Advisory Partnership Meeting 9th March 2016  
@ South Green Park, Mattishall NR20 3JY

**Present:** Mark Buckle Chair, Peter Ronan Vice Chair, Sharon Donoghue minutes, Anne Ritchie, Pam Weyer, Julia Spinks, Sally Gallop, Michael Rosen, Catherine Sutton, Martyn Lovett.

**Apologies:** Keeley White, Don Evans, Cathy Mouser, Mike Woodward, Antonella Parker, Caroline Sexton, Anja Grau, Carey Cake, Carola Doy, Kevin Martin.

1. **Introductions.**
   - Minutes agreed from last meeting 3rd Feb.
   - Action Points from previous meetings.

**Virtual School** - Catherine Sutton from Early Years gave a brief description of her role both within the Virtual School and within the Home learning team (which is part of the early years achievement team.)

Within the Virtual School there are 3 early years advisors who offer support to social workers, preschool and schools around completing good quality early years PEPs. They attend PEP meetings and reviews where possible and some LAC reviews. They are also hoping to be able to make links with foster carers who have children 0-5 years in their care, to offer support and ideas around child development and a good home learning environment for 0-5 year olds.

The Virtual School has to ensure all 2 year olds have a progress check and all children and young people from 0-18 (25 for SEN) will receive assistance from Virtual School.

The TAC to look at how the Virtual School can assist carers. (PAM-What tools can VS target FC with.)

**Within the Home Learning** strand the early years advisors offer support and guidance to early years settings and work with Children’s Centres in supporting parents with their children’s learning and development. The early years foundation stage document shows the development of children from 0-5 years and can be used to measure children’s progress.

The first two years of a child’s life are fundamental and if parents have knowledge of the importance of these years at the earliest possible time, the outcomes for the children will be better. Children’s Centres offer a Pathway to Parenting course (antenatal) for all first time parents to explain the importance the early years.

Discussion around the growing problem of mental health in our children and a hope for the future that mental health nurses regularly attend high schools or clusters, which is already the case in an area North Norfolk, followed.
2. Support Groups

**Gt Yarmouth** - At Time and Tide, Dan St John and 13 carers attended. A summer event was discussed and a trip to the beach where all bring their own toys and

**CWD** - 8 attended and discussed changing facilities for disabled children and young people at venues. A list is being devised of places with good changing facilities.

**North Walsham** - 20 carers attended - discussed the emails being sent out to carers and how we might not read things we don’t see as relevant to our placements. Not all carers take in what is being sent to them as we appreciate that everyone learns in different ways. Perhaps there learning styles should be identified and information passed in different ways such as via a buddy scheme or through Supervising Social Workers. Advice and support comes from many avenues including friends and family. The existing set up for fortnightly Newsletters to carers to be revisited – Peter

**Kings Lynn** – 3rd Feb - speech therapist attended, 7 carers, a good meeting. Anne will be talking about online training at next group meeting. A summer event was discussed and Sandringham was suggested as a venue.

**Watton** An AP representative needs to be found for this group. Julia will attend the next meeting which is on 31st March.

**Norwich** – Good bye for Roger and Chris Coe who have retired after many years’ service. We wish them the best of luck and a happy and healthy retirement.

An issue was raised via “Fostering Friends” a closed Facebook page, where a carer felt pressured into making an appointment at short notice for a Health Assessment. The carer had a two hour slot available and needed to be at another venue to collect a child so had to leave on time. The carer felt that her and the children were being unnecessarily detained over her two hours which she had allocated and by this time the children were visibly distressed and she was late to pick up the other child. This caused an unnecessary amount of stress on the carer and children. Peter to deal with the specifics of the case/talk to carer. Michael pointed out that Health Assessment have been behind and its part of the Ofsted Improvement Plan to speed up this process. Martin to draft information to carers via a newsletter regarding the shift in focus.

3. Leaving Care

As a result of the Ofsted inspection and recommendations, each LAC who is 10+ will have an advocate. This is an independent person who attends meetings to ensure that the child’s voice is being heard. Coram Voice is being used for this. Letter to go out to all carers who have a child in this age range shortly – Peter/Irene.

4. Working Groups

a. **Team Around the Child** - The next TAC meeting is 10th March.
   - Open days have now been organised for each locality.
• Recording System – TAC and CPD recognise that there is a lot of disparity in how carers complete their daily recordings and both are trying to resolve this. It was hoped that a new online recording system would resolve this issue but it appears that this is now not happening. Therefore could TAC and CPD get together and come up with a uniform way of recording. Title of the existing form to be changed to “Our Life Together” (Peter/Suzy)
• New members needed for this team, a child protection social worker, family placement social worker and carer.

b. Continuous Professional Development – A meeting was held on 7th March.
• Discussed courses for next year.
• A big launch is intended for the Portfolio in May, at an event for Supervising Social Workers and through network groups. Peter to discuss this further with Suzy and Sarah.

c. Network Groups and Social Events
• A meeting was recently held and discussed the 10th Anniversary of the annual Gressenhall get together for carers and adoptive families. It was felt this could be marked in some way.
• A workshop will be held for LAC 10+, 10 spaces at Gressenhall. This is primarily a confidence building workshop but has elements of craft: art, making giant dolls, textiles, and graffiti. Further details to be sent out soon.
• The feasibility of Open venue Norwich to be used for activities for adolescence in the future - Julia.

5. Progress of Ofsted Improvement Plan:
• PEPs progressing well with year 6 and 11 having been reviewed. EPEP’s – multiagency training taking place currently.
• Health Assessments – more resources have been put in to manage this as targets were not being met. A new agreement means that all Health Assessment to be carried out within 5 working days.
• Permanency Panel and monitoring – cases have been reviewed.
• NFCA – a meeting will be taking place today between NFCA and Michael to discuss the Parker Review.

Sally added that she and Mike Woodward would meet up regularly to talk about low level issues relating to cases to prevent further disruptions and placement breakdown.

Julia said that IRO’s have been changed without warning. This has already been flagged up with Carey. New IRO’s have been employed which means that the caseloads have decreased.
6. **Fostering Network:**
   Antonella has organised for Fostering Network to attend on the 4th May to check that what AP is doing is all above board and to present the Mockingbird Model.
   It was suggested that the presentation should begin the proceedings at 9.30 followed by discussion and lunch. All the usual AP members to attend this together with the TAC group. Then in the afternoon for the representative to observe a normal AP meeting and comment as necessary. If it is decided that the Mockingbird Model is something that NCC wishes to proceed with then workshops will be arranged with a wider audience. The day should finish by 2.30. Those who are not normally involved in the AP meeting can leave after the presentation/lunch.

7. **Delivery of the Charter:**
   Peter has provided copies of the charter for carers to give out at Network Groups. There have been three meetings with LAC Managers and others, where the Charter has been presented, in general it has been well received. Further meetings will be used to present the Charter and it will also be included in the newsletter. The away day for Supervising Social Workers will also be used to deliver the Charter.

8. **Dates of July and October meetings** — Sharon to liaise with Becky.

   **AOB - Election of Chair.** Carers already on the AP have a month, by 9th April to put their names forward. If no names are given then Julia will be the new Chair after a period of tutoring by Mark.

Written by S Donoghue 9th March

Checked by P Ronan 18th March