

Should be
Placed for
Adoption
(SHOBPA)
Decision
Making

May 9

2018

This procedure explains the decision making process as to whether a child should be placed for adoption.

Ref:121

Contents

SCOPE	2
LEGAL FRAMEWORK.....	2
RELATED DOCUMENTS	2
1.0 Introduction.....	2
2.0 Definitions.....	2
2.1 Agency Decision Maker.....	2
2.2 Panel Adviser.....	3
2.3 Medical Adviser	3
2.4 Adoption panel.....	3
3.0 When a SHOBPA decision is required.....	4
4.0 SHOBPA Decisions	5
5.0 SHOBPA DECISION CHANGES.....	6
Appendices:	6

Should Be Placed for Adoption (SHOBPA) Decision Making

SCOPE

This procedure sets out the decision making arrangements relating to whether a child should be placed for adoption.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

[Adoption and Children Act 2002](#)

[Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005](#)

[The Adoption Agencies \(Panel and Consequential Amendments\) Regulations 2012](#)

RELATED DOCUMENTS

[SHOBPA Flowchart](#)

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This procedure describes the decision making arrangements at Warrington Borough Council for determining whether a child should be placed for adoption.
- 1.2 The [Adoption Agencies Regulations \(Panel and Consequential Amendments\) Regulations 2012](#) transferred the responsibility for deciding whether a child should be placed for adoption from the Adoption Panel to the Agency Decision Maker (ADM), where an application for a Placement Order under [Section 22 of the Act](#) is required. This would aim to reduce delay and duplication in the adoption process so that children could be placed with their prospective adoptive families earlier.

2.0 Definitions

2.1 Agency Decision Maker

- 2.1.1 The Agency Decision Maker (ADM) has the responsibility for making the decision about whether a child is suitable to be placed for adoption. In cases requiring a Placement Order, the ADM must make the decision without reference to the Adoption Panel.

- 2.1.2 The [National Minimum Standards for Adoption 2011](#) state that the ADM should:

Author: Kellie Williams

Date of procedure: 9 May 2018

Next update: 2019

- a) Be a senior person(s) who is a social worker with at least three years post qualifying experience
- b) Have knowledge and experience of permanency planning for children
- c) Have knowledge and experience of adoption and child care law and practice.

2.1.3 More than one ADM may be appointed. In Warrington the Operational Director for Children's Social Care / Deputy DCS acts as the lead ADM and in the event of absence the Head of Service for Children's Quality Assurance and Safeguarding also acts as the ADM.

2.2 Panel Adviser

2.2.1 The Panel Adviser has a key role providing advice to the ADM when a particular case is being considered for adoption.

2.2.2 The Panel Adviser is a senior member of staff who is a social worker with at least five years' post-qualifying and relevant management experience.

2.2.3 The Panel Adviser is based at Together for Adoption - the Regional Adoption Agency.

2.3 Medical Adviser

2.3.1 The Medical Advisor should be consulted in relation to the arrangements for access to, and disclosure of, health information which is required in the adoption process to enable the decision to be made by the ADM.

2.3.2 Warrington Borough Council is required to appoint at least one registered medical practitioner to act as the Medical Adviser.

2.3.3 Prior to a SHOBPA decision being made, the child should undergo a pre-adoption medical, usually undertaken by the Adoption Agency Medical Adviser which will result in a report highlighting any issues that may impact on the decision for the child to be placed for adoption. A copy of the Adoption Medical Report will be held on the child's electronic file and will be inserted into the Child Permanence Report prior to being sent to the ADM.

2.4 Adoption panel

2.4.1 Regulatory changes introduced by the [Adoption Agencies Regulations \(Panel and Consequential Amendments\) Regulations 2012](#) means that the Adoption Panel

Author: Kellie Williams

Date of procedure: 9 May 2018

Next update: 2019

considers whether a child is suitable for adoption where the birth parent consents to placement for adoption and there are no care proceedings pending, i.e. a relinquished child.

- 2.4.2 The Adoption Panel is still required to consider the approval of prospective adopters and the suitability of the match between a child/ren who have a Placement Order and approved adopters.

