

# **Special Guardianship Order Financial Policy**

## **Consultation report**

**Date of issue: 17 May 2021**

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## 1. Overview

A public consultation on the Special Guardianship Order Financial Policy was undertaken over a twelve-week period from 15 February to 9 May 2021.

The consultation received **a total of two** interactions from survey completions. This paper details the analysis associated with the consultation.

## 2. Introduction

The public survey was available to complete online through a link on the consultation page of the council's website. Paper copies of the consultation were also made available which could be sent directly to residents upon request. Surveys were available in standard and large print formats. Both were available in Welsh and English. The content of the page remains available online.

In total, there were 32 questions that required a reply from respondents. Respondents could choose to answer all or some of the questions. All survey responses offered the option of anonymity. The council's standard set of equalities monitoring questions were also included with the survey in line with recommended good practice for all public-facing surveys carried out by the council.

Comments regarding the consultation were also invited via social media, letter, email and phone call.

## 3. Promotional tools and engagement methods

### 3.1 Promotional tools

This section details the methods used to raise the profile of the consultation and encourage participation.

#### 3.1.1 Social media

In December 2017 the council committed to managing its social media accounts bilingually. In addition to introducing Welsh language corporate Twitter and Facebook accounts at that time, it started posting bilingually across the remainder of its social media channels.

The Special Guardianship Orders Financial Policy Consultation was posted bilingually to the council's corporate Facebook and Twitter channels throughout the consultation period to raise awareness of the consultation and to encourage citizens to share their views on the proposals.

The council currently has 13,486 followers on its corporate Twitter accounts and 16,138 followers on its Facebook pages. While content is most likely to be seen by these users, it is also displayed to users who are not connected to the accounts.

During the consultation period, the local authority posted **14 times (7 English and 7 Welsh) 2 Facebook post and 12 tweets. This content reached 85,151 people generating 0 comments, 3 shares, 4 reactions and 149 clicks through to the consultation page on the local authority website.**

### 3.1.2 govDelivery

govDelivery is a new digital communications tool that has been implemented by the local authority in 2020 to send messages directly to residents' email inboxes in the language of their choice.

There are currently 37,360 English language subscribers and 220 Welsh language subscribers from Bridgend County Borough to the weekly Covid-19 update emails. The Special Guardianship Orders Financial Policy Consultation was included in a Gov Delivery bulletin on **25-02-2021 this was opened 37,559 times with 16,667 unique opens, 30 unique links clicks and 35 total link clicks.**

### 3.1.3 Media and publicity

One main media release was issued to coincide with the start of the consultation in order to raise awareness and encourage participation. This was issued on 24 February.

The consultation was also incorporated into a news round-up media release issued on 24 February.

The media release was featured at the media centre of the council's website.

## 4. Response rate

In total, there were **two** interactions during the consultation. Both responses were received from the online survey.

## 5. How effective was the consultation?

The Special Guardianship Order Financial Policy consultation was conducted over a twelve week period during which time the consultation was promoted via press release, council social media and govDelivery.

## 6. Headline figures

- 50% of respondents stated that the policy makes it clear what financial support is available and 50% of respondents stated it did not.
- 50% of respondents stated that the policy clearly outlines the financial assessment process and 50% of respondents stated it did not.
- 100% of respondents stated that the policy clearly outlines how the means test is applied.
- 50% of respondents stated that the policy clearly outlines how supplementary allowances could be granted for a child previously fostered by the applicant and 50% of respondents stated it did not.
- 50% of respondents stated that the policy clearly outlines when supplementary payments may be paid in exceptional circumstances and 50% of respondents stated it did not.
- 50% of respondents stated that the policy clearly outlines what responsibilities Special Guardians have with regard to informing the Permanence Team of any changes and 50% of respondents stated it did not.
- 50% of respondents stated that the policy clearly outlines the review process for financial assessments and 50% of respondents stated it did not.

- 50% of respondents stated that the policy clearly outlines why and when payments would end and 50% of respondents stated it did not.
- 50% of respondents stated that the Special Guardianship Orders Financial Policy is accessible i.e. written in plain language that is clear and easy to understand and 50% of respondents stated it did not.
- 50% of respondents stated that something is missing from the Special Guardianship Orders Financial Policy that they would like to see included and 50% of respondents stated it did not.

