MEETING ON 2ND DECEMBER 2015

AT DEREHAM FOOTBALL CLUB 10am-1pm

Present:  Mark Buckle (Chair), Peter Ronan (Vice Chair), Sharon Donoghue, Pam Weyer, Anne Ritchie, Julia Spinks, Carey Cake, Michael Rosen, Keeley White, Andy Goff.

Apologies:  Sarah Hunter, Antonella Parker, Martyn Lovett, Kevin Martin, Don Evans, Anja Grau Cathy Mouser, Natalie Samways.

Introductions and “Welcome” to Keeley White, Virtual School and Andy Goff, CAMHS.

1. Action Points: All action points completed or in hand.

2. Network Group Feedback:
   
a. North Walsham – 18/11 there was no speaker which meant that more time was spent getting to know each other. This also gave Pam the opportunity to talk about what the “Team Around the Child” is currently working on.

b. Norwich – 1/12 the guest speaker was Sally Gallop who’s role is assistant manager for the Norwich LAC team. Sally spoke very positively and passionately about her role and her team and talked about some of their roles and responsibilities. Sally agreed to attend more meetings, which was thought to be beneficial and an ideal way of communicating, sharing ideas and raising issues. This is just one of the issues she was able to offer advice with: Two carers mentioned that they had previously asked for a copy of the chronology for two children they had been looking after for four years. The reason they wanted this is because the children had questions about their past and it might help explain behaviours. Sally suggested ways in which the carers should take this issue forward. Also, Sally was keen to take this issue forward, and see if an agreement can be made for chronology to be discussed or given to carers at the start of a placement.

With regards to life story work, Peter will look at the advantages of developing a workshop, perhaps with both carers and social workers.

3. Conference Feedback – Sarah Hunter has provided several documents of feedback. Mark suggested that all of the feedback is emailed to all of those people who attended the conference as discussed on the day. It was also suggested and agreed that each working group would evaluate their own feedback and list key points and actions. Once this task has been completed these should also be mailed to the conference attendees so that they can see what will happen as a result of their feedback. Generally, feedback was much more positive this year than last year.
4. a. **Team Around the Child** – A meeting was held on 10th November at County Hall. The group is still working on the Charter. Peter will be writing an introduction and asking Corporate Parenting Board to sign off the Charter and the end of January. Mark suggested putting an article on the Charter in “Improving Times” so that all workers can read about how we have arrived at the draft document. We could then post the charter in the AP section of the NCC website and provide a link so that children’s services staff can see the charter and comment before it finalised, which we all thought was a good idea.

Keeley said that she would like to have an input to the education section of the charter on behalf of the Virtual School; this was agreed and Pam will invite to next charter meeting.

An open day has been organised for 18th May at County Hall, and it is hoped a similar event will be organised for Dereham and Kings Lynn offices. Carers will be contacted nearer the time.

**Education**

Sharon has emailed the education questions to Don Evans who has acknowledged receipt and has agreed to respond. Keeley reported that some of these questions have been forwarded to her to deal with. The TAC working group had agreed at the last meeting that education was an excellent place to start an in depth look at all the areas of the charter.

**Contact**

The small group which had been designated to look at the contact section of the charter at the last AP meeting were unable to report as there was no one there from this group. It consists of Martyn Lovett, Natalie Samways and Kate Lyon.

b. **Continuous Professional Development** – Next meeting 9th December, will discuss conference feedback. The “CPD Portfolio” has now been passed by the corporate parenting board and will be launched in April. This foster carers document will become part of the annual review and will be discussed at each supervision.

c. **Network Groups and Social Events** – A meeting was held on 11th November. At the moment network group meetings are held bi-monthly. The group discussed the advantages of holding a monthly meeting but alternating between a social event and network group. The ethos of the group for the children/young people events is that they should be “Fun, Educational and Therapeutic” and each event should cover at least two of these, with this in mind an idea was put forward of having a transition event at Gressenhall for children who are leaving primary education and going to secondary. Also having an event at the Castle Museum with the theme “Science and Space”, geared at both older and younger children.
This group does need to gain some new members to function, with the numbers that we have at the moment the workload to launch anything significant would be too great. Mark suggested that we put together a brief on what we are looking to achieve and send this out to all foster carers with a view to recruiting new people. To be discussed at the next working group meeting.

