Social Worker.

3.3 It will be the responsibility of the child care social worker to ensure Legal Services and the applicants are updated where there are any delays in this process and the case is within proceedings.

3.4 Copies of the verified documents will be passed to and retained by the CCC Finance Team who will develop a mechanism for ensuring that all information required is collected, seen and stored in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2016.

3.5 A means test will be applied (as detailed in section 5) to assess if any SGO allowance is payable. The calculation will then be sent via e-mail to the Assessing Social Worker to share and discuss with the applicant(s). The e-mail will confirm if all documents required have been received in line with this policy. The assessment remains provisional until they are.

- 3.6 Where the decision is to proceed, the amount payable, duration and timescale for review will be included in the SGO support plan and recorded on the data management system.
- 3.7 Special guardians should be asked by the Assessing Social Worker to provide details of their bank account (bank, branch, sort code, account number and name of account holder/s) for payments to be set up at the earliest opportunity.
- 3.8 The Assessing Social Worker is responsible for ensuring the SGO or Connected Persons Assessment, support plan and financial assessment are recorded on the data management system for future reference should any queries arise in relation to the original assessment and agreement.
- 3.9 Following the granting of the SGO, a member of the Fostering Team will be responsible for ensuring a letter is sent to the Special Guardian/s confirming:
- The outcome of the financial assessment
  - The amount, start date and frequency of payments
  - The requirement to apply for Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit
  - Any additional conditions in respect of the allowance and the consequences of not meeting them
- 3.10 If the prospective special guardian refuses to cooperate with the financial assessment process, no allowance will be payable.
- 3.11 If, in the process of completing the assessment it is found that the prospective special guardian(s) is/are not claiming their welfare benefit entitlements in line

with central government guidance and there are concerns about fraudulent claims, the matter will be referred back to the Assessing Social Worker or Fostering Team (in the case of a financial review) to address.

- 3.12 The local authority will provide support for prospective guardians to obtain 2 hours legal advice upon completion of an assessment and support plan to facilitate the applicant(s) to make an informed decision and submit an application to the court.

## **4. Required documentation**

4.1 If one or both of the special guardian applicants are:

- Employed, Payslips for 3 months or 12 weeks are required as part of the verification process.
- For self-employed applicants, a copy of their tax return and/or business accounts are required.
- For those not working, verification of all benefit income is required (either via a DWP award letter or in some exceptional circumstances, copy of a bank statement).
- For those in receipt of child/working tax credit and pension credit, copies of the award notices are required and our letter that we send out with the financial form asks specifically for 'all pages' of the letters to be included.
- Bank statements are also required for all accounts for the last 3 months.

4.2 Verification of any other income is required. If an undeclared income is identified on a bank statement, Finance will query this with the applicant.

4.3 An allowance can be made within the financial assessment for costs such as mortgage, rent, council tax, etc. Verification of these costs is requested and required.

4.4 Where an entitlement to adult benefits is identified but not taken up by the applicant(s), the applicant(s) would be advised that an additional benefit could be claimed and given an opportunity to submit a claim. Finance would then follow up on this claim in due course. If the claim is not submitted, Finance will seek the advice of the Assessing Social Worker regarding whether the

amount of the benefit ordinarily payable will be taken into account as income, as part of the assessment procedure.

- 4.5 Where an entitlement to child benefit and/or child tax credit is identified and applied for by the applicants but they are awaiting award, this income will be included in the allowance and reclaimed either from the backdated award, or through an adjustment of the allowance.
  
- 4.6 Special guardians must notify the Fostering Team when they become in receipt of the benefit and must provide a copy of the statement of award. This is intended to avoid unnecessary delay in making the correct payments, and to arrange repayment options if necessary.

## 5. Applying the means test

### Income

- 5.1 The total weekly net income of the special guardian(s) (after deducting tax, national insurance and pension contributions) is taken into account. Any deductions taken at source for items such as monthly season ticket, travel allowance, loans, gym membership etc. will be added back into the total net income.
- 5.2 All other income of a regular kind will need to be included for the purpose of the means test, i.e. from non-dependants, own children, relatives, lettings of property and accommodation, income from savings and investments, pensions, court orders, child maintenance payments, all benefit income including working tax credits and child tax credits, all child benefit payments.
- 5.3 Furthermore, as part of the application for an SGO allowance, the disclosure of any other income not listed above is required. These may include, but are not restricted to, any payments received in respect of Adoption, Residence Orders, existing Special Guardianship Orders and Disability Living Allowance(s). Income from such payments are not included within the means test but are required to verify the information within bank statements.
- 5.4 Where the young person (subject of the SGO application), or another young person in the household, is in receipt of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) or income associated with government employment training schemes, these will not be included in the household income assessment.
- 5.5 Those in receipt of Job Seeker's Allowance or Employment and Support Allowance will be subject to a full financial assessment.