## 7. Question and analysis - consultation survey

The consultation contained 32 questions covering the following sections:

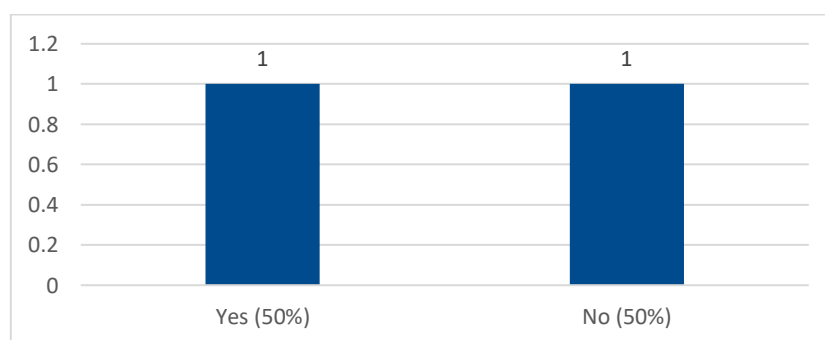
- Financial Support for Prospective Special Guardians
- The financial assessment process
- Required documentation for Prospective Special Guardians to apply for financial support
- Applying the means test
- Supplementary Allowance and exceptional circumstances
- Exceptional circumstances
- Special Guardian(s) responsibilities
- Review
- Termination of payments
- Additional comments

### 7.2 Survey questions

#### 7.2.1 Section one: Financial Support for Prospective Special Guardians

##### 7.2.1.1 Does the policy make it clear what financial support is available?

A total of two respondents answered this question.



50% of respondents stated that the policy makes it clear what financial support is available and 50% of respondents stated it did not.

##### 7.2.1.2 If you answered 'no', what information do you think is missing?

One comment was received to this question and is detailed in the table below.

Comment	Number
I have been granted special guardianship for my granddaughter from a baby and she is now 9, I was told there was no financial help for me apart from child benefit.	1

### 7.2.1.3 Do you have any other comments on this section?

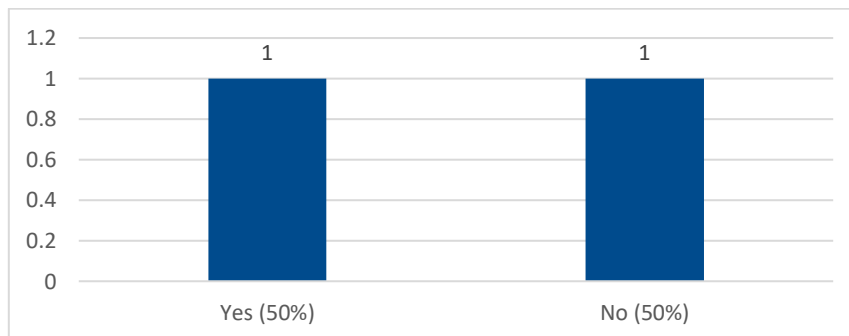
One comment was received to this question and is detailed in the table below.

Comment	Number
I really struggled and ending up in a divorce	1

## 7.2.2 Section two: The financial assessment process

### 7.2.2.1 Does the policy clearly outline the financial assessment process?

A total of two respondents answered this question.



50% of respondents stated that the policy clearly outlines the financial assessment process and 50% of respondents stated it did not.

### 7.2.2.2 If you answered 'no', what information do you think is missing?

One comment was received to this question and is detailed in the table below.

Comment	Number
Never had one	1

### 7.2.2.3 Do you have any comments on the financial assessment process?

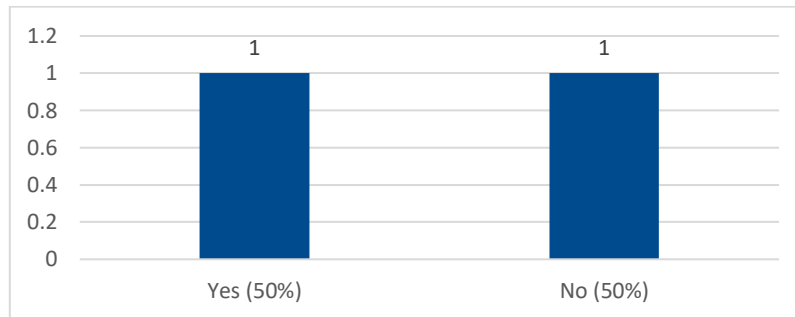
One comment was received to this question and is detailed in the table below.

