

## **Role profile and person specification for Independent Chair- Fostering Panel**

### **Role profile:**

- To satisfy the requirements as outlined in SBC's central list agreement;
- To ensure that the panel operates within the relevant law, regulation and guidance;
- To ensure that the panel operates within the policies of the Swindon's Children Services;
- To prepare for each panel meeting by reading all panel papers carefully and critically;
- To chair meetings of the panel and to ensure that all those attending panel are treated with respect and courtesy;
- To respect at all times the confidential nature of the Department's work;
- To address diversity issues and to promote anti-discriminatory, anti-oppressive and anti-racist practice at all times;
- To facilitate panel members to consider the information presented to them before making their recommendation, reaching a consensus wherever possible;
- To lead/ manage the process of identifying the questions which panel will explore with social workers and/or applicants and agreeing who will ask those questions;
- To meet with applicants prior to them joining the panel, to explain the process;
- To ensure that the panel is clear about the reasons for its recommendations and that these are recorded in the minutes;
- Where there is a split or contentious panel recommendation, to facilitate each panel member in turn to explain the reason for her/his views and to ensure that these are formally recorded in the minutes;
- To enable those attending panel to contribute effectively (e.g. enabling social workers to present their case in a constructive manner);
- To ensure that the minutes of the panel are accurate and are signed and returned to the agency in a timely manner;
- To attend meetings of the Independent Review Mechanism if required;
- To facilitate the panels in their role of monitoring the quality of work presented to the panel;
- To feedback any concerns about the management of cases through the appropriate departmental channels;
- To check/ amend and authorise panel minutes
- To attend and contribute to planning the regular business meetings to review the management and the business of the panel;
- To attend and contribute to planning a minimum of 1 training day each year and to contribute if appropriate;

- To complete an annual report on the impact of Foster Panel to accompany the annual Fostering Report
- To keep abreast of current practice issues in adoption, permanency, fostering and other permanent placements and seek to promote best practice within the panel and the agency;
- To assist the agency to identify training needs within the panels and the agency;
- To take part in the interviewing of prospective panel members and advise the agency on appointments to the panels;
- To assist in the induction of new panel members;
- To undertake the annual review of the performance of panel members (with support from agency advisor) and regularly provide feedback to panel members;
- To support Vice Panel Chairs in their role
- To bring to the attention of the panel advisor/ Fostering Team Manager, situations in which panel members are not meeting the requirements of the central list agreement for panel members.

**Person specification:**

The following specification will form the basis of the annual appraisal of panel chairs:

	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
<b>Experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience either professionally or personally or both of the placement of children in adoptive/foster families;</li> <li>• Extensive experience of chairing child care meetings e.g. panels, child protection conferences.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of adoption or matching children in permanent placements ;</li> <li>• Management of policy implementation or organisational change.</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sound understanding of the fostering process and relevant legislation, guidance, regulations and standards;</li> <li>• Knowledge of importance of partnership working in fostering practice;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of attachment theories;</li> <li>• Understanding of research findings re outcomes for children looked after.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding, knowledge and experience relating to children and young people and their needs throughout their development</li> <li>• Understanding of the role of fostering in safeguarding children.</li> <li>• Knowledge of couple relationships and relationships within wider networks.</li> </ul>	
<b>Competencies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authority and expertise to chair panels;</li> <li>• Ability to assist panels in the effective use of time;</li> <li>• Ability to analyse and explain complex information;</li> <li>• Ability to identify and summarise key issues clearly and succinctly;</li> <li>• Excellent oral and written communication skills;</li> <li>• Ability to enable all participants to contribute effectively;</li> <li>• Ability to monitor the performance of panel members;</li> <li>• Ability to ask questions that are relevant, sensitive, diplomatic and appropriate;</li> <li>• Ability to manage the expression of strongly held but possibly conflicting views by panel members, and to help the panel</li> </ul>	

	<p>reach a recommendation which takes account of all of these views;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ability to scrutinise, monitor and challenge practice</li><li>• A commitment to safeguarding and the need to offer a safe re-parenting experience;</li><li>• A commitment to promoting children's welfare;</li><li>• A commitment to children retaining contact with members of their birth family if this is in their best interests;</li><li>• A commitment to keeping children within their own family or community where this is possible;;</li><li>• A commitment to achieving timely permanency for children where this is in their best interest;</li><li>• Recognition of the lifelong impact of fostering on all parties;</li><li>• An awareness of the richness of different kind of families and their potential for meeting children's needs;</li><li>• An appreciation of the impact of loss and separation on both adults and children;</li><li>• An understanding and knowledge of families and</li></ul>	
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	how they are affected by change.	
<b>Other requirements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Must not be a current employee of the authority;</li><li>• Clear commitment to equalities issues;</li><li>• Commitment to continuing personal and professional developments to maintain and update knowledge and skills;</li><li>• Satisfactory DBS disclosure.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Social work degree or equivalent;</li><li>• Post qualification training in Child care;</li><li>• PQ training in adoption, family placement or child protection;</li></ul>

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