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| <b>Meeting of East Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership</b>  | Integration Joint Board  |
| <b>Held on</b>  | 2017   |
| <b>Agenda Item</b>  | 9  |
| <b>Title</b>  | Independent Panel Chairperson – Adoption and Permanence Panel                            |
| <p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>An independent review of the Adoption and Permanence Panel during 2017 recommended that the appointment of an Independent Panel Chairperson should be considered. The review also recommended that a deputy Panel Chairperson and a deputy Agency Decision Maker Designate should be appointed.</p> <p>The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the recruitment and appointment of an Independent Panel Chairperson and to recommend the appointment of a deputy Chairperson and a deputy Agency Decision Maker Designate.</p> |  |
| <b>Presented by</b>   | Kate Rocks, Head of Children's Services and Criminal Justice (Chief Social Work Officer) |
| <p><b>Action Required</b></p> <p>The IJB is asked to:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>note the contents of this report</li> <li>approve the recruitment and appointment of an Independent Panel Chairperson</li> <li>confirm the arrangements of a deputy Chairperson and a deputy Agency Decision Maker Designate.</li> </ol>  |  |
| <p><b>Implications checklist – check box if applicable and include detail in report</b></p> <p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Finance/Efficiency      <input type="checkbox"/> Policy      <input type="checkbox"/> Legal      <input type="checkbox"/> Equalities<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Risk      <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staffing      <input type="checkbox"/> Property/Capital      <input type="checkbox"/> Directions </p>  |  |

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**EAST RENFREWSHIRE INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD**

**16 August 2017**

**Report by Chief Officer**

**INDEPENDENT PANEL CHAIRPERSON – ADOPTION AND PERMANENCE PANEL**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

2. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the recruitment and appointment of an Independent Panel Chairperson of East Renfrewshire Council's Adoption and Permanence Panel. The report also seeks approval for the appointment of a depute Chairperson and a depute Agency Decision Maker Designate.

**RECOMMENDATION**

3. The IJB is asked to:-
  - a. note the contents of this report
  - b. approve the recruitment and appointment of an Independent Panel Chairperson
  - c. confirm the appointment of a depute Chairperson and a depute Agency Decision Maker Designate.

**BACKGROUND**

4. The Looked After Children (Scotland) Regulations 2009 require all local authorities in Scotland to establish an Adoption and Permanence Panel.
5. The purpose of the Adoption and Permanence Panel is to provide governance to the approval and resignation of foster carers and adoptive families; regularly review foster carers and payment of adoption allowances, recommend plans for children and young people who require permanence care planning out with their birth family and provide recommendations in respect to post adoption support to children placed for adoption.

**REPORT**

6. The Adoption and Permanence Panel membership consists of a Panel Chairperson, three Independent Panel members, an HSCP Legal advisor, an Educational Psychologist, and a Medical Advisor. There is a designated minute taker and a Panel advisor.
7. The role of the Panel Chairperson is to provide structure, direction and advice in all areas of Panel business and to liaise with the Agency Decision Maker. This individual works alongside the HSCP Panel advisor to ensure practice issues and decision making is robust and of a high standard.
8. East Renfrewshire Council is a small local authority and senior managers may have a dual role in relation to planning for children. The current Panel Chairperson is a senior manager within HSCP Children's Services.

9. An independent review of the Adoption and Permanence Panel was undertaken during 2017. The review made a number of recommendations, including the benefit of appointing an Independent Panel Chairperson to provide additional objectivity, thereby removing any potential conflict of interest and increasing the capacity of the service as well as the appointment of a depute Panel Chairperson and a depute Agency Decision Maker.

## **CONSULTATION AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING**

10. The recommendations of the independent review of the Adoption and Permanence Panel were made following consultation with a number of key stakeholders, including foster carers and adopters.

## **IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS**

### Finance and Efficiency

11. The Independent Panel Chair will be remunerated per panel and the fee includes all preparatory work, attendance at the Adoption and Permanence Panel, the completion of minutes and liaison with the Agency Decision Maker. This will be met through the existing budgets of HSCP Children's Services.
12. The Independent Panel Chairperson and the Independent Panel members will be annually appraised by the Agency Decision Maker and the Panel Chairperson respectively.
13. The appointment of a depute Panel Chairperson and depute Agency Decision Maker will be made within existing staff resources and as such will not incur any additional financial costs.

### Risk

14. None

### Policy

15. None

### Staffing

16. The appointment of an Independent Panel Chair will be independent to the existing staff component of the HSCP. This will be progressed through a national advert.
17. The appointment of a depute Panel Chairperson and depute Agency Decision Maker will be provided within the existing HSCP staffing structure and a senior manager will be identified within children's services to act as the depute chair, with the Head of Health and Community Care being approved as the agency decision maker designate.

### Legal

18. None

### Property/capital

19. None

### Equalities

20. None

Directions

21. None

**CONCLUSIONS**

22. The recruitment and appointment of an Independent Panel Chairperson will provide additional objectivity, thereby removing any potential conflict of interest and increasing the capacity of the service.
23. The appointment of a depute Panel Chairperson and depute Agency Decision Maker is in keeping with the Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007 and will provide contingency within the local authority procedures.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

24. The IJB is asked to:-
  - a. note the contents of this report
  - b. approve the recruitment and appointment of an Independent Panel Chairperson
  - c. confirm the appointment of a depute Chairperson and a depute Agency Decision Maker Designate.

**REPORT AUTHOR AND PERSON TO CONTACT**

Chief Officer, HSCP: Julie Murray

Kate Rocks, Head of Children's Services and Criminal Justice (Chief Social Work Officer)

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

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