Comment	Number
All I was asked how much I earn.	1

### 7.2.3 Section three: Required documentation for Prospective Special Guardians to apply for financial support

#### 7.2.3.1 Does the policy clearly outline the required documentation for different circumstances?

A total of two respondents answered this question.



50% of respondents stated that the policy clearly outlines the required documentation for different circumstances and 50% of respondents stated it did not.

#### 7.2.3.2 If you answered 'no', what information do you think is missing?

No comments were made in response to this question.

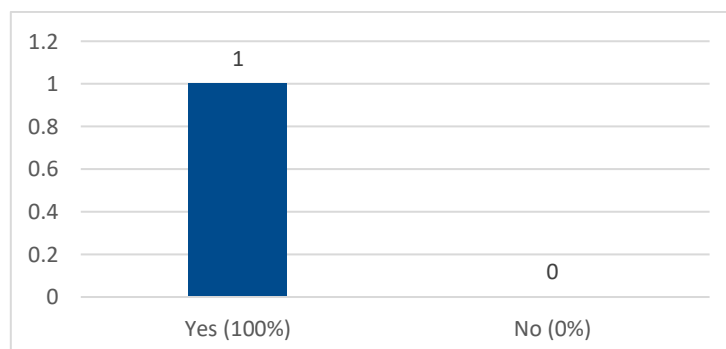
#### 7.2.3.3 Do you have any comments on the required documentation for the financial assessment process?

No comments were made in response to this question.

### 7.2.4 Section four: Applying the means test

#### 7.2.4.1 Does the policy clearly outline how the means test is applied?

A total of one respondent answered this question.



100% of respondents stated that the policy clearly outlines how the means test is applied.

#### 7.2.4.2 If you answered 'no', what information do you think is missing?

No comments were made in response to this question.

### 7.2.4.3 Do you have any comments on how the means test is applied?

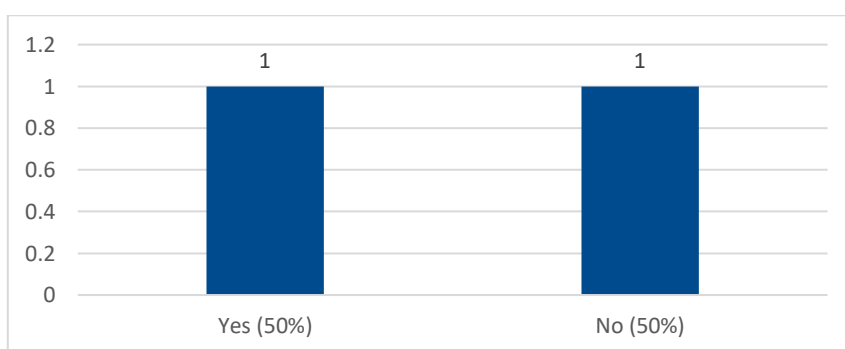
One comment was received to this question and is detailed in the table below.

Comment	Number
Cannot remember	1

## 7.2.5 Section five: Supplementary Allowance and exceptional circumstances

### 7.2.5.1 Does the policy clearly outline how supplementary allowances could be granted for a child previously fostered by the applicant?

A total of two respondents answered this question.



50% of respondents stated that the policy clearly outlines how supplementary allowances could be granted for a child previously fostered by the applicant and 50% of respondents stated it did not.

### 7.2.5.2 If you answered 'no', what information do you think is missing?

One comment was received to this question and is detailed in the table below.

Comment	Number
Like I said I never had any financial help after I was granted FG	1

### 7.2.5.3 Do you have any comments on how supplementary allowances could be granted for a child previously fostered by the applicant?

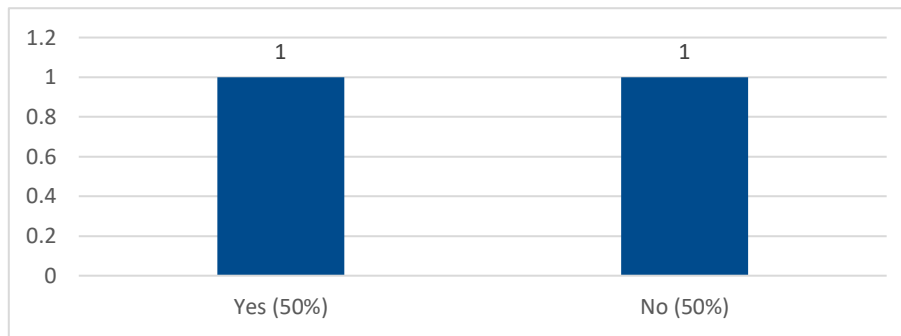
No comments were made in response to this question

## 7.2.6 Exceptional Circumstances

### 7.2.6.1 Does the policy clearly outline when supplementary payments may be paid in exceptional circumstances?

A total of two respondents answered this question.





