Advisory Partnership Meeting – 28th September 10-1

@ South Green Park, Mattishall.

Present: Rachel Bartholomew, Anja Grau, Martyn Lovett, Keeley White, Pam Weyer, Mark Buckle (Chair), Michael Rosen, Carola Doy, Linda Everitt, Danielle King, Stefan Rice, Anne Ritches, Sharon Donoghue (minutes).

Apologies: Mike Woodward, Antonella Parker, Sarah Hunter, Peter Ronan, Julia Spinks, Cathy Mouser, Ann McKendrick.

Invited: Karen Cooper, Simon Booth (Breaking the Cycle) & Suzy Holman

1. Introductions: Thank you to Mark for stepping in as Chair at short notice. Welcome to Danielle King and Linda Everitt.

2. Minutes of 22/6/16 agreed. These will be put on the NCC website soon.

3. Action points from previous minutes.
   
   - Pam has met with representatives of Children’s Centres to discuss ways of utilising their services. Pam would like Centres to hold sessions for older children, teaching them life skills such as cooking. Children’s Centres are normally for children aged under 8, but Michael said that it was possible for Pam’s idea for this work with older children to be taken forward. Carola volunteered her help with this as she has strong links with Children’s Centres. *Pam/Michael to speak with Philip Beck to take this forward.

   - In-Care Council – to enable greater participation from our young people and to ensure that their voice is heard in all areas of children’s services, there will now be two localities rather than just the one.

   - Buddy System - carers have emailed AP to say they are interested and this information has now been passed onto supervising social workers manager. The carers must now be joined with other carers and contact details of carers in their area passed via their supervising social worker to enable communication to commence between carers. A list will be kept of the carers who are part of the buddy scheme. Sharon expressed that she would like to attract new carers to join the buddy scheme. Mark suggested that feedback is obtained from carers in due course.
At the last meeting we discussed about hearing the voice of the child more through this group. Sharon Pam and Julia will visit the ICC in the coming months to obtain their views. Sharon’s SSW questioned whether the voice of the child is sufficiently heard in carers annual reviews. Examples of forms which could be used for this were gathered and devised. Martyn said that the child’s voice is already being heard through the comments made by the child’s social worker, so this would be duplication. All agreed that this was the case and a further form was not necessary.

4. Health Forms

Various forms have been used over the years for recording medication. Linda is a carer who feels strongly that carers should be using forms for recording medication and medical appointments as this information is vital for example; to take to hospital, for reviews or if the child has respite. An updated form has been devised for administering daily medication, and another to record all appointments. We all thought these were a good idea and NCC will fund photocopies of these. They will then be passed on to carer either via the child’s social working in the start up pack at the beginning of placement, or via SSW. Thank you to Linda for her work with this. Information in these forms form part of the carers supervision. Linda agreed to return to the AP meeting to let us know how the implementation of this is going.

5. Joint Strategic Partnership with Barnardo’s

Michael and Julia met with Barnardo’s for a Q & A. Michael said that Barnardo’s is a Charity and NCC is not paying them for this work. This is a 2-3 year arrangement and there are no proposals for Barnardo’s to take over fostering. The focus is on working with NCC to get the voice of the child heard, by identifying the impact of what has already been done and work out what different services are needed. Barnardo’s will bring in ideas on what is working well for them nationally. Barnardo’s will not be bidding for contracts and will not be part of a commissioning process. They will not be taking over from smaller charities in the area and Michael assured us that Barnardo’s intend to work in collaboration using a broad approach with all charities in the interest of the children. Barnardo’s has a good track record and working relationship in with Essex County Council. Funding has been requested via innovations fund and the majority will be used for mental health which we all found pleasing.
6. **Working Groups**

**CPD**
Anne recently held a meeting. The TAC Conference is on November 30\textsuperscript{th}, so far 220 people have signed up but there is room for another 60. As usual we have the wide ranging marketplace, and AP will be given a slot to feedback what’s been happening this year at AP, to the audience. *Would Julia speak in her new role as Chair of AP? Our guest speaker Margot Sunderland is booked for the day and will be speaking about three different age ranges so this will apply to all carers. It would be helpful if the audience could have lots of questions to utilise her time. AP will have a stall which we would need to man and obtain literature for. * Peter was organising a pull up poster and Antonella was organising posters, Sharon to check what is happening with these.

Martyn asked if carers could be asked to sign up for signs of safety training if they haven’t already done so, via Network Groups.

