**Planning for Children Panel**

**Terms of Reference**

**Purpose:**

Wirral Children’s Services is committed to ensuring that the majority of looked after children are accommodated in locally commissioned placements. The in-house fostering service has a key role to play in providing for the majority of placement needs. However, we recognise that for a smaller number of children placements will need to be provided through independent foster agencies, in external residential placements including respite or in supported accommodation. Where this is necessary or where there is a risk of escalation to such provision, we will try to ensure that such placements are provided within or as close to the Wirral as possible subject to the needs and risks associated with individual children.

The Planning for Children panel will therefore meet to ensure that the use of external placement resources:

• Are the most appropriate ways of meeting children’s needs.

• Will have and will continue to have a positive impact on outcomes for children.

• Are the best available use of resources.

• Are only used for as long as necessary.

The panel will:

1. Consider requests for the use of new external placement provision (Fostering, Residential, and Supported Living)
2. Consider requests for other externally commissioned services e.g. therapeutic, assessment etc.
3. Review any existing placements to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the children placed

When considering a placement request the Panel will consider:

• That the viability of all internal placement options and those linked to the supporting people offer for young people aged 16+ have been exhausted before any requests are brought to the panel for consideration

• The appropriateness of the request.

• The reason for the placement and what it is to achieve.

• Whether the proposal is in the best interests of the child/ren.

• The child’s views on the proposed placement.

• Whether there is any other provision or support service which might be able to meet the child/ren’s needs.

• The proposed length of placement.

• The cost implications of the placement

**Membership:**

• Lead Commissioner Children in Care

* Commissioning Officer

• Senior Manager Children in Care

• Fostering Team Manager

• Designated Nurse CLA

• CAMHS Representative

• Panel Administrator

• Headteacher for Virtual School

• SEN Manager

• Service Manager, Adolescent Edge of Care Team

* CCG Commissioner complex health needs

The meeting will be chaired by the Lead Commissioner, Commissioning Officer, or Senior Manager Children in Care

**Frequency of Meetings:**

Weekly