- 5.6 Any fostering allowances and fostering remuneration fees received by the special guardians for any child looked after in their care, not solely the subject of the application, are not taken into consideration as income for assessment purposes.
- 5.7 Income for self-employed applicants will be based on their drawings. Profit will also be included as income and averaged out over 52 weeks (in order to determine a weekly income figure).
- 5.8 Rental income is included in full. However, where the rental is arranged through a letting agency, only the final rental income figure is included (after making an allowance for rental fees).
- 5.9 Only the interest from income generated from capital investments and savings is taken into consideration within the financial assessment.
- 5.10 Where an applicant has submitted a self-assessment tax return to HMRC within the last year, a copy is required.
- 5.11 Payments from Criminal Injuries Compensation Awards should not be included in the financial assessment, however, a copy of the award documentation should be provided to the Financial Assessment Team to verify the information provided.
- 5.12 Interest on capital belonging to the child is disregarded. Only interest on the applicant's capital is taken into consideration.



5.13 General household expenditure on items such as food, transport, clothes, utilities (gas, electricity and water), recreation etc. will be calculated using the Income Support allowance rates and increased by 25%.

## Calculation

5.14 The maximum rate of Special Guardianship Allowance is the equivalent to fostering allowance rates unless there are exceptional circumstances that require a supplementary allowance.

5.15 The family's disposal income will be calculated by adding together the accommodation expenses and the general household expenditure/personal allowance figures and offsetting this against the assessable income. This will provide an amount equating to the disposable income. The outcome of the assessment is determined by the amount of the disposable income:

- If the outcome of the financial assessment is 'nil', then no payment will be made to the applicant/s.
- If the outcome of the financial assessment (a) is less than the applicable fostering rate less child benefit (b), then the lower figure will be paid (a).
- If the outcome of the financial assessment (a) is greater than the applicable fostering rate less child benefit (b), then the maximum weekly amount will be payable (b).
- If an applicant is in receipt of Income Support or Pension Credit (Guarantee Credit) a means test is not required. The person would be paid the applicable fostering allowance/rate less child benefit less child tax credit (subject to proof of the qualifying benefit being in payment and proof of child tax credit).

5.16 Once the financial assessment is authorised, an email is sent to the Fostering Team detailing the outcome of the financial assessment. A copy of the financial assessment is also enclosed along with a copy of an assessment outcome form that can be forwarded to the applicants.

5.17 Payments of SGO allowance are made fortnightly, one week in advance, one week in arrears, unless otherwise specified in the SGO agreement.

## 6. Supplementary Allowance

- 6.1 There may be exceptional cases where financial support over and above the SGO allowance rate is required to support a Special Guardianship arrangement.
- 6.2 Local authorities may impose conditions that they consider to be appropriate when providing financial support. This could include the timescale and purpose that the financial support should be used for.
- 6.3 The supplementary allowance is not subject to the financial assessment process for the SGO allowance or means test as previously described, and will be paid in addition to the SGO allowance.
- 6.4 A supplementary allowance could be granted to cover one-off costs or regular costs relating to a specific need and can be time limited. It may be awarded in the following circumstances:

### Child Previously Fostered by Applicant

- 6.5 If a Special Guardianship Order is granted to an applicant who previously provided foster care to the child for whom the Order is granted, the Special Guardian will receive an SGO allowance that is equal to fostering allowance, minus child tax credit and child benefit for 2 years regardless of the outcome of the means test assessment.
- 6.6 The above applies to BCBC foster carers and Independent Fostering Agency carers. The maximum supplementary allowance paid to aid a Special

Guardian`s transition from being a foster carer to being a Special Guardian for a child, is the fee element applicable at the time the SGO is granted, unless it can be evidenced, with supporting written evidence that this would result in a significant detriment. These rates will not increase in line with inflation or any other changes, and will remain at that base level for the duration of the order

- 6.7 In exceptional circumstances the local authority may agree to extend the period of supplementary allowance beyond 2 years.

