

## Job Description

Job Title: Agency Decision Maker

POSCODE: New Shire Hall

Grade: P4

### Overall purpose of the job

Please write one or two sentences about why the job exists. Focus on the achievement of the key end results of the job.

Reporting to the Service Director for Adoption Fostering and Corporate Parenting, having an agency decision maker (ADM) involved in decisions regarding children with adoption plans is crucial for several reasons:

**Legal Oversight:** Adoption is a legally binding process that requires careful consideration of various factors, including the child's welfare, the suitability of prospective adoptive parents, and adherence to legal requirements. The ADM ensures that all decisions comply with relevant laws and regulations.

**Expertise and Training:** ADMs typically have specialised training and expertise in adoption procedures, child welfare, and relevant legal frameworks. Their knowledge enables them to make informed decisions that prioritise the best interests of the child.

**Impartiality:** ADMs provide an impartial perspective on adoption decisions. They are not directly involved in the day-to-day care of the child or the selection of prospective adoptive parents, allowing them to make decisions objectively based on available information.

**Accountability:** By involving an ADM, decisions regarding adoption plans are subject to oversight and accountability within the adoption agency or local authority. This ensures transparency and accountability in the decision-making process.

**Legal Authority:** ADMs have the legal authority to approve adoption plans and placements, ensuring that all necessary legal steps are followed and that the child's rights are protected throughout the adoption process.

### Main accountabilities

**Please list the accountabilities in descending order of priority. Please include 6-9 accountabilities.**

	Main accountabilities
1.	Act as a key decision maker for children who have a plan for adoption/ matching and Should be placed for Adoption plans in accordance with relevant legislation, policies, procedures, and best practice. Be accountable for the local authority's compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements in fostering and adoption.
2.	Maintain up to date knowledge on new legislation, case law, policy guidance and local/regional policy developments, and support the implementation of new legislation in conjunction with senior managers and other partners (including external agencies).
3.	

	Communicate adoption and SBPA decisions to: social work practitioners, families and panels within statutory timeframes ensuring best practice across the service.
4.	Work with managers within the frontline teams to ensure that all reports are completed within agreed timescales in order for timely decision to be made and where performance issues are identified with the quality of the reports alert the responsible senior managers to ensure the impact on the timeliness of decision making is considered/ mitigated against
5.	Provide training to key staff on the role and function of the ADM where required in consultation with the RAA Panel Advisor.
6.	Ensure that issues of equality and diversity are properly reflected and addressed in the documents upon which the post holder's decisions are based, in order to ensure transparency of decision making. Ensure that there is evidence that the heritage needs of children have been identified and can be met by prospective carer/adopters.
7.	Ensure panel chairs are suitably qualified and equipped to discharge their duties. by conducting annual appraisals of panel chairs based on: observation of panel, quality of the panel minutes and the panel's recommendation
8.	Consult with the Service Director for Fostering, Adoption and Corporate Parenting to address any emerging themes or practice issues that require improvement and/or to acknowledge and celebrate success in a timely manner.
9.	To carry out any other duties that may be required in this role.
10.	Demonstrate an awareness and understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion.
11.	Able to contribute to our organisational commitment to becoming a Net Zero organisation by 2030.
12.	<b>Safeguarding commitment</b> <i>(Include for roles involving work with children/vulnerable adults)</i> We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people/vulnerable adults. We require you to understand and demonstrate this commitment. This role will require an enhanced DBS clearance check.

## Person Specification

### Qualifications, knowledge, skills and experience

Minimum level of qualifications required for this job

Qualifications Required	Subject	Essential/ Desirable
CQSW, DipSW, BA	Social Work or equivalent with a minimum of 3 years experience in working in a Fostering/Adoption service.	Essential
Social Work England Registration	A professionally qualified, registered Social Worker adhering to the Social Work England professional standards and able meet the Knowledge and Skills statements for child and family social work.	Essential
Any relevant Post Qualification Practice Models	Systemic Practice, Signs of Safety, Family Safeguarding.	Desirable

Minimum levels of knowledge, skills and experience required for this job

Identify	Describe	Essential/ Desirable
<b>Knowledge</b>		
Deep detailed knowledge of permanence planning, childcare law and practice	Standard 23 for both fostering and adoption NMS).	
Detailed knowledge of legislative framework in regard to social care and social policy, and sound understanding of related policies and procedures	<p>The Children Act 1989</p> <p>Children and Adoption Act 2004</p> <p>Adoption Agency Regulations 2005 amended by the Adoption Agencies (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2013</p> <p>Adoption National Minimum Standards 2011</p> <p>The Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011</p> <p>Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards</p> <p>The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review and Fostering Services (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2013</p>	Essential

Detailed knowledge of inspection framework	Must have a sound understanding of the key standards of service expected.	Essential
<b>Skills</b>		
Must have sound analytical skills	Actively uses, organises and analyses information to inform the decision making role as ADM.	Essential
Ability to read extensive reports and make sound decisions based on the information provided.	Ability to analyse qualitative and quantitative information in assessments and reports provided to panels and directly to the post holder.	Essential
Excellent communication skills both verbally and in writing, structures ideas and information which results in clarity, understanding and impact.	Ability to advise and make decisions on complex cases, timely.	Essential
Ability to build and maintain effective networks and relationships	Must possess good influencing, negotiating and advocacy skills.	Essential
<b>Experience</b>	Give an idea of the type and level of experience required <b>do not</b> specify years of experience.	Essential
Experience of working with children and young people who have been subject to Court Proceedings.	Must demonstrate a good understanding of the Public Law Outline.	Essential
Experience of working in a QA role with in the Fostering or Adoption field to be able to demonstrate a high level of scrutiny and challenge where required.	Experience and understanding of relevant approaches to quality assurance. This role will include working closely with the Adoption Panel Advisor to ensure that the quality of documents that are completed are maintained to a good standard.	Essential
Significant risk management experience in complex cases/issues within a statutory child care setting.	Must demonstrate the ability to manage complex risk and make sound decisions based on the information before the ADM.	Essential
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (applies to all roles).	Ability to demonstrate awareness and understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion and how this applies to this role.	Essential
Net Zero (applies to all roles).	Ability to contribute towards our commitment of becoming a net zero organisation.	Essential
Safeguarding (applies to all roles working with children/vulnerable adults).	Demonstrate an understanding of the safe working practices that apply to this role. Ability to work in a way that promotes the safety and well-being of	Essential

	children and young people/vulnerable adults.	
Post qualifying experience in Social Work	<b>Must have extensive post-qualifying experience in social work with children and families (minimum 3 years)</b>	<b>Essential</b>

### Disclosure level

What disclosure level is required for this post?	None	Standard
	Enhanced x	Enhanced with barred list checks

### Work type

What work type does this role fit into? (tick one box that reflects the main work type, the default work type is hybrid)	Fixed	Hybrid	Field	Remote	Mobile
	X	X			