

Terms of Reference for Permanency Tracking Panel – Panel Members

July 2022 (Review July 2024)

Children's Services Vision

To make North Somerset a truly great place for children and young people to thrive; where all have the best possible life and opportunities, including those who are vulnerable, disadvantaged and/or have special educational or additional need

Purpose of meeting

To ensure that senior leaders have a process to track and monitor plans for children who are subject to Public Law Outline (PLO) and for all children in care until their permanence plan is secured.

This enables senior leaders in North Somerset to effectively demonstrate that they have oversight and input into ensuring securing permanence is timely and effective.

The panel will track and monitor the timeliness and quality of our statutory duties to ensure they are fulfilled.

Permanence is the long-term plan for the child's upbringing and provides an underpinning framework for all social work with children and their families from family support through to adoption. It ensures a framework of emotional, physical and legal conditions that gives a child a sense of security, continuity, commitment, identity and belonging.

The objective of planning for permanence is to ensure that children have a secure, stable and loving family to support them through childhood and beyond and to give them a sense of security, continuity, commitment, identity and belonging. It is also important to remember that older children and young people also need to achieve permanence in their lives although they may not wish (for a variety of reasons) to be in a foster home or to be adopted.

1. Panel Members

- Head of Service Family Support & Safeguarding (joint chair)
- Head of Corporate Parenting (joint chair)
- Head of Commissioning & Contracts



- Adoption West Family Finding Manager
- Team Manager, Fostering
- Team Manager, Children in Care, Corporate Parenting
- Child's Social Worker (by invite)
- Child's Team Manager (by invite)
- Supervising Social Worker (by invite)
- Family Finding Social Worker (by invite)
- Team Manager Quality Assurance & Safeguarding

2. Frequency

Panel will be held once per month

3. Panel Administration

3.1 The Permanency Tracking Panel (PTP) will be administered by a named business support member of staff.

3.2 Within 3 working days, the Panel Administrator will be notified of:

- (i) children who become looked after (Business Intelligence)
- (ii) children made subject to Pre-Proceedings or care proceedings but who do not become looked after (by case holding TMs/Legal Panel), and
- (iii) any changes in the legal process (Legal Panel)

3.3 The Panel Administrator will check that all children referred to them have been added to the Permanency Planning Tracker.

3.4 The PTP Agenda will be agreed by the Panel Chair's at least one working week before the meeting. The administrator will then circulate the agenda and invites. Children are discussed in line with the agenda and tracker is amended as appropriate and actions followed up and reviewed at next month's tracker if required.

3.5 Minutes and actions recorded and added to children's LCS records.

4. Documentation

Prior to Permanence Panel the tracker is shared with colleagues to update on key significant dates and progress on actions. Legal data is triangulated against the tracker on an ongoing basis to ensure dates are correct.

5. Permanency Tracking Panel functions

- To demonstrate that social workers and team managers have a clear focus on permanence planning for all children from the point they become looked after or enter pre-proceedings/ care proceedings, and that this is sustained

- To ensure that all children have a robust permanence plan that meets their assessed long-term needs, and which incorporates effective contingency planning
- To ensure that family finding for both adoptive and long-term fostering placements is progressed in a timely way
- To provide senior management oversight and review of permanence planning for children as individuals and as part of a sibling group
- To ensure oversight and timely progression of children subject to care proceedings
- To ensure children transfer to the Children in Care Team within agreed timescales
- To continue tracking children until permanence is secured through effective matching. Life story work and letters for later life are completed.

6. Timescales for children to be presented to Permanency Tracking Panel

All children will be discussed at Panel at least every other month. Children who become subject to PLO and/or looked after, will be presented to Panel at the next available panel after they have become accommodated or subject to PLO. At a minimum all children will be discussed at panel every 3 months.

7. Permanency Planning Tracker ('Tracker')

The Tracker provides a comprehensive record of permanence planning for all children looked after until such time as permanence has been ratified through fostering, adoption or SGO's and all children subject to PLO but who are not looked after, including contingency planning.