

Meeting summary

28 June 2024 | 9.30am - 12.00pm

1. Matters arising

- 1.1 Jane confirmed there will be a one day in person conference for Adoption and Fostering/Kinship Panel Chairs and Panel Advisers, possibly in February 2025. This will be a joint event with the Fostering Network. The morning will be a joint discussion and in the afternoon there will be a choice of workshops.

2. Virtual panels and challenges

- 2.1 A discussion was held about the challenges and pros and cons of virtual panels. Jane advised that Chairs need to be cautious about the use of the Zoom chat feature and WhatsApp messages as these could form part of the minutes. There was the suggestion of disabling the chat function for panels. The Panel Adviser's role should be to enable the waiting room and to keep an eye on time-keeping and who wishes to speak, etc. Chairs make panel members responsible for time-keeping when they are asking questions
- 2.2 Positives of virtual panels were noted as increased diversity and cost and time of travelling reduced. Applicants also said they preferred virtual panels but had nothing to compare it with as this had been their only experience.
- 2.3 Negatives of virtual panels were around it being hard for new panel members to connect, social workers missing cues and facial expressions and these panels often over-running. To help new panel members to connect with the panel some agencies do more training days to counteract this, two to three times a year. The 'fit to frame' tool can be used to see more than one applicant if a couple is attending.

3. Forms Update

- 3.1 **Adoption Support Plan** – has been out to pilot since April. Early feedback from RAAs is positive with nothing substantial that people would like to change apart from strengthening the 'financial support to adopters' section. More feedback from piloting agencies is due at the end of July.
- 3.2 **CPR** – this went out for pilot in May to approx. 34 local authorities and will complete in November. Feedback (including from the judiciary) has been very positive and the only queries have been around the health section and compliance with Somerset. Ellie Johnson, Health Consultant, is currently updating all the health forms and will be compiling an agency medical advisers summary which will be inserted in the CPR and simplify. The pilot group has a touch-base meeting at beginning of August. The Department for Education has been consulted; CoramBAAF was awaiting a response.
- 3.3 **PAR** – work on updating will commence in December once the revised CPR has been published.

There will be a working group; volunteers for this will be invited.

3.4 **Form K** – has had a radical overhaul and is currently being piloted.

3.5 **Form F** – has been updated and is currently being piloted.

4. **Transracial Adoption Framework**

4.1 This is a piece of research by Dr Tam Cane and Professor Gillian Ruch at Sussex University. Jane commended the document which aims to challenge and address the issues that are likely to affect the identity of children moving into transracial placements. The framework is very versatile and can also be used with foster carers, kinship carers, in team meetings, for self-reflection, and assessing families looking at their racial-awareness and cultural competency. It is embedded in the new CPR. The document is [The Framework \(transracialadoptionframework.uk\)](https://www.transracialadoptionframework.uk)

4.2 CoramBAAF are considering doing a print run of hard copies available to buy.

Action: members to let Danielle and Jane know if they are interested in buying printed copies of the framework and, if so, how many. Possible price around £18.

4.3 Jane is working with Tam and Professor Gillian Ruch about possibly doing a roadshow/training days to introduce the framework. Tam will be presenting a Learning from Research session for CoramBAAF (date to be confirmed). Jane and Tam are planning a practice note on identity which will tie in the work form Warwick University.

5. **Panel matching and early permanence**

5.1 Jane shared a presentation with the group and there was discussion about matching for EP placements. The CoramBAAF webinar [Learning From Research: Managing infant family time in Early Permanence held in October 2023](#) was noted.

Future agenda items

- Disruptions
- Barometer - Public Law Working Group will give their feedback at some point

Date of next meeting: 29 November (Adoption Panel Advisers to be invited to join between 11.00 and 12.00pm for the last hour)