**Terms of Reference: Permanency Panel**

**Updated: 1st July 2023**

**Purpose of the Panel**

The permanency panel will ensure that permanency planning is ongoing and monitored appropriate, with the ultimate aim of ensuring that this has a positive impact on outcomes for children.

The panel ensures that plans for permanence are progressed and implemented in line with Torbay’s permanency strategy and will prevent and address drift and delay in care planning.

The panel will ensure that permanency plans are informed by holistic assessments of need and that they are clear with identifiable outcomes, as well as details in respect of service provision and actions to meet those needs.

The panel will also have senior leadership oversight of the process in place when Special Guardianship is being considered, particularly in terms of the formulation and sign off within the scheme of delegation of all SGO Support Plans and oversight of the relevant communications and feedback from prospective Special Guardians prior to the final submission of the plan.

**Scope and Remit of the panel**

The panel will track permanency for the following groups of children (please see accompanying Permanence Panel Flowchart – included below for ease of reference);

* Children in care proceedings when permanence is agreed.
* Children placed at home under Schedule 3 assessment.
* Children in long term foster care where matching is required.
* Children whose care plan is adoption.
* Children with a plan of Special Guardianship.

**Aims and responsibilities**

* To track and monitor timely progress towards permanency for children and young people.
* To challenge and support practice to achieve the most appropriate and timely permanency options for children.
* To ensure that children, parents, carers and wider family members have the support they need to ensure permanency is achieved for children and young people.
* To ensure that the care planning pathways have been adhered to, and that all relevant steps have been taken, in particular when Special Guardianship is being considered.

**Membership**

Panel members are required to prioritise their (or their representatives) attendance and must have the authority to allocate resources / staff time form their organisation.

* Head of Service: Operational Services – Chair (or nominated Officer)
* Service Manager – Regulated Services (Deputy).
* Team Manager – Placements, Family Time, Short Breaks, Direct Payments and Daycare Services.
* Family Group Conference Team Manager (where appropriate – in particular in relation to the review of those children placed under Schedule 3 at home).
* Relevant Team Managers upon invitation.

**Review**

A review of the relevance and value of the terms of reference is to be undertaken annually.

**Working Methods**

* The meeting will be held fortnightly, normally on a Thursday morning.
* The chair determines review frequency depending on the update and actions required.
* Minutes will be recorded via the Permanency Panel tracker, the actions and decisions will be added to child / young person’s case file by the panel administrator. The updated tracker will be circulated to Team Manager and Social Worker to complete their actions and ensure the case file is kept updated.
* Invited Team Managers must prioritise attendance at the meeting to give a verbal update or arrange for a colleague to attend on their behalf – the presentation for each case will take the form of a verbal presentation.

**Case Presentation Guidance: Team Managers**

The Team Manager presents the updates and progress of completed actions to the panel.

DOCUMENTS TO BE PRESENTED AT PERMANENCE PANEL:

* Long term matching report (where applicable)
* Verbal updates from Service Manager, Team Manager and social worker (where appropriate)

