
Role dimension and person specification for Adoption East Midlands Panel members, vice-chairs and chairs on the central list

Role dimension – All

1. To read the circulated papers carefully before the meeting and to attend the meeting prepared to raise issues and to contribute to the panel discussion.
2. To take responsibility for participating in the making of a recommendation, on each case, drawing on both personal and professional knowledge and experience.
3. To attend meetings of the panel as specified in your agreement with the agency.
4. To be prepared to attend additional panels if possible, if requested.
5. To promote diversity and anti-discriminatory practice.
6. To safeguard the confidentiality of all information.
7. To participate in induction and training, which will be at least one day per year and to take responsibility for building up own knowledge of adoption.
8. To participate constructively in the annual review of your central list and panel membership.
9. To attend panel training each year and to contribute if appropriate.

Role Dimension – Chair

1. To chair meetings of the panel and to ensure that all those attending panel are treated with respect and courtesy
2. To facilitate panel members in considering the information presented to them before making their recommendation, reaching a consensus wherever possible
3. To manage the process of identifying the questions which panel will explore with social workers and/or applicants and agreeing who will ask those questions
4. To meet with applicants prior to them joining the panel, to explain the process
5. To ensure that the panel is clear about the reasons for its recommendations and that these are recorded in the minutes
6. Where there is a split or contentious panel recommendation, to facilitate each panel member in turn to explain the reason for her/his views and to ensure that these are formally recorded in the minute
7. To enable those attending panel to contribute effectively (e.g. enabling social workers to present their case in a constructive manner)
8. To ensure that the minutes of the panel are accurate and are signed and returned to the agency in a timely manner
9. To attend any other meeting as required by the agency

10. To facilitate the panels in their role of monitoring the quality of work presented to the panel
11. To feedback any concerns about the management of cases through the appropriate channels
12. To attend the regular business meetings to review the management and the business of the panel
13. Together with the agency adviser, to undertake the annual review of the performance of panel members
14. To bring to the attention of the panel managers, situations in which panel members are not meeting the requirements of the central list agreement for panel members.

Role dimension – Vice-chair

1. To deputise in the absence of the chair
2. To support the chair in the management of the panel
3. To undertake occasional reviews of panel members
4. To deputise for the chair on other occasions as required

Person Specification

Abilities – All

- Good listening and communication skills
- The ability to read, process and analyse large amounts of complex and sometimes distressing information.
- The ability to form a view and make a recommendation, based on the written and verbal information presented to panel and the confidence to articulate this at panel.
- The ability to use personal and/or professional knowledge and experience to contribute to discussions and decision making in a balanced and informed manner.
- The ability to work co-operatively as part of a multi-disciplinary team.
- The ability to attend panel meetings as required, arriving on time.

Abilities - Chair

- The authority and competence to chair a panel, ensuring that business is covered and that panel operates according to regulations, guidance and policies.
- Excellent interpersonal and listening skills
- The ability to communicate well and clearly, both verbally and in writing

- The ability to process and analyse large amounts of complex and sometimes distressing information.
- The ability to identify key issues and possible solutions and to communicate these clearly
- The ability to facilitate the active participation of all panel members.
- The ability to ensure that those attending panel are treated with respect whilst ensuring that panel members remain able to explore concerns.
- The ability to manage strongly held views and conflict
- The ability to represent the panel in discussions with the service.
- The ability in conjunction with agency advisers to review panel members' performances in a way that is constructive and purposeful

Abilities - Vice-chair

- The ability to chair meetings
- A level of preparedness that can allow deputising at short notice

Whilst it is not expected that the vice-chair can meet all the requirements of the person specification of the chair it is necessary for them to be familiar with these and to meet sufficient specifications in order to carry out these responsibilities when called upon.

Experience and qualifications – All

- A social work or medical qualification will be necessary for certain panel members. Social work members must have at least three years' post qualifying experience in child care social work, including direct experience in adoption work.

Experience and qualifications – Chair

- Experience of chairing complex meetings.

Knowledge – All

- An appreciation of the effects of separation, loss and developmental trauma on children.
- Awareness of the richness of different kinds of families and their potential for meeting children's needs.
- Understanding of the purpose and function of the panel and the work of the agency.
- An understanding of adoption and the looked after experience for children, either professionally or personally.

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- An understanding of the adoption process and the related legalisation or the capacity to develop this quickly.

Attitudes and values – All

- A commitment to keeping children within their own family or community where this possible and to maintaining contact between children living in adoptive families and their birth families where this appears to be in the child's best interests.
- A commitment to adoption as a way of meeting a child's need for permanence, where this appears to be in the child's best interests.
- A valuing of diversity in relation to issues of ethnicity, religion, gender, disability, and sexuality.
- An understanding of, and commitment to, the need for confidentiality.
- A willingness to increase knowledge and understanding of issues through reading, discussion and training.
- Recognition of the lifelong impact of adoption on all parties.