### Exceptional Circumstances

- 6.8 In exceptional circumstances, a supplementary allowance can be granted for a specific purpose. These supplementary payments can be one-off payment or regular payments of an ongoing nature and must be included in the support plan. There must be an assessed need and appropriate evidence provided. The following are provided as examples of such circumstances but are not intended to be an exhaustive list:

- Setting up costs – e.g. furniture or equipment for any special educational needs, alterations/ adaptations to the home to support a child with a disability;
- Placing the child in a boarding school – e.g. where assessed necessary to meet the child`s special educational needs.
- Court/legal fees – e.g. where there is evidence to support this is an ongoing risk to the stability of the SGO arrangement
- Facilitating contact – e.g. contact centre fee, travel expenses. The costs associated would be calculated on an annual basis and averaged into a weekly allowance.

- Mediation – e.g. where there a complex family dynamics that will have a detrimental impact on the wellbeing of the child if not addressed.
- Therapeutic services – e.g. for the child, Special Guardian or both
- Financial hardship – e.g. where a Special Guardian has ended their employment in order to care for the child and the child’s needs require that the carer continues to remain at home to provide support. The local authority may agree to extend the period of supplementary allowance until the child is engaged in full time education.

6.9 A child who has an illness, disability, emotional or behavioural difficulties, or who is suffering from the continuing consequences of past abuse or neglect, may require a degree of care and support which necessitates additional expenditure. In these cases, medical and other professionals will have a role in evaluating the effect of the child’s condition and in providing advice to the local authority. The local authority is expected to seek specialist medical advice where appropriate and consider this expert advice when considering the need to providing any supplementary allowance payment above the basic allowance rate to support the special guardian. This payment will be regularly reviewed and time-limited. The circumstances for the supplementary allowance in these circumstances will require authorisation from a Corporate Manager for a fixed period to assist the family.

6.10 Should the supplementary financial support identified in the support plan (either initially or subsequently) exceed £500 in any single financial year then the support plan will also need authorisation from the Corporate Lead Officer before being submitted to the court or provided.

6.11 The need for ongoing additional expenditure will be re-assessed on an annual basis as part of the SGO allowance review procedure or where there is a significant change of circumstance. This would include the Special Guardian

advising if contact has not taken place, where supplementary allowance is paid to facilitate contact.

- 6.12 Any agreements for supplementary allowance to be paid must be outlined in writing within the SGO Support Plan, to include specifics as to the amount agreed, for what purpose and the duration.
  
- 6.13 Failure on the part of the Special Guardian to adhere to financial review arrangements will result in any supplementary allowance ceasing. The local authority will also seek to recoup any overpayment of supplementary allowance, including where a Special Guardian has failed to notify the local authority of a change in circumstance.
  
- 6.14 Payment of the child related SGO allowance or supplementary allowance, if applicable, will not increase during the term of the order, unless the Guardian/s were previously foster carers and entitled to protected allowances under the policy, or following a financial assessment review.

## **7. Special Guardian(s) responsibilities**

7.1 If the special guardian(s) qualifies for financial support following the means test, they must inform the Fostering Team of the following within 14 days:

- Any change of address/ telephone number or additional contact details such as an email address
- If there is a significant change in theirs and/or the child's financial circumstances
- If there is a change in family relationships (such as a new partner or the separation of the special guardians), that affects household income/expenditure
- The child ceases full time education i.e. between 16 and 18 years and commences employment
- The young person qualifies for Income Support or jobseekers allowance in his/her own right

7.2 The Fostering Team must be notified immediately if:

- The child no longer permanently resides with them
- If the child dies
- The SGO has ceased to have effect (the child has turned 18 or the Order revoked by the Court)

7.3 Special guardians are required to inform the local authority of the progress of their claims for Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit within 4 weeks of the SGO being granted. Failure to do so will result in the suspension of payments pending receipt of the required information.