5. **Children’s Services strategy and effect on placements:**

A variety of reasons for the lack of placement were discussed, together with the types of rumours which are circulating. The goal is to reduce the number of looked after children as Norfolk is higher than regional counterparts. It is acknowledged that there is a financial impact on carers who have not had placements, especially those whose sole household income is through fostering. Michael suggested that this issue is addressed by providing all carers who are currently be affected by this with data/information and a workshop with thoughts on how carers skills could be utilised in other areas. There were a number of suggestions on this as the meeting progressed into other subject areas, to be revisited.

6. **Effective Strategy for Change:**

The attendance and participation at Fostering Advisory Partnership meetings of all Children’s Services staff is highly valued and appreciated amongst the carers, and some staff are now involved in other various working groups.

However Mark is concerned that without the involvement of grass roots social workers with the opportunity to put their views and wishes forward, the fostering advisory partnership will not continue to make changes we want for our looked after children. Michael acknowledges this point. It was agreed that communication between Mark (chair) and Peter (vice chair) to discuss strategy and meeting agendas would take place in the form of face to face meeting, in addition to the Partnership meetings.

7. **Mental Health - CAMHS**

Andy Goff is the manager of Mental Health for Looked after Children in Norfolk. His service delivery is a core team in each of the following areas: Gt Yarmouth and Waveney, Norwich Central North and South, West Norfolk. The core mental health offer helps with eating disorders, anxiety, depression, bio-polar and other mental disorders. In addition to this, LAC Norfolk offer consultation and direct work with emerging mental health issues, also the short stay schools. Other teams which operate in schools are YMCA, MAP, MIND. Professionally trained carers may be used in hospitals to engage with young people.
Projects to receive funding from transformation fund, will be “Crisis” for a psychiatrist and assessor and training for 2nd order change “embedded change” to keep children safe in schools. A new online portal will be launched for schools and possibly carers (Anne to contact Andy andy.goff@nsft.nhs.uk).

8. Virtual School

Keeley White has been Interim Head of Virtual School since 1st September. The virtual schools role is the following:

- Monitor attendance of looked after children (by using Welfare Call).
- Promote progress and raise attainment, narrowing gaps in education.
- Quality assure, oversee PEPs, ensuring they are of high quality and are timely.
- Ensure children and young people are in good quality education.

All regions operate differently but have the same goals which are set in legislation.

Within her team are 2 LAC advisors – Pip Wells and Clare Sybos, 5 specialist support assistants, 3 early years workers.

PEPs will soon be electronically recorded with many benefits such as the facility to upload items like certificates, and space for noting who attends parents evenings etc.

AOB. Advisory Partnership Recruitment – With regards to new recruits, it was felt that the groups should ask what skill set they hold so that they are given the correct groups according to this. We also need to be thinking about succession planning – Mark, to revisit this and the need to update Terms of Reference, for the next agenda.

The North Walsham Network group suggested that it might be a good idea for newly qualified social workers to spend some time in their first year with foster carers, as this is not covered during their training. Peter to invite NIPE team manager to next FAP meeting.

Independent inspection of the Partnership. Helen Keeney is scheduled to carry out a due diligence check in March and it was hoped that this would happen in the morning followed by a presentation of the Mockingbird Model in the afternoon. Interested carers, workers, and Sarah from training would be invited for the afternoon presentation. Cost implications need to be considered.

Date of next meeting 6th January venue to be confirmed.

Minutes prepared by Sharon Donoghue 2/12/15

Check by Mark Buckle 3/12/15