50% of respondents stated that the policy clearly outlines when supplementary payments may be paid in exceptional circumstances and 50% of respondents stated it did not.

#### **7.2.6.2 If you answered 'no', what information do you think is missing?**

No comments were made in response to this question

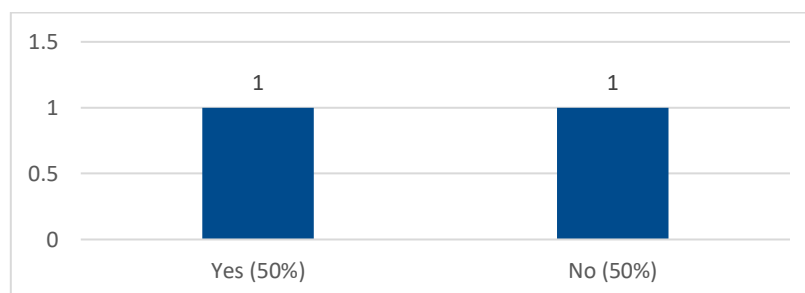
#### **7.2.6.3 Do you have any comments on supplementary payments which may be paid in exceptional circumstances?**

No comments were made in response to this question

### **7.2.7 Section six: Special Guardian(s) responsibilities**

#### **7.2.7.1 Does the policy clearly outline what responsibilities Special Guardians have with regard to informing the Permanence Team of any changes?**

A total of two respondents answered this question.



50% of respondents stated that the policy clearly outlines what responsibilities Special Guardians have with regard to informing the Permanence Team of any changes and 50% of respondents stated it did not.

#### **7.2.7.2 If you answered 'no', what information do you think is missing?**

No comments were made in response to this question.

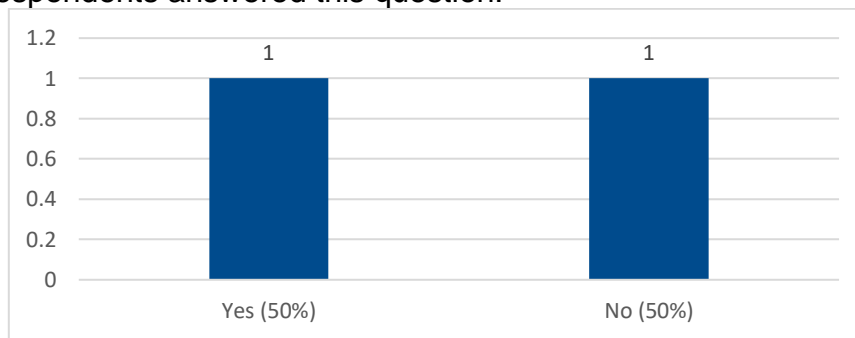
#### **7.2.7.3 Do you have any comments on the responsibilities of Special Guardians on informing the Permanence Team of any changes?**

No comments were made in response to this question.

## 7.2.8 Section seven: Review

### 7.2.8.1 Does the policy clearly outline the review process for financial assessments?

A total of two respondents answered this question.



50% of respondents stated that the policy clearly outlines the review process for financial assessments and 50% of respondents stated it did not.

### 7.2.8.2 If you answered 'no', what information do you think is missing?

No comments were made in response to this question.

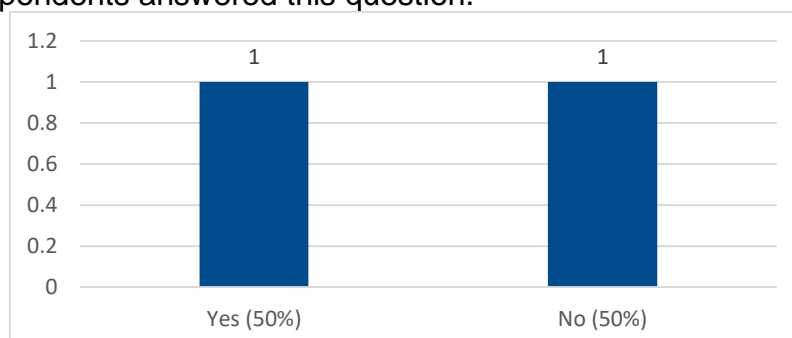
### 7.2.8.3 Do you have any comments on the review process for financial assessments?