## 8. Review

- 8.1 Annual re-assessment of each case will take place on the anniversary of the date that the SGO is granted, however, a change in the applicant's financial circumstances would prompt a further financial assessment within a 12 month period. In order to ensure this, the review documentation will be sent to the Special Guardian(s) 2 months prior to the due date.
- 8.2 The Fostering Team will be responsible for diarising reviews in conjunction with finance. However, any changes that may be identified in the support package as a whole prior to the date of the annual financial review, which would have an impact on any financial support offered, should be forwarded to Fostering Team in order for a review to be undertaken if necessary prior to the annual anniversary date.
- 8.3 Failure to submit a completed assessment or review may result in allowances being suspended. Special guardians will be notified of this writing. Payments will not be reinstated until the required documentation has been received by the Fostering Team, the financial assessment has been completed in conjunction with the Finance Team and a positive outcome determined. A reasonable number of attempts will be made to establish contact with the carer to arrange for the assessment/ financial evidence to be provided by the carer in person or via email/ post before the payment is ceased. ALL correspondence attempts MUST be clearly recorded on data management system with the required response by date expected by the carer.
- 8.4 It is possible that the child related SGO allowance may reduce or cease following review or re-assessment.



- 8.5 The review of the allowance may also be undertaken at any time when the authority is notified by the special guardians of any significant change in their own, or the child's, financial circumstances.
- 8.6 Where changes are made by central government to benefits, this may require a review of this policy and procedure. No changes will be made to individual payments unless it is in accordance with updated policy and procedure and following a financial assessment review.

## 9. Termination of payments

9.1 Payment of all allowances terminate on the occurrence of the earliest of the following events:

- The Special Guardianship Order has ceased to have effect (e.g. because the child has attained the age of 18) or has been discharged or varied by the court.
- The child ceases to permanently reside with the Special Guardian\’s (or, in a case where there are two or more Special Guardians, the child ceases to live with any of them).
- The death of the child about whom the Order relates.
- The child ceases full time education i.e. between 16 and 18 years and commences employment. The education maintenance allowance and government training schemes for young people between the ages of 16 and 18 will not be included as income for the SGO allowance. The Fostering Team will contact the applicant(s) during August each year following the child’s 16th birthday to obtain confirmation of the child’s educational status, the evidence will need to be provided within a stated number of weeks of the young person commencing their education/ placement in the September term (copies of their college I.D, etc. or written letter can be emailed/ posted/ shown to the allocated worker).
- The young person qualifies for Income Support or jobseekers allowance in his/her own right
- The applicant(s) refusing to submit the information that is required for a financial re-assessment to be undertaken

9.2 As a single financial assessment is undertaken, incorporating all children placed with the applicant(s) under any Court Order, the termination of any single Order will terminate the payment of all allowances and will require a re-

assessment in respect of the remaining children placed with the applicant(s). This re-assessment will initially be based on information provided during the most recent reassessment until a full re-assessment can be undertaken for the remaining children.

- 9.3 Where a supplementary allowance has been granted to aid the transition from foster carer to Special Guardian, any such payment will terminate after two years, unless exceptional circumstances have been agreed by the Corporate Lead Officer. In these cases, the payment will cease on the predetermined date outlined in the SGO Support Plan. Unless any of the above apply (9.1).

## 10. Appendices

### Reference:

Name of 1<sup>st</sup> Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_ (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Other)

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of 2<sup>nd</sup> Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_ (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Other)

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

### Home Address:

\_\_\_\_\_

### Home Telephone Number:

\_\_\_\_\_

### Daytime Telephone Number:

\_\_\_\_\_

### 1. Other Occupants in the Household

Name	Date of Birth	Relationship to Applicant/s (Birth child, foster child, adopted, etc)	Full Time Education Yes / No

## 2a. Details of Earnings (Employment)

### First Applicant

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Nature of Employment:</b>	
<b>Name of Employer:</b>	
<b>Address of Employer:</b>	
<b>Average Gross Earnings:</b>	
<b>Average Net Earnings:</b> (after deductions)	

### Second Applicant

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Nature of Employment:</b>	
<b>Name of Employer:</b>	
<b>Address of Employer:</b>	
<b>Average Gross Earnings:</b>	
<b>Average Net Earnings:</b> (after deductions)	

**You will need to provide copies of payslips for 3 months  
(or 12 weeks if paid weekly)**

**2b. Details of Earnings (Self Employed)**

<b>Applicant Name:</b>	
<b>Nature of Business:</b>	
<b>Business Address:</b>	
<b>Postcode:</b>	

**You will need to supply a copy of the figures submitted to the Tax Office for Tax Assessment together with any confirmation that these have been accepted**

