Fostering Advisory Partnership meeting on 16th March 2017 @ South Green Park, Mattishall.

Present: Julia Spinks (Chair), Peter Ronan (Vice Chair), Sharon Donoghue (minutes), Francis Wymark, Catherine Sutton, Sarah Cressey, Ann McKendrick, Antonella Parker, Owen Garrod, Pam Weyer, Debbie Burrell, Roni Kingston-Miles.

Apologies: Sarah Hunter, Stef Rice, Keeley White, Lori Ong, Anne Ritchie, Mike Woodward, Theresa Lavery, Anja Grau.

1. Introductions not necessary.
2. Minutes of 22nd Feb checked and can now go online. *Previous minutes that are not online to be chased by Sharon, and minutes of 22nd Feb shared on the Hub.*
3. Action Points from previous meetings:
   - Pull up board – Antonella has this in hand.
   - Contact books to FAP carer representatives – *Sharon to email Mike to see if these are now ready for distribution.*
4. Media – Foster Carers around the table (6) are bemused by the recent reporting of Children’s Services by the EDP and would like to be involved in some good news stories. We would like to work with the communications department to highlight how successful the majority of our looked after children have been. We feel they have been reflected in a bad light by EDP so far and this is unfair on them and a sad portrayal of their time in care. There appears to be a real lack of understanding in the press about the issues and many different challenges faced by our young people in their current and past lives.
5. **Fostering Friends:**

Statement from Lori who could not be here today read by Sarah:

- There are now 122 members
- Fostering Friends Facebook group continues to be a wealth of support at any time of day...there is always someone to listen, meet up with, find the form, recommend training, car share, answer that question or provide information and guidance.
- Norwich Breakfast Club continues to be a great resource for foster carers.
- Several foster carers and their children joined us on our coastal walk on 25th February. The children thoroughly enjoyed this experience and many pebbles were left and picked up too! Pebble painting is also being done independently and carers are encouraging discussion around who may find the pebbles.
- the pebble painting mornings have now become a regular FRIDAY THERAPY monthly event, this is proving to be a great supportive time for carers and a great place to share skills and resources.
- recent discussions requested by members were....‘scoring scales’ and ‘Staying Put. Content of these discussions will be discussed within the FAP TAC group.
- NCC press office have been in touch regarding positive press ie LOVE ROCKS project...after some discussion we have decided it’s not an appropriate time to put this out there with the press, given their current reporting. We will revisit this when the project is well underway.

As we have our Leaving Care Manager here today we thought this was a good opportunity to discuss “Staying Put” with him. Staying Put is still in its infancy and everyone including carers are now getting to grips with this. Norfolk has the highest amount of Young People on Staying Put in the whole of the country which is very positive. Staying Put is an arrangement rather than a placement.

When a young person is in Foster Care and they reach 18, payments to the carer decrease. Norfolk CS pay £233 a week to the carer and a grant is applied for by Children’s Services from central government which covers some of this. Payments are capped at £250 a week. Applications for housing benefit should happen in a timely way with either the carer or social worker applying for this, but where payments haven’t happened on time the leaving care team can look at reimbursing.
The role of the personal advisor is to visit with the carer and young person at the age of 16 to find out what the intentions are in respect of the placement becoming Staying Put at 18. Then, to assist with arrangements to help with the implementation of this or other plans for accommodation.

Plans would have already been discussed at the LAC Review and other meetings with the Social Worker, IRO and others being present, so everyone should be aware of what will happen post 16 before the Personal Advisor becomes involved. Everyone in the Team Around the Child has a responsibility to ensure this is being talked about at the earliest opportunity.

If carers would like to contact a manager of the leaving care service these are the names and areas:

Jason Barnes - Kings Lynn and Breckland.  jason.barnes@norfolk.gov.uk

Yvonne Durie – Gt Yarmouth   yvonne.durie@norfolk.gov.uk

Gemma McNevin – South Norfolk   gemma.mcnevin@norfolk.gov.uk

Sarah Green – Plumb – North Norfolk and Broadland
sarah.green-plumb@norfolk.gov.uk

Owen Garrod – Norwich   owen.garrod@norfolk.gov.uk

- Owen accepts what carers have said that this may not be happening in all cases at the moment and will discuss with staff to ensure a timely meeting takes place.
- Sarah to feedback to carers.
- Owen to ask Stef Dolan to provide information on Staying Put to go on the Hub and elsewhere.
- Peter to email supervising social workers to remind them that conversations should be happening about 16+.

6. Network Groups:
North Walsham – 18 carers attended including some new carers, with Helen Maund telling carers about Theraplay. This was extremely well received. A fond farewell was said to Irene who has been fostering for many years and has now retired – best wishes to Irene from FAP.

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Children with disabilities – went well with a number of carers attending.
Gt Yarmouth – also went well and was well attended.
Watton, Norwich and Kings Lynn are coming up soon.

7. **Network Groups and Social Events:**
   A meeting is scheduled for next week. Sharon asked the groups if they thought we still needed this group as carers now have the means of communication and organise events themselves. All agreed, so *Sharon will email the other members of the group to see if they are in agreement before change is made.*

8. **Team Around the Child:**
   **Workers profile** is now being rolled out across the county. Ann added that Sam Sadler is sending some examples to her.
   Children’s Centers – the TAC group to decide on whether these should be used by carers at their next meeting.
   Scoring at LAC Reviews – scoring has become an issue because of inconsistencies in the delivery and communication at reviews and this has sometimes left carers feeling targeted. At TAC we discussed carer’s feelings in relation to this and all thought that it is not acceptable for this to continue in the same way. Therefore Rob Jordan IRO has taken our thoughts back to his team and will advise us of the outcome. *Ann will contact Rob to find out what the outcome is and what will happen next.*
   
   **CAMHS** – Jonathan Stanley presented to the TAC group on changes which are happening to our CAMHS service. *Pam will email Jonathan to highlight the points raised by carers and social workers.*

   **Ann** will be leaving Children’s Services - all at the TAC and FAP groups are sad to see her leave. Catherine shared some cakes to say farewell to Ann and a card was given. Ann made a short speech about how she has loved working with us all. Ann has brought laughter to our meetings as well as being a source of information, clarity and openness. Best Wishes Ann you will be an asset to your future employer. *A replacement for Ann in TAC and FAP will be sought by Peter.*

9. **CPD** – there is a meeting due next week. Peter added that the training service is shortly to be undergoing restructuring so changes will be happening.
10. AOB.

- Catherine handed out NHS stickers for ‘Confidential advice and support’ for young people aged 11-19. The school nurse can be contacted on 07480635