

Council

Date of Meeting: 21 October 2020

Report Title: Appointments to the Adoption Panel and Fostering Panel

Senior Officer: Acting Director of Governance and Compliance and Monitoring Officer

1. Report Summary

- 1.1. The report invites Council to approve a number of appointments to Statutory Panels which do not fall within the definition of “Committee” for the purposes of legislation.

2. Recommendation/s

- 2.1. Council is asked to appoint:-
 - (a) Councillor Brian Puddicombe to the Adoption Panel; and
 - (b) Councillor Carol Bulman to the Fostering Panel.

3. Reasons for Recommendation/s

- 3.1. These bodies carry out statutory functions and appointments are needed to ensure that the Council meets its obligations.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1. Not applicable.

5. Background

- 5.1. As there are some organisations which do not fall within the category of being “outside organisations”, the members of which being appointed by other means, the Council needs to make such appointments as part of the annual Committee appointment process. The organisations are Statutory Panels which do not fall within the definition of “Committee.” These are:-

- Adoption Panel
- Fostering Panel

Adoption Panel

- 5.2. The Panel considers the suitability of anyone who applies to become an adopter, and whether or not to recommend that they are suitable to adopt; and also considers the placement of any child with a particular adopter. The Elected Member is a full member of the Panel and is defined as an 'independent panel member' by the Independent Review of Determinations (amendments) 2011. Under the performance objectives of the Panel, each member is asked to attend 75% of the meetings, which are currently held 6 weekly. In addition, each member is asked to attend any training events and induction events that are held at least annually and also to undergo an annual appraisal.
- 5.3. The role of the Adoption Panel and the appointment of Elected Members are governed by the Adoption Agency Regulations 2005 and the Adoption Agencies and Independent Review of Determinations (amendments) 2011, Adoption and Children Act 2002.
- 5.4. The Adoption Panel is made up of a central list and comprises of the following:
- Chair
 - Medical Advisor
 - Agency Members
 - Social Workers (2)
 - Elected Members (1)
 - Independent Members (3)
 - Additional Members (2)

Councillor B Puddicombe served on the Adoption Panel during the 2019/20 municipal year and it is proposed that he continue on the Adoption Panel.

Cheshire East are part of a Regional Adoption Agency arrangement, Adoption Counts, in partnership with four other Local Authorities, Salford, Trafford, Stockport and Manchester. Adoption Counts is responsible for Adoption Panel arrangements on behalf of the Local Authorities.

Fostering Panel

- 5.5. The establishment of fostering panels is laid down by the Fostering Service (England) Regulations 2011. Regulation 23(1) requires the fostering service to provide a central list of persons considered to be suitable members of the Panel, similar to the Adoption Panel.

- 5.5 The Fostering Panel makes timely and appropriate recommendations in line with the overriding objective to promote the welfare of children in foster care. The Panel considers and advises on the suitability of persons who apply to be foster carers for children who are “cared for” by the local authority. It states what its recommendations are in respect of a particular child or children and clarifies whether the prospective carers matching considerations are to be for certain ages or categories of children.
- 5.6 It considers the continuing approval of foster carers following their annual carer’s review or other significant changes in their circumstances and advices on any other matters relating to the fostering service.
- 5.7 The Panel holds fortnightly meetings which are held in private. One nomination is required.
- 5.8 It is proposed that Councillor Carol Bulman be nominated to the Adoption Panel.
- 5.9 As with the Adoption Panel, the Fostering Panel is administered by Cheshire East Children’s Services, and as such, is not an outside organisation.

6. Implications of the Recommendations

6.1. Legal Implications

6.1.1. There are no direct legal implications.

6.2. Finance Implications

6.2.1. There are no direct implications for finance.

6.3. Policy Implications

6.3.1. There are no direct implications for policy.

6.4. Equality Implications

6.4.1. There are no direct implications for equality.

6.5. Human Resources Implications

6.5.1. There are no direct implications for Human Resources.

6.6. Risk Management Implications

6.6.1. There are no direct risk management implications.

6.7. Rural Communities Implications

6.7.1. There are no direct implications for rural communities.

6.8. Implications for Children & Young People/Cared for Children

6.8.1. There are no direct implications for children and young people/Cared for Children.

6.9. Public Health Implications

6.9.1. There are no direct implications for public health.

7. Ward Members Affected

7.1. All Ward Members.

8. Access to Information

8.1. The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report author.

9. Contact Information

9.1. Any questions relating to this report should be directed to the following officer:

Name: Brian Reed

Job Title: Head of Democratic Services and Governance.

Email: brian.reed@cheshireeast.gov.uk