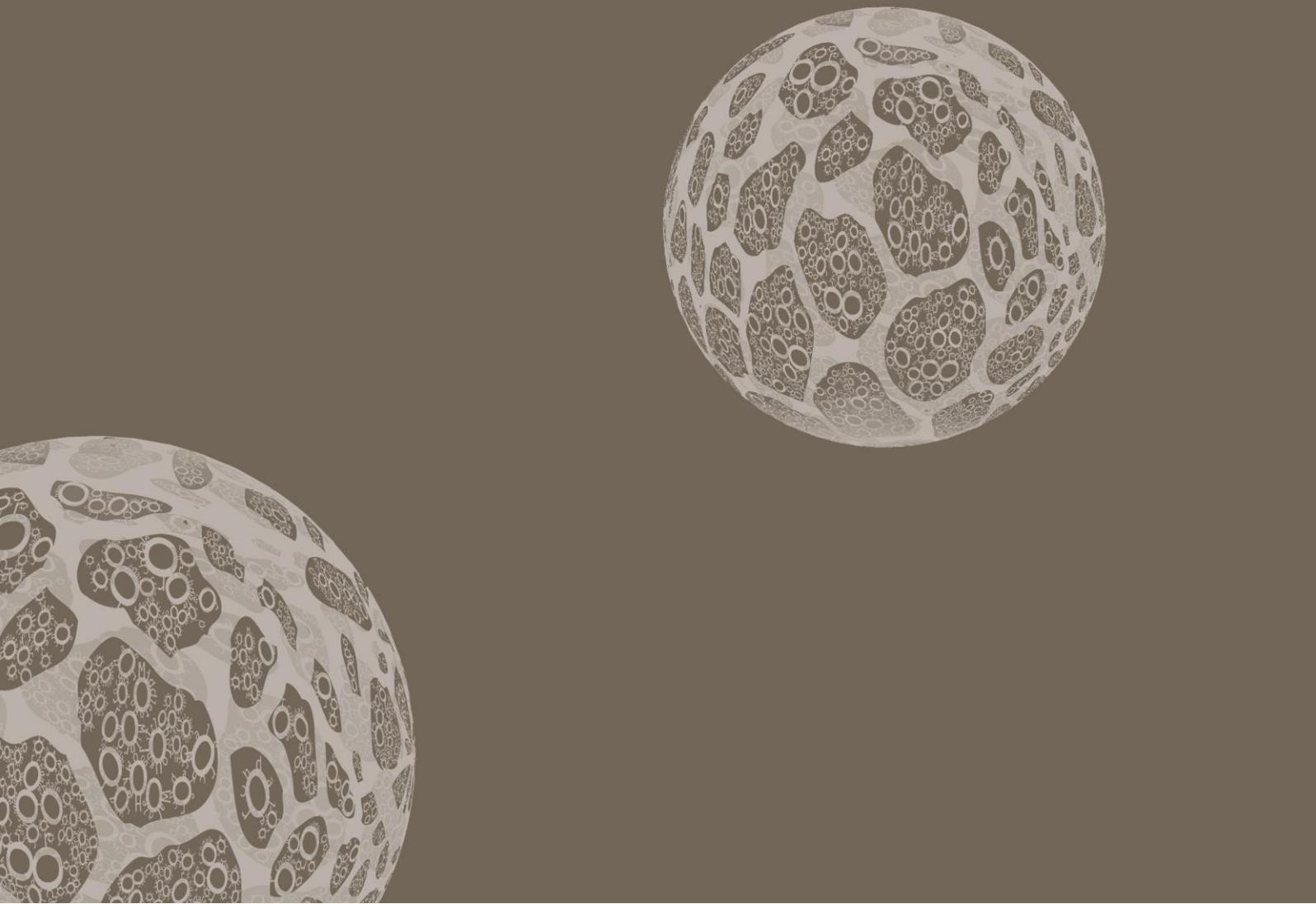


Rochdale Permanence Panel

Terms of Reference



Document Control

Document Title:

Summary

Publication Date	
Related Legislation / Applicable Section of Legislation	Children Act, 1989 and subsequent amendments Adoption and Children Act, Care Planning Placement and Case Review Regulations
Related Policies, Strategies, Guideline Documents	
Replaces	Finance Panel Terms of Reference, Legal Care Planning
Joint Procedure (Yes/No)	
Name of Partner(s) if joint	
Procedure Owner (Name/Position)	Ian Godfrey, Head of Provider Pamela Wharton Head of Child Protection and Court Mike Blower, Head of Cared for Children and Youth Offending
Procedure Document Author (Name/Position)	Ian Godfrey/Pamela Wharton

Review of Procedure

Last Review Date	28 th October 2021
Review undertaken by	SMT
Next Review Date	October 2022

Document Approvals

This document requires the following approvals.

Name	Title	Date of Issue	Version Number



Rochdale Permanence Panel Terms of Reference

1. Introduction

Rochdale Council defines “Permanence” as

“...a framework of emotional, physical and legal arrangements that give a child/young person a sense of commitment, security, and continuity of care throughout their childhood and beyond”.

Permanence planning is based on the philosophy that every child has the right to a permanent, safe, stable and loving home where they belong, preferably with his or her own family.

Rochdale Council (and partners) are committed corporate parents for children and young people who are cared for and will work diligently to find permanent, safe homes for children in care that meet their specific needs, in a timely manner. The best possible care involves giving children security, stability and love throughout their childhood and beyond, to ensure the best outcomes as they become adults.

Our Permanence work is therefore guided by the following key provocations and we will always ask the following questions when considering permanency planning for children and young people:

- Would this be good enough for my own child?
- What kind of adult do we want the young person to be at 20, 35 and 50?
- Are we managing the risk for the child or the organisation?
- Is there a shared approach to parenting?
- Are we ensuring every child has someone who will stand up for them?

Permanence Panel Purpose

The purpose of the Permanence Panel is to oversee and ensure that all cared for children have an active plan for permanency that is being progressed in a timely manner

The Permanence Panel focusses on Care Planning decisions made through multi-agency Children Looked After planning meetings, including those children and young people subject to Pre-Proceedings and Care Proceedings.

The Permanence Panel will support the Council to fulfil their duties in respect of

- Ensuring all Children Looked After have a Permanence Plan that meets their individual needs;
- Permanence Plans are achieved in the child's timeframe; Ensuring that a clear permanence plan is agreed by the second Looked After Review;
- Scrutinising performance information and escalating where necessary to minimise drift and delay in achieving Permanence;
- Ensure that clear support plans are in place (including but not limited to financial support) that support the Permanence Plan
- Ensuring our children are in the right placement with clear outcomes for transition to adulthood.

2. Specific Procedure (Mandatory)

Key Functions

Panel business and the agenda for meetings will be formulated around the following key matters:

1. Approval of Long-Term matching of fostering arrangements – Long-term matching report
2. Approval of arrangements and support plans for proposed SGO arrangements including approval of financial support – SGO assessment report and support Plan
3. Review of SGO support plans and financial arrangements
4. Legal care planning care plan sign off prior to IRH/ Final Hearing and/ or ADM for '*Should be Placed for Adoption*' decision
5. Permanence Tracking function (will be held separately to Permanence Panel) – oversight of Permanence; this includes progression of plans for SGO's/CAO's; PwP arrangements, long term foster care and Adoption Tracking
6. Consideration of proposals to make section 20 accommodation the Permanence Plan for a child.*

*There is some overlap here with LGW. In some cases LGW will determine a Permanence Plan involving the use of s.20 accommodation but this would usually be done in consultation with Heads of Service for Cared for Children and Provider Services.

The panel will review the above considerations in relation to all children and young people:

- Who are under the age 15 years and 6 months
- Are in care proceedings and prior to the IRH
- Are accommodated under Section 20 prior to second Review
- Are in foster care and should be long term matched

Exclusions – Children and young people who are approaching their 16th birthday or older

Panel Membership

Head of Child Protection & Court
Head of Cared for Children
Head of Provider Services
Fostering Practice Manager
RAA Placement Finding Lead

Other members by invitation for specific issues:

Head of Safeguarding
Head of Quality and Improvement
Data & Performance Manager
First Response Team Head of Service
Children with Disability Head of Service
Virtual School Rep
CCG Rep

Business Support Arrangements

Agenda co-ordination
Receiving and distributing papers
Minute taking

Frequency

Weekly subject to review after 3 months.

By exception and as agreed by the chair care planning proposals may be considered outside the meeting to prevent delay but will be reported back into the main meeting as a retrospective item.

Paperwork

Details of the paperwork required for each item are listed in the definitions below. Cases for consideration should have paperwork submitted by 12 noon on the Thursday prior to panel the following Monday (including any legal advice).

3. Forms/Templates to be Used

PERMANENCE PANEL AGENDA				
Date of panel				
AGENDA ITEM 1 – Previous Cases for Review AGENDA ITEM 2 – Long Term Fostering Matching AGENDA ITEM 3 – Confirmation of SGO Plans and Support Arrangements (Including reviews) AGENDA ITEM 4 – Legal care planning considerations				
Time slot	Name of child	Agenda item	Name of social worker	Name of manager
9.30				
10:00				
10.30				
11:00				
11:30				
12.00				
12.30				

AGENDA ITEM 1 - Previous Cases for Review

These cases will have been heard at panel previously and the panel will have made the recommendation to re-present the case back to panel within a specific timeframe. Business Support to the panel will capture this at the panel and forward book for the social worker and add to the appropriate agenda. Business Support will provide to the Panel the reason for the case to be re-presented and details of any actions set from the previous Panel. **Paperwork submitted will be relevant to the item being reviewed**

AGENDA ITEM 2 – Long Term Fostering Matching

Where children are in a long term settled placement, permanence of the placement should be considered. Prior to seeking ratification, matching meetings should have been held and the child and carers consulted. A **full matching report** must be presented to the Panel along with the **care planning meeting minutes/ C4C review minutes** at which matching was considered

Financial agreement to any planned celebration event will be given by Panel

AGENDA ITEM 3 – Confirmation of SGO Plans and Support Arrangements (Including reviews)

These items are to consider the suitability of proposed Special Guardianship Order arrangements. In addition to the suitability of the arrangement the panel will consider the robustness of the proposed SGO Support Plan including proposed financial arrangements. Paperwork to be submitted: **SGO report; SGO support Plan; Financial assessment**

For reviews of financial support reviews a copy of the **revised support plan and financial assessment** will need to be submitted

AGENDA ITEM 4 – Legal care planning considerations

Children's cases to be presented to agree the long term care plan, including where there is a plan for reunification to parents (no order/ supervision order or PwP); SGO/ CAO with connected person; foster care with connected persons, long term fostering and adoption. Panel will provide a recommendation to the ADM about the plan for adoption including the key rationale and commentary on specific post adoption issues e.g. contact; together or apart arrangements; the potential need for an Adoption Allowance

Paperwork: **Permanence proposal report and SGO documents if considering SGO support and financial package alongside the ratification of the permanence plan**

4. Process for Monitoring Compliance and Effectiveness of the Procedure

Key Standards:

Attendance must be prioritised by all social workers and practice managers

SSW from the connected persons team must attend for SGO cases

Paperwork is submitted to the Panel Administrator by 12 noon on the Thursday before the Monday panel date

All Panel members must attend or send a representative

All those attending panel will be prepared for the discussions by familiarising themselves with the submitted paperwork

It is expected that the agenda will be made available on the Friday prior to each Monday meeting

It is expected that a brief record of the panel discussion and actions agreed, are recorded on the child's file by Business Services staff within 5 working days of the panel date

The Permanence Tracking meeting will be held separately once a month and practice managers will attend via time slots allocated



5. Procedure Review Date (Mandatory)

March 2021

- Details of any supporting/linked documents that should be considered to enable effective application and utilisation of the procedure.

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