3.0 When a SHOBPA decision is required

- 3.1 Where a child has a potential plan for adoption a Child's Permanence Report should be completed as soon as practicable.

Practice Guidance - Child Permanence Report

The Child Permanence Report (CPR) is the primary document used by Warrington Borough Council to explain how and why a decision is made about a child's suitability for adoption. It is the responsibility of the child's allocated Social Worker to complete the Child Permanence Report using the BAAF Form CPR (Ref: Appendix 1).

The CPR must be completed by a suitability qualified and experience social worker with at least three years' post qualifying experience in children's social work, including direct experience of adoption work; or be supervised by a social worker who has at least three years' post qualifying experience in children's social work, including direct experience of adoption work.

The CPR must be started from the first statutory child in care review at 20 working days from the date of the child coming into the care and finalised by week 18 at the very latest.

The document must be authorised by the Principal Team Manager and the relevant Head of Service and sent to the ADM's Personal Assistant by week 19.

BAAF Guidance Notes for completing the CPR are attached as Appendix 1.

- 3.2 A SHOBPA decision is required at the point where there is a clear and preferred plan for adoption.

- 3.3 The plan may include:

- a) Placement with an approved adopter under concurrency planning with the

Author: Kellie Williams

Date of procedure: 9 May 2018

Next update: 2019

adopter approved as a foster carer.

- b) Placement with an approved adopter as a Foster to Adopt placement with the adopter approved as a foster carer.
- c) Placement with an approved adopter following the conclusion of care proceedings and once a Placement Order has been made.

3.4 Adoption panels still have a role to play in deciding whether some children should be placed for adoption. Those will be cases where the Courts have no role to play in the case, i.e. parents have relinquished their child for adoption or where a care order has been made and in both cases there is parental consent under [section 19 of the Adoption and Children Act](#).

4.0 SHOBPA Decisions

4.1 Where adoption is the clear and preferred plan for a child, the ADM is required to make a SHOBPA Decision. This decision must be made within the timetable of the Court and the life of the care proceedings as set out in [Section 32\(1\)\(a\) of the Children Act 1989](#) which is 26 weeks from the date that the application was issued.

4.2 The Social Worker should inform the ADM's Personal Assistant that SHOBPA decision is required via email. Once this has been received the Personal Assistant will compile a timetable for the CPR to be completed and the documentation to be submitted. The timetable will include time for the relevant Head of Service to quality assure the documentation.

4.3 The following documentation is required to be submitted for consideration by the ADM:

- a) The Child Permanence Report (CPR)
- b) Independent Reviewing Officers endorsement of the Care Plan for child which specifies adoption
- c) Adoption Medical Assessment Report
- d) All Court directed assessments
- e) Legal advice in respect of the plan for adoption.

4.4 Once the ADM has received all the relevant documentation, the ADM and the Panel Adviser will discuss on the telephone whether there are available adopters that can meet the needs of the child. The Panel Adviser may make suggestions about the quality of the CPR and how this may be improved to aid family finding and matching.

Author: Kellie Williams

Date of procedure: 9 May 2018

Next update: 2019

The ADM may wish to follow up any medical issues with the Medical Adviser and seek further legal advice.

- 4.5 The ADM will consider whether adoption is in the best interests of the child and reach a conclusion based on the evidence presented by the child's allocated Social Worker.
- 4.6 Once a decision has been reached, the ADM will record the decision on MOSAIC and email the Social Worker on the day of decision has been made and record the decision on MOSAIC within 5 working days.

5.0 SHOBPA Decision Changes

- 5.1 Where there are changes to a Care Plan and the plan for adoption following the making of a SHOBPA decision the ADM must be informed in writing of the change. This includes cases where the Court has decided that adoption is not an appropriate plan for the child.
- 5.2 In these instances, the allocated Social Worker must complete the **Changes to the Plan for Adoption Form** attached as Appendix 2 within five working days and send this to the ADM.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – BAAF Child Permanence Report – Guidance Notes and Additional Resources

Appendix 2 – Changes to the Plan for Adoption Form.

-END DOCUMENT-