## 2. Allowances, Pensions and Benefits

### First Applicant

	<b>Amount £</b>	<b>* Delete as Appropriate</b>
<b>Income Support</b>		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
<b>Universal Credits</b>		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
<b>Working Tax Credit</b>		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
<b>Child Tax Credit</b>		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
<b>Pension Credit:</b> - Guarantee Credit		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
- Savings Credit		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
<b>Retirement Pension</b>		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
<b>Occupational Pension</b> (former employment)		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
<b>PIP/DLA</b>		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
<b>PIP/DLA Mobility</b>		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
<b>Attendance Allowance</b>		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
<b>Incapacity Benefit</b>		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
<b>Industrial Injuries</b>		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
<b>Child Benefit</b> (own children)		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
<b>Child Maintenance Payments Received</b>		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
<b>Other</b> (please state) _____ _____ _____		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly

## Second Applicant

	<b>Amount £</b>	<b>* Delete as Appropriate</b>
<b>Income Support</b>		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
<b>Jobseekers Allowance</b>		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
<b>Working Tax Credit</b>		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
<b>Child Tax Credit</b>		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
<b>Pension Credit:</b> - Guarantee Credit		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
- Savings Credit		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
<b>Retirement Pension</b>		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
<b>Occupational Pension</b> (former employment)		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
<b>DLA Care</b>		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
<b>DLA Mobility</b>		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
<b>Attendance Allowance</b>		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
<b>Incapacity Benefit</b>		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
<b>Industrial Injuries</b>		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
<b>Child Benefit</b> (own children)		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
<b>Child Maintenance Payments Received</b>		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
<b>Other</b> (please state) _____ _____ _____		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly



**4a. Interest/Income from savings and investments**

Type of Income Received	Amount £	Frequency

**Please provide copies of bank statements for the last 3 months for all accounts**

**4b. Any other income (fostering allowances are disregarded)**

Type of Income Received	Amount £	Frequency

**5. Any other income received from occupants in your home (e.g. children, other relatives, lodgers, children placed by other agencies for fostering or adoption)?**

Name	Date of Birth	Relationship to Applicant	Amount £	Frequency

**6. Your child's income\*** (this could be your own or adopted children)

	Child's Name	Child's Name	Child's Name	Child's Name
	Amount £	Amount £	Amount £	Amount £
<b>Child Benefit</b>				
<b>PIP/DLA Care</b>				
<b>PIP/DLA Mobility</b>				
<b>Other</b> (please state)				

**7. Expenses and Outgoings**

	Frequency	Amount £
<b>Mortgage Payable</b>		
<b>Mortgage Endowment</b>		
<b>Rent</b> (less any Housing Benefit received)		
<b>Council Tax</b> (less any Council Tax Benefit received)		

**8a. Other Outgoings**

	Details	Weekly Amount £
<b>Maintenance payments / Court Orders</b>		
<b>Private pension contributions</b>		
<b>National Insurance</b> (if self employed)		
<b>Reasonable child care costs</b> (not included in the childcare element of Working Tax Credit)		

**8b. Loan Repayments**

<b>Lender (Bank, Building Society, etc)</b>	<b>Purpose of Loan</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>Loan Duration</b>	<b>Amount £</b>

**You will need to provide proof of any costs listed in section 7 & 8**

**9. Additional Information**

**10. Please read this declaration carefully before you sign and date it.**

- I declare that the information I have given on this form is correct and complete.
- I understand that you will use the information I have given to work out if I am entitled to financial support. You can check some of the information with other council departments within Ceredigion County Council and with other councils. You may give some information to other council departments and government organisations as required by law.
- I know that I must let the Fostering Team of the council know immediately in writing about any changes in my circumstances which might affect the amount of support I receive.
- I understand that if I knowingly give false information, action may be taken against me to recover all or part of the financial support I have been paid.

**Signature of 1<sup>st</sup> Applicant:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:**  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of 2<sup>nd</sup> Applicant:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:**  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **How we collect and use information**

- We will use the information we collect, both on this form and from supporting evidence you give us, to process your claim for a support allowance. Once we collect your information we may share it with other council departments to help provide a complete service to you.
- We may check information you (or anybody else) have provided with other information we hold. We may also get information from other bodies and organisations, or give information to them to check the accuracy of your information, to prevent or detect crime, to protect public funds in other ways or for reasons allowed by law.
- We will use your information in line with the General Data Protection Regulations 2016 and the Data Protection Act 2018. We (Ceredigion County Council) are the data controller for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 2018.
- If you want to know more about what happens to the information that we hold about you and your rights and our obligations to you, the councils Fair Processing statement is available on the data protection pages of our website.