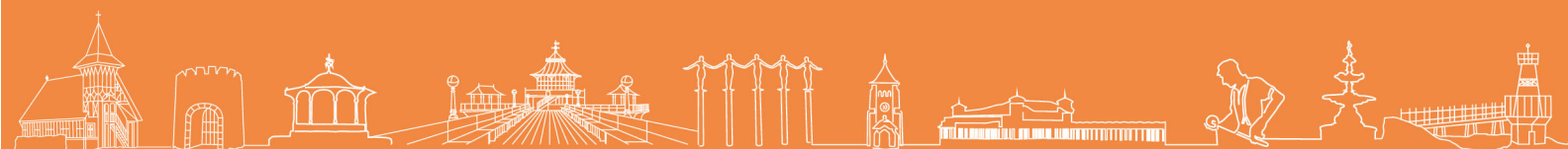


North Somerset Council

Scheme of Delegated Decision Making

August 2022 – August 2024



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1. Accountability and Delegation

1.1 Introduction

This document sets out the agreed Accountabilities and Delegation within the Children's Services Directorate.

Its purpose is to provide for consistency in the level and authority at which key case management decisions are taken throughout the Service. It is directed principally to Child Protection and Child in Need casework in the Family Wellbeing & Front Door, Family Support & Safeguarding, Corporate Parenting and the Youth Justice Service.

This scheme of delegation is confined to operational and finance decisions. It represents the normal arrangements for making decision. In some circumstances, decisions may need to escalate to a more senior level or may be delegated.

This document should be brought to the attention of all managers and supervisors during their induction.

2. Framework of Accountability

The Director of Children's Services is accountable for both the performance and quality of all practice and service delivery across North Somerset.

The Assistant Director, Children's Services is accountable within their designated area for the performance and quality of all practice and service delivery.

Heads of Service are responsible for both performance and quality within their area.

Team Managers are responsible for the day-to-day performance and practice within their team.

All managers in the service are expected to have systems in place that include supervision and quality assurance to inform the quality of performance and practice in the services/ teams.

3. Recording Decisions

All decisions set out in this procedure when take with respect of a child or young person must be recorded on the Electronic Recording Systems (ERS) together with a concise statement explaining or accounting for the decision.

The decision recorded on the ERS should be in the case note section with the heading 'Decision Taken' by the named manager and identify:

- What is the decision
- Why is the decision being taken
- Who made the decision
- When the decision was made.

The case record should be clear for all Social Care staff, relevant external professionals such as Inspectors and particularly for the young person or parent who may read it.

4. Decision Makers in Relation to Adoption

The Director of Children’s Services is authorised to make the decision whether a child should be placed for adoption. In addition, s/he will decide whether or not to ratify the recommendation of the Adoption Panel in relation to:

- Whether a child should be placed for adoption (in relevant cases, ie where the matter is not before the court)
- Whether approved adoptive carers should be matched with a child

The Director of Children’s Services can delegate the decision to the Assistant Director, Children’s Services

5. Decision Makers in Relation to Fostering

The agency Decision Maker (ADM), Children’s Services will be responsible for the approval of new foster carers. Heads of Service are authorised to decide whether or not to give temporary approval to connected persons as foster carers under Regulation 24 Care Planning Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010.

6. Professional Decisions

6.1 Director

Consent to marriage where a care order exists	The consent of birth parents should also be sought, as they retain this right and in consultation with Assistant Director, Children’s Services as appropriate
Consent to enlist in HM forces where a care order exists	The consent of birth parents should also be sought, as they retain this right
Approve all recommendations of Adoption Panel	Director as Agency Decision Maker – may be delegated to Assistant Director
Approve all Should be Placed decisions for Adoption	Director as Agency Decision Maker – may be delegated to Assistant Director
Admission of child to Secure Accommodation	In the case of secure orders, the relevant Head of Service should act as the gatekeeper before the request goes to the Assistant Director. In the even that a Secure order is made, a review

	will be due within four weeks which will be the responsibility of the Head of Service to arrange
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6.2 Assistant Director, Children's Support & Safeguarding

Report a serious incident/death of a child to the Director, Children's Services	
To agree ongoing financial support in applications of Special Guardianship/ Child Arrangements Order, or Adoption where there is an exception to the agreed policy for financial support.	
To seek publicity in respect of a search for missing children	
Consent to accommodate a child/young person	This may be delegated to Heads of Service
Initiate Pre-Proceedings and Care Proceedings including Emergency Protection Orders	This may be delegated to Heads of Service
Approval of all external placements	
Consent to place a child/young person in an out of county residential or fostering placement	
Agreement to revoke a placement order	

6.3 Heads of Service

To Chair Legal Planning Meetings	
Approve final care plans in proceedings	This will be based on the recommendation of a Team Manager
Agreement to approve the discharge of care and supervision orders	
Placement of a child in care with parents or with other carers under Regulation 38	
Report a Serious Incident/death of a child to the Assistant Director, Support & Safeguarding	

To approve a temporary placement when foster carers require an exception decision	
Approval to search for all external placements	
To approve connected persons as temporary foster carers under Regulation 24 of the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010	
To agree ongoing financial support following an annual review of an Adoption, Special Guardianship or Child Arrangement Order	
To support/not support a foster carer's application for Child Arrangement Order /Special Guardianship Order/Adoption Order	
To agree the commission of a social work assessment on our behalf	
To agree ongoing financial support following an annual review of an adoption, Special Guardianship or Child Arrangement Order allowance	Head of Service Corporate Parenting
To agree the suspension of fostering approval	Head of Service Corporate Parenting
To grant a temporary exemption to the usual fostering limit	Head of Service Corporate Parenting
Child in care to travel abroad for periods of less than one month	For periods of more than one month, the permission of the Court is required. Parental agreement should also be sought in all cases.
Non-routine medical or dental treatment for a child in care, where the parents do not agree	The reason why parental wishes are overruled should be recorded in the ongoing record on their file.
To consent to planned surgery, child with life threatening conditions, sensitive	In consultation with Assistant Director, Children's Services as appropriate

medical treatment or invasive health screening (eg blood tests) – for child or young person on a Care Order)	
Change of school for child in care	Parents should be consulted/kept informed and in consultation with the Virtual School.
To agree to religious custom or ritual requiring parental consent (eg baptism) – child or young person on Care Order	In consultation with Assistant Director, Children’s Services as appropriate
Sign passport applications for children subject to a Care Order	In consultation with Assistant Director, Children’s Services as appropriate
To support child’s application for British citizenship (Child in Care)	
To decide if a private fostering arrangement is satisfactory	
To make decisions on prohibitions on private fostering	
To agree a condition on a private fostering arrangement	
Approval for enhanced payment to Supported Lodgings provider	Head of Service Corporate Parenting
Authorising contact with the Press	In consultation with the Assistant Director, Children’s Services

6.4 Team Manager

Authorisation of contacts and referrals	Can be delegated to a Senior Social Worker
Decision to allocate/end intervention with a child	
Authorise assessments of need	Can be delegated to a Senior Social Worker
To chair Strategy Discussions	Can be delegated to a Senior Social Worker
Decision to initiate S47 enquiries	
Decision to proceed to Initial Child Protection Conference and agree that a Child Protection Conference can be cancelled and re-arranged within timescales	

Agree that a Child in Care review can be cancelled and re-arranged within timescales	
School trips, camps etc (including consent for necessary medical treatment) for child in care, where parents agree	Team Manager should sign and parent should countersign

6.5 Financial Decisions

Finance decisions are out of scope of this document and are subject to the delegated decision making schemes that are part of Agresso, LCS and ContrOCC systems.