

Independent Panel Chair Job Description & Person Specification

Job Purpose:

To chair complex meetings and effectively manage the Fostering Panel. To demonstrate expertise in childcare planning and child development with detailed and up to date knowledge of the legislative framework for fostering, and a comprehensive understanding of the National Minimum Standards and Regulations and current good practice initiatives. To ensure that the panel functions in a non-discriminatory manor and has an inclusive approach.

General Contacts: Fostering Team Managers and Panel Advisors, Agency Decision Maker, Panel Members, Social Workers and Foster Carers

Key duties and responsibilities:

To chair Panel meetings, ensuring that all items of business are covered and that the Panel operates in accordance with Regulations and Guidance and the policies and procedures of the Fostering Service provider.

To prepare for panel meetings, reading Panel papers carefully, identifying key issues and alerting the Panel Adviser if necessary to ensure, as far as possible, that the case is adequate for submission to Panel.

To facilitate the active participation of all Panel Members in contributing to the Panel's consideration of cases and to the making of clear and well evidenced recommendations with the reasons for these.

To ensure that all those attending Panel are treated with respect and courtesy.

To address diversity issues and to promote anti-discriminatory practice at all times.

To ensure that clear and accurate minutes are written which record any serious reservations which Panel Members may have and to check draft minutes.

To liaise with the Agency Decision Maker, Fostering Team Managers and with other senior managers as required.

To ensure, with the Panel Adviser that senior managers are aware of issues of concern in relation both to individual cases and to more general matters.

To be involved in the recruitment and appointment of new Panel Members and in any consideration about terminating the appointment of a Panel Member.

To review, with the Panel Advisers, the performance of Panel Members with an annual appraisal.

To assist in planning training for Panel Members and to participate in at least one day per year of training.

To safeguard the confidentiality of all Panel papers and Panel discussions.

To be involved in:

- Deciding whether a case is adequate for submission to Panel
- Deciding on the attendance of observers at Panel
- Deciding on the participation of a Panel Member who declares an interest in a case
- Deciding when an extra Panel may be necessary
- The preparation of a six monthly report on the Panel's work

General/Corporate Responsibilities:

1. To undertake such duties as may be commensurate with the seniority of the post
2. To partake in the Council's and Directorate's staff training and development policies as well as the Council's system of performance appraisal
3. To treat all information gathered for the Council and Directorate, either electronically or manually, in a confidential manner
4. All employees are required to demonstrate a commitment when carrying out their duties which promotes and values diversity and the equality of opportunity in relation to employees and service users which is in line with the Council's Equality & Diversity Policy.
5. To be responsible for identifying and managing all risks associated with the job role through effective application of internal controls and risk assessments to support the achievement of Corporate and Service objectives
6. To ensure the highest standards of customer care are met at all times
7. To ensure the principles of Value for Money in service delivery is fundamental in all aspects of involvement with internal and external customers
8. To ensure that the highest standards of data quality are achieved and maintained for the collection, management and use of data.
9. To positively promote the welfare of children, young people, and vulnerable adults and ensure that it is recognised that Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility; and to engage in appropriate training and development opportunities which enhance an individual's knowledge and skill in responding to children, young people and vulnerable adults who may be in need of safeguarding.

POST TITLE		
Panel Chair (Independent)		
NOTE TO APPLICANTS Whilst all points on the specification are important, those listed in the essential column are the key requirements. You should pay particular attention to those points and provide evidence of meeting them. Failure to do so may mean that you will not be invited for interview.		
CRITERIA	NECESSARY REQUIREMENTS	
	Essential	Desirable
EXPERIENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substantial experience of Children's Social Work • Significant experience of Fostering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous experience of Chairing Fostering Panels
SKILLS AND ABILITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent ability to Chair complex meetings • Excellent knowledge of Fostering Regulations and Requirements • Excellent Interpersonal Skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recently demonstrated skills in Children's Care Planning
EDUCATION/ QUALIFICATIONS/ KNOWLEDGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registered Social Worker with Social Work England 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recent training with regards to Fostering Regulations and Standards
OTHER REQUIREMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible approach to work by responding to the needs of the services • Commitment to own continuous personal and professional development • Strong team player, committed to an ethos of continuous improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of own continuous personal and professional development
COMMITMENT TO EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to equal opportunities and the ability to recognise the needs of different service users 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of having completed training in equality and diversity awareness

COMMITMENT TO SERVICE DELIVERY/ CUSTOMER CARE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to provide a customer-focussed service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of surpassing customer expectations or service targets / goals