**Kinship and Special Guardianship**
Support groups have been set up for Special Guardianship carers alternating monthly between Kings Lynn and Tuckswood in Norwich. The next meeting is on the 12\textsuperscript{th} October and the speakers are Matthew Project.

**TAC**
The new Social Workers profile is being implemented and Ann will provide feedback at the next TAC meeting. Deep Dive into health – at the TAC meeting it was decided that we would look at mental wellbeing and the role of CAMHS as it was felt by all that there are gaps in the provision of services for our children. TAC wanted to obtain the views of carers about their recent experiences of CAMHS. However with the Local Transformation Programme report being published next week this will tell us how many children are seen in relation to those who have needs. *Michael will ask a representative from LTP to speak with Pam and agree a set of questions to target carers for feedback. The services for mental wellbeing differ in Schools and a more joined up approach is needed so that all children receive the same high level of service to meet their needs. An awareness of resources would help Schools and Carers (*Danielle will action this) *Michael to invite Chris to the next meeting (19/10) *Mental Health on next month’s agenda. Sharon/Julia
Network Group and Social Events
Sharon is now chairing this group and held a meeting at the green Britton Centre in Swaffham on the 5th Sep. Two new carers came forward to help with this group, Ruth and Anita. We discussed the Gressenhall and the Picnic event which happened during the summer. We are hoping to run the picnics annually. Future events are the Halloween event at Holkham Hall, during the half term week. We hope to hold a Christmas Party at each of the NWG areas. Although Martyn has agreed to fund the cost of the hall for these Parties they will be run independent of NCC. CWD support group and Norwich NWG will definitely be holding a Christmas party as volunteers have come forward from those areas.

7. Union for Carers.
It has been in the news recently that carers can now join a union. Members of AP are not aware of any more details of this, so this is a point for the next agenda when more is known.*Julia

8. Unaccompanied Child Refugees
Karen and Simon held an initial session for carers and workers to pass on information so that carers could see if this is type of fostering they would like to offer. The session was very well attended. Simon Booth from Breaking the Cycle explained that; when a child or young person arrives they go through an assessment process which can be harrowing for them as it revisits traumatic events which led up to them being here. More than 50% of children are suffering from PTSD. Whilst the journey here is tough enough, it was noted that 1 in 4 young women are sexually abused, when they arrive here. Feedback from carers was that they would be put off offering this by the legalities of the system, where there is a very high likelihood that the young person would be returned to their country of origin at age 18. Most 16-18 year old are placed into supported accommodation rather than foster care. AP felt that carers and the young people would need a very high level of support, training and resources and acknowledged that this is a different type of fostering to what we are used to. The buddy system could be used as a means of linking placements so that mutual support is given and possibly the same social workers who have greater experience with these young people, used within these. There would be a need for all available services to engage and help. Above diversity and an understanding of cultural needs etc, Simon said that “the most important thing they want is love and care”.

Discussions will take place on how we take this forward at CPD group (Ann/Suzy)
9. **Parker Review**

On look east yesterday, they had an item regarding the parker review which is due to come out tomorrow. 30 cases have come forward about decisions which were made during 2004 – 2014, and out of these 8 were taken forward to be looked at as part of the review. The other 22 did not have a relevant case. NCC acknowledges that poor decisions were made in these 8 cases and foster carers were treated badly. NCC has a new approach to allegation which is much less reactive and more balanced. Since this happened, where allegations have been made, in all cases carers have continued to foster and often the child has returned to the placement.

Michael is to appear on Look East within the next two days and we would like to invite Norman Lamb to this group.

**AOB**

- **LAC Review Invites** - The social worker is responsible for inviting everyone to the review and ensuring all know the date with whichever method is best.
- **Contact with birth families** – on some occasions carers have been asked to supervise contact either in the community or their own homes. Some carers expressed a greater need for guidance and support. Carola said that it is done on a case by case basis which must be tailored by the social worker and agreed in the placement planning meeting. This is then reviewed and communicated on an ongoing basis between the social worker and the carer, rather than left until the LAC review. *Martyn will look into this further.*
- **Use of agencies** – There is no arrangement for agencies to be allocated a percentage annual quota of cases. Where a case cannot be placed in house then it will go out to agency. In-house will always be the first option as this is less expensive.

Next Meeting 19th October 2016

Written by Sharon Donoghue 28th Sep 2016

Checked on 19th Oct 2016