No comments were made in response to this question.

## 7.2.9 Section eight: Termination of payments

### 7.2.9.1 Does the policy clearly outline why and when payments would end?

A total of two respondents answered this question.



50% of respondents stated that the policy clearly outlines why and when payments would end and 50% of respondents stated it did not.

### 7.2.9.2 If you answered 'no', what information do you think is missing?

No comments were made in response to this question.

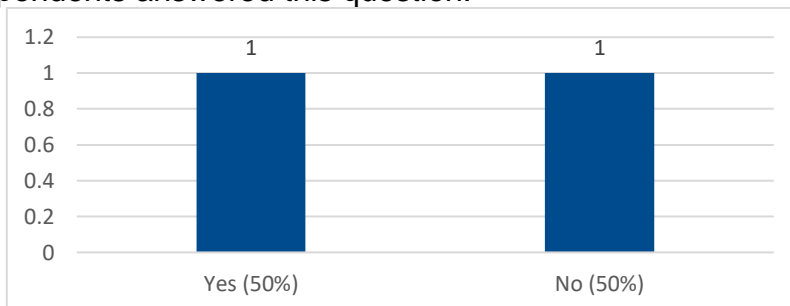
### 7.2.9.3 Do you have any comments on the termination of payments?

No comments were made in response to this question.

### 7.2.10 Section nine: Additional comments

#### 7.2.10.1 Is the Special Guardianship Orders Financial Policy accessible i.e. written in plain language that is clear and easy to understand?

A total of two respondents answered this question.

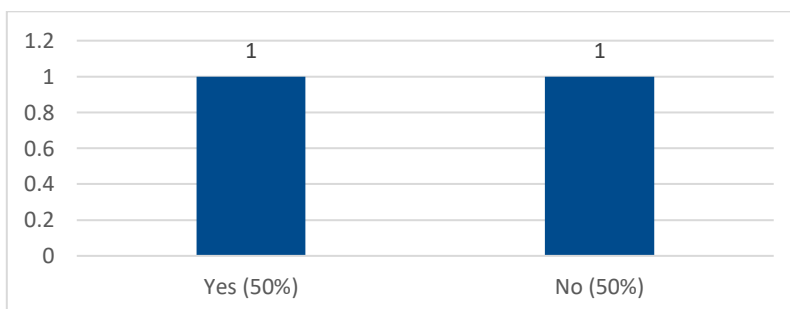


50% of respondents stated that the Special Guardianship Orders Financial Policy is accessible i.e. written in plain language that is clear and easy to understand and 50% of respondents stated it did not.

#### 7.2.10.2 If you answered 'no', please tell what would improve the accessibility of the policy.

No comments were made in response to this question.

#### 7.2.10.3 Is there anything missing from the Special Guardianship Orders Financial Policy that you would like to see included?



50% of respondents stated that something is missing from the Special Guardianship Orders Financial Policy that they would like to see included and 50% of respondents stated it did not.

#### 7.2.10.4 If you answered 'yes', please tell us what you think is missing.

One comment was received to this question and is detailed in the table below.

Comment	Number
Clear understanding, someone to make it all clear to people is needed.	1

### 7.2.10.5 Do you have any further comments on the Special Guardianship Orders Financial Policy?

One comment was received to this question and is detailed in the table below.

Comment	Number
No help for my granddaughter at all.	1

### 7.2.11 Equalities monitoring

#### 7.2.11.1 How would these proposals affect you because of your: Gender, Age, Ethnicity, Disability, Sexuality, Religion / belief, Gender identity, Relationship status, Pregnancy, Preferred language?

No comments were made in response to this question.

#### 7.2.11.2 We would like to know your views on the effects that the guidance would have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English. What effects do you think there would be? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

No comments were made in response to this question.

#### 7.2.11.3 Please also explain how you believe the guidance could be formulated or changed so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language, and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and ensure there are no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language.

No comments were made in response to this question.

## 11.8 Summary

Information from this consultation will be used to inform the development of the Special Guardianship Order Financial Policy. This report is to be shared with Cabinet in order to inform the SGO financial policy development.