 **Case No:**

 **No:**

 **Date:**

**This report has been prepared for the court and should be treated as confidential. It must not be shown nor its contents revealed to any person other than a party or a legal adviser to such a party. Such legal adviser may make use of the report in connection with an application for legal aid.**

**In the Family Court at Sheffield**

**In the Matter of the Children Act 1989**

**And in the Matter of Child’s name in full – d.o.b. …………… (A Girl / Boy)**

### Between:

###  Sheffield City Council Applicant

 **and**

**Mother’s full name1st Respondent**

 **and**

 **Father’s full name *(if he is a party)* 2nd Respondent**

 **and**

 **The Child**

 **(through his/her Children’s Guardian) 3rd Respondent**

**Initial Viability Assessment of**

**Name of prospective carer/s**

**Author of Report:**

Name of social worker and designation

**(Current address of the Author)**

 **Qualifications and Experience:**

* Name of social worker and details, including qualification, previous experiences with relevance to this social work post.
* Include the date of your HCPC Registration.
* Include the date when the case opened and the date you were allocated this case.

 **Purpose of the Viability Assessment:**

* Explain why you are undertaking this viability assessment.
* Make clear who the viability assessment is of and why they have requested an assessment, (i.e. short term care/long term care supervision of contact etc.).
* Provide the date when you met the prospective carer and their attitude to the assessment.

**Details of Applicant:**

(Best Practice – we should be asking to see ID, such as birth certificate/passport/ if overseas national ask to see ID card and take down the number).

**Name:** Name of prospective carer

**Date of Birth:**  ………………………..

**Address:** ………………………..

**Relationship to Child:** Paternal Grandmother

**Name:** Any other prospective carer’s

**Date of Birth:**  ………………………..

**Address:** ………………………..

**Relationship to Child:** ………………………..

**Details of others living in the home:**

**Name:** Eg: Son details

**Date of Birth:** ………………………..

**Address:** ………………………..

**Relationship to Prospective Carer:** ………………………..

**Name:** Eg: Daughter details

**Date of Birth:** ………………………..

**Address:** ………………………..

**Relationship to Prospective Carer:** ………………………..

**Details of the Child Whom the Applicant Wishes to be Assessed:**

**Name:** Name of Child

**Date of Birth:**  ………………………..

**Home Address:** ………………………..

**The Child’s Assessed Needs, Wishes and Current Care Plan:**

* Provide brief details why the child is known to the local authority.
* If a case is already before the Court, refer to the initial local authority evidence. You must include which statement, author and date. (*E.g. Initial Social Work Evidence completed by social worker Ms Lucy Locket on 12th January 2017*).
* Explain the welfare of the child and the current situation/circumstances.
* Explain the relationship between the child and the prospective carer and if possible comment on what the child’s perspective is of the prospective carer.
* Record when you spoke with the child and what their wishes and feelings are.

**Police National Check:**

* As part of the initial viability assessment, Police National Check (PNC) must be completed.
* The PNC must be completed at the earliest opportunity, as this can take time.
* PNC forms needs to be signed by the prospective carer.
* Include what the prospective carer self-reports about what may show up on a PNC. Get their views on this activity.
* Make reference, on the viability assessment, the date when checks were completed and summarise relevant information recorded on the PNC.
* If checks are not back and you have completed the assessment, chase it up and record the date and efforts made in obtaining this information.
* Remember checks need to be completed on other prospective carer’s and any person living in the home who is 18 years of age or above.
* If the prospective carer is an overseas national, ACRO checks will need to be completed.

**Health Checks:**

* As part of the initial viability assessment, health checks must be completed.
* This must be completed at the earliest opportunity, as this can take time.
* Include what the prospective carer self-reports about their health and wellbeing.
* Make reference, on the viability assessment, the date when health checks were completed, and summarise relevant information recorded from the health information received.
* If checks are not back and you have completed the assessment, chase it up and record the date and efforts made in obtaining this information.

**Statutory Checks:**

* As part of the initial viability assessment, statutory checks must be completed as part of this report. Check with each local authority they have lived.
* This must be completed at the earliest opportunity, as this can take time.
* Record the date when checks were completed.
* Include what the prospective carer self-reports about any history of involvement with Social Care Services.
* If checks are not back and you have completed the assessment, chase it up and record the date and efforts made in obtaining this information.
* Remember to check if there are archived files, and request these at the earliest opportunity.
* Make every effort to read the archive files, they may contain valuable information.

**Financial Situation:**

* Incoming
* Outgoing
* Best practice – take the means assessment out on your first visit.
* Make sure any self-reported incoming/outgoing add up.
* Tell the prospective carer to gather evidence of their self-reported incoming and outgoing as this would need to be evidenced if a long term placement is viable. (E.g., bank statements, benefits, mortgage payments/rent, utility bills etc.).

**Housing:**

* Description of the home e.g. size, condition, amenities available etc.
* Is there any rent/council tax arrears.
* Where is the child going to sleep, e.g., own bedroom/sharing a bedroom.
* Will this impact on any other child within the home.
* Is the home in close proximity to the child’s school, birth family, will this impact upon the child’s contact with their birth family.

**Support Network:**

* Ask about the prospective carer’s support network.
* Complete an eco-map.
* Complete a genogram.
* Explore the impact on caring for this child and if this will affect their support network, (i.e. will family fall out with them or will they provide support).
* Identify anyone in this network who may not be supportive of this plan and explore why.

**The Applicant’s Understanding and Acceptance of the Concerns:**

* You need to fully explore, with the prospective carer, what their understanding is of the local authority concern and do they accept this, record their views.
* Discuss what their relationship is like with the parent, (i.e. is this good, bad, will they collude with the parent, can they protect?).
* Do they have insight into the local authority concerns?
* Can they safeguard the child from further harm, if so how will they safeguard the child?
* Will they promote contact between the child and parent?
* How will they manage contact between the child and parent?
* Have they thought about what this may look like given they will be caring for the foreseeable future?
* What are their future plans? Does this impact on the child?
* Can they identify any areas of need themselves?

**Motivation of Applicant:**

* Why do they want the child?
* Are you satisfied this is for a genuine reason; are family placing pressures on them?
* How do they describe the child? Do they speak of the child with warmth?
* Can they empathise with the child and parent?
* Is the prospective carer child focused?
* Do you believe they can prioritise the child above all else?
* Do they understand the child’s needs and the loss the child is/maybe suffering?

**Conclusion:**

* Summarise the findings of this report. Think about each area and whilst highlighting the positives, make sure you record the concerns. Make this argument balanced.
* From answering all the above questions, are you satisfied that this child’s care needs can be met by the prospective carer.
* Think of the Welfare Checklist.
* Is this placement good enough for this child, can they safeguard and protect the child from future harm.

**Recommendation:**

* The child should be placed with the prospective carer …….Why, explain.
* The child should not be placed with the prospective carer ……Why, explain.

**Keep the recommendation brief and to the point. This is not an area to duplicate the contents of the viability assessment.**

I, **name of social worker, designation** of **child’s name**, declare that this statement is true and that we make it knowing it may be placed before the Court in these proceedings.

**Social Worker ………………………….**

**Signed ………..…………………………**

**Date ……………………………………..**

**Senior Fieldwork Manager …………….**

**Signed ……………………………………**

**Date ……………………………………..**

**Remember to format this viability assessment, as shown below:**

1. **Qualification and Experience:**

1.1 …………………………

1.2 …………………………

1.3 …………………………

**2. Purpose of the Viability Assessment:**

2.1 …………………………

2.2 …………………………

2.3 …………………………