**BUCKINGHAMSHIRE CHILREN’S SERVICES**

**CHIDREN’S CARE PLANNING & RESOURCES PANEL**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

1. **Introduction – Purpose of the Panel:**
   1. The Children’s Care Planning & Resources Panel (referred to as the ‘Panel’) is responsible for making decisions about the allocation of placement resources to ensure that they meet the child/young person’s assessed needs and circumstances and are in line with care planning arrangements. This applies to:

* All new and emergency placements
* All future planned placements
* Any proposed changes to, or reviews of, existing placement arrangements
* Any exceptional accommodation arrangements

1.2 The Panel is responsible for evaluating:

* The details of the care and placement planning and review processes, including PLO pre-proceedings and court care proceedings, presented by the allocated social worker and manager
* The suitability, availability and value for money options of all placement resources, including:
* Internally delivered foster care and residential care home provision
* Externally commissioned services via independent fostering agencies and private and voluntary sector residential care home providers, including semi-independent supported accommodation and short break (respite) residential care provision

1.3 The Panel may also consider:

* Exceptional requests for alternative accommodation, for example hotel or private rented accommodation which may be required from time to time

1.4 The Panel will identify opportunities for shared funding arrangements in terms of joint or tripartite funding with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and/or Health Services. Whenever shared funding arrangements are considered to be appropriate the Panel Administrator will:

* Email a copy of the Complex Needs Panel referral template to the allocated social worker for completion with SEN and Health colleagues and submission to the Complex Needs Panel Administrator
* Notify the Complex Needs Panel Administrator of the name/LCS number of the relevant child/young person for future reference

1. **Membership and Attendance:**

2.1 The Panel is chaired by the Service Director. The Vice Chair is the Head of Care Services (Fostering, Adoption, and Residential & Placements)

* 1. Other Panel members include:
* Panel Administrator
* Finance Accountant
* Commissioning Manager
* Fostering ATM
* Residential Manager
* SEN Officer
  1. It is the responsibility of each Panel member to ensure that their attendance is regular and consistent. Panel members are responsible for arranging suitable cover whenever they are on annual leave or unable to attend.

* 1. Panel member attendance will be monitored. The Chair will address any concerns that arise with the Panel member in the first instance and via the relevant line manager if required.
  2. Each Panel member is responsible for taking a proactive solution focussed approach. This will include providing relevant information to assist the Panel decision making process. Each Panel member is responsible for representing their team or service perspective and is required to attend Panel equipped with all relevant information. This process may also include following up queries outside of the Panel and taking action or feeding back as necessary and appropriate.
  3. The child/young person’s allocated Social Worker and/or Personal Advisor, are required to attend Panel to present the details of the child/young person’s assessed needs and circumstances. Their presentation will make reference to key points summarised in the written Panel template request.
  4. The relevant line manager, either the Assistant Team Manager or Team Manager, is also required to attend Panel to support the Social Worker or Personal Advisor and answer Panel’s questions or queries regarding the management overview and decision making.

1. **Frequency, Duration & Process of Panel Meetings**
   1. The Panel will meet every week on a Wednesday morning.
   2. The Panel will run from 9:30am at the earliest through to 1:00pm at the latest, depending on the number of children and young people due to be considered.
   3. The Panel will allocate 15 – 20 minute time slots to consider each child and young person on the agenda. The Social Worker and line manager will be asked by the Panel Chair to address the two key areas set out below:

* Provide a pen picture of the child/young person and outline their assessed needs and circumstances
* Outline what Panel outcome they are seeking for the child/young person and explain why this is appropriate to meet their care plan
  1. Each Panel member will listen actively and engage with the Panel discussion process to ensure that they:
* Understand and agree with the information being presented and discussed
* Contribute by providing additional information from their professional or service perspective
* Provide appropriate challenge to address, influence or correct any information being presented or discussed
* Provide appropriate support to guide, endorse and encourage the information being presented or discussed
* Ultimately agree with the Panel decision and any recommended action that is proposed
* Formally dissent from any Panel decision or recommended action that is proposed

3.5 The Panel will ask questions to clarify any relevant information about the child/young person’s needs and circumstances and consider all available resources before making a decision to:

* Approve;
* Decline; or,
* Defer
  1. The Chair will confirm the Panel decision to the allocated Social Worker and Manager and explain the rationale and any recommendations for action.

1. **Panel Requests**

4.1Panel requests will be made by the allocated social worker using the Panel request template, see Appendix 1.

* 1. All sections of the Panel request template should be completed before submission to the Panel Administrator. It is the allocated Social Worker’s responsibility to coordinate input from the child/young person’s Independent Reviewing Officer and relevant Head of Service.
  2. The Panel Administrator must receive all completed Panel request templates no later than 5:00pm on Monday in order for the matter to be considered at Panel on the Wednesday.
  3. In exceptional circumstances the Panel Administrator may accept late Panel request templates but only with permission of the Panel Chair or Vice Chair.

1. **Panel Agenda and Records:**
   1. The Panel Administrator will produce a weekly Panel agenda, and embed relevant Panel request templates and any previous records, and email these to Panel members by 12 noon every Tuesday
   2. The Panel Administrator will take notes during the Panel meeting and will record:

* Highlights of the social work presentation and Panel discussion
* Panel decisions
* Panel recommended actions
* Dates for review (which will be diarised and brought forward onto future Panel agendas)

5.2 The Panel Administrator will send a draft Panel meeting record to the Chair within 48 hours of the Panel. The Chair will check and amend, as necessary and appropriate, and send the final record of the Panel meeting record back to the Panel Administrator within 48 hours.

5.3 The Panel Administrator will upload the individual records for each child/young person onto their electronic (LCS) record within 24 hours and maintain a central copy of all Panel meeting records.

5.4 The turnaround of Panel meeting records will be completed before the following week’s Panel at the latest.