

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

COUNCIL

Date of Meeting:	17 May 2017
Report of:	Head of Governance and Democratic Services
Subject/Title:	Appointments to Adoption Panel and Fostering Panel

1.0 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 purpose of legislation.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Council is asked to appoint –
- (a) one Councillor to the Adoption Panel; and
 - (b) one Councillor to the Fostering Panel.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

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

4.0 Background and Options

- 4.1 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

4.2 Adoption Panel

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 monthly, and in addition is asked to attend any training

events and induction events that are held at least annually, and undergo an annual appraisal.

As we move into the regional adoption agency arrangements as 'Adoption Counts' (from July 2017) the Adoption Panel will be held 6 weekly.

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.

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 L Jeuda served on the Adoption Panel during the 2016/17 municipal year.

4.3 Fostering Panel

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 that of the Adoption Panel.

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.

It considers the continuing approval of foster carers following their annual carer's review or other significant changes in their circumstances and advises on any other matters relating to the fostering service.

The Panel holds fortnightly meetings which are held in private. One nomination is required.

Councillor G Merry served on the Fostering Panel during the 2016/17 year municipal year.

- 4.4 As with the Adoption Panel, the Fostering Panel is administered by Cheshire East Children's Services, and as such, is not an outside organisation.

5.0 Access to Information

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

Name: Brian Reed
Designation: Head of Governance and Democratic Services
Tel No: 01270 686670
E-mail: brian.reed@cheshireeast.gov.uk.