

Pre-Proceedings Timeline 16 weeks

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| Week   | Action  |
| -3  | Legal Planning Meeting  *This meeting is serviced by Locality Business Support, chaired by a Service manager or HOS and attended by the SW team (TM & SW) and a solicitor.*  The following papers *must* be submitted to Business Support by the Friday before the relevant panel: * Up to date Chronology and Genogram
* Information about previous court proceedings on this child, a related child or one of the parents
* Relevant documents with sufficient analysis of the child’s circumstances including: a current social work assessment and Child Protection Minutes & Plans for last 6 months (longer if necessary) and setting out clearly what the identified harm is
* Current safety plan
* Any schedules of expectations
* Significant other documents e.g. probation risk assessments / PNC / School attendance
* Any specific evidence in support of SW assessment that PLO is needed
* Clear proposed course of action, including TM’s view

 The meeting should discuss the following: * The specific issues, risks and mitigating factors of relevance at this time, which will include known historical concerns, consider the family history and chronology
* Continuing support or any additional direct work to be undertaken with the child(ren) during this period.
* Specify further support the local authority could offer the family to mitigate identified risks.
* How the local authority will continue to assess the risks and/or track positive changes in this period.
* Any expert assessments that are required – including who is being assessed, for what purpose, who will undertake this assessment plus the likely duration.
* Any testing, ie hair strand test
* Family members who are to be consulted to offer either support or be assessed as alternative carers. The early sharing of necessary information with extended family and the use of a family meeting/network meeting is essential, unless there is good reason why this is not possible, ie increased risk
* Record that the duration of pre-proceedings process (16 weeks) will commence from the date of the first PLO meeting at which the plan will be discussed with the parent(s); and agree the frequency of review meetings.
* Set when the pre-proceedings letter will be sent in order to communicate with family and agree when, where etc the pre-proceedings meeting will take place.

3 days following LPM Legal to send written advice to chair and Business support, and minutes to be prepared BS, agreed by Service Manager and circulated to all attendees and FPT/SGO manager, as well as recorded in Mosaic. Birth certificate to be applied for by the social worker, and sent to legal on receipt.  4 days following LPM Pre Proceedings Letter to be prepared by SW agreed by TM and forwarded to legal for comment. Letter then to be hand delivered to parents by SW, along with list of solicitors. If not safe – request legal send by way of process server or similar.  .  |
| 15 working days following LPMWEEK 1-2 | Initial Pre Proceedings Meeting to take place. DAY 1The aim of this meeting is to:* Ensure the parents have understood the PLO letter and the reason for the meeting.
* Ascertain the parents’ understanding of the concerns the local authority holds about their children.
* Review the current child protection/Safety plan to see if there are points on the plan that the parents agree will provide the most immediate change/safety for their children.
* Describe what support the local authority will provide to the parents while they focus on the immediate change work.
* Discuss and agree any additional assessment work and the timetable for this work.
* Make clear that pre-proceedings may end earlier & court a possibility if the level of risk increases
* Parent/s consent to obtain their medical records/complete form AH or parent/s solicitor to obtain.
* Parent/s consent to reports from [identify] be obtained by the SW (or their solicitor to obtain)

Plan and schedule of expectations to be prepared by SW and agreed by TM in advance of the meeting, in consultation with Legal. Meeting chaired by TM and attended by solicitor unless the parents are not represented. Any draft letters of instruction for experts to be compiled by Legal and/or SW (as appropriate) and available at this meeting so that each parent’s solicitors can have input.Pre Proceedings meeting notes and plan to be taken using the PLO plan template (in tri.x) by TM and attached on the child’s file within 5 working days. Notes and Plan to be sent to parents’ solicitors by legal and signed by all.  Referral for adoption medical to be made by SW if appropriate. Parenting assessments by SW to commence.  Any necessary tests (hair strand, DNA, Learning Capacity) to be sought/requested as agreed at the LPM, the social work team will be responsible for commissioning testing and assessmentsFamily Meeting to be convened by SW to formally discuss potential future ongoing support to the family and children and safety planning, alongside identifying any extended family as alternative carers.Screening assessments to commence by SW of any family members identified for support/alternative connected care arrangements and DRB checks to be undertaken immediately to avoid delay. Screening assessments need to be completed within 10 working days, SW to make referral to FPT for viability assessments when the decision outcome of the screening is to progress. Viability Assessments to be completed by week 8, if legal advice is needed on this assessment seek this prior to assessment being signed off. |

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| Week 8 | Case discussion/supervision between SM TM & SW – to discuss how plan is progressing, update on how assessments are progressing and any early indications of likely outcome. If plan not progressing then identification of what further intervention can be put in to the family to effect change. Consideration to CARP panel if extra resource is neededRecord of discussion to by placed on file as SM oversight, and copy sent to legal. |
| 8-9 | Pre Proceedings Review Meeting to be arranged and chaired by TM and attended by parents/carers (as well as each parent’s solicitorif their funding permits).  Test results and preliminary /viability assessments to be discussed. Progress of the plan to be discussed and amendments made where necessary. Current analysis of the identified risk as set out at initial meeting & identify any gaps. Minutes to be taken by BS and PLO plan updated with progress to date, checked by TM and circulated to all attendees and also FPT/adoption TM. To be placed on child’s file on Mosaic within 5 days  |

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| 13 - 14 | Formal planning discussion – Chaired by SM to include solicitor and SW team to discuss progress of the plan, The following assessments need to be completed by this point for discussion: * Parenting assessments
* Full Connected carers assessment of any family members
* Experts reports
* Test results (hair strand, DNA etc)
* outcome of family network meeting and any possible long term plan for support and safety

This meeting will need to consider if sufficient progress has been made within pre-proceedings and necessary change and safety created so as to come out of PLO. If no progress and the evidence and analysis of assessments conclude that parents do not have capacity to change and the children remain at significant risk of harm, then issuing proceeding needs to be discussed and decision agreed.Record of this discussion and decision to be placed on file with clear SM rationale.    |
| 14 -15  | Pre proceedings Review Meeting to take place (if needed and/or legal aid allows). To be chaired by TM, Parents/carers and solicitors to attend.  As above, the following assessments need to discussed * Parenting assessments
* Full Connected carers assessment of any family members
* Experts reports
* Test results (hair strand, DNA etc)
* outcome of family network meeting and any possible long term plan for support and safety

 Decision from Planning Meeting at week 13-14 to be fed back to family:  Minutes to be taken by BS and checked by TM, updating the PLO plan template and placed on file   |
| 16  | Case either to come out of pre-proceeding either by way of stepping down as risks have reduced or can be appropriately managed in the long term, or by way of issuing proceedings as despite intervention and support in pre-proceedings the children continue to suffer significant harm  |
| 16  | If issuing proceedings Social Worker to prepare Initial Statement to be submitted together with final Parenting assessments, Connected carer assessments, chronology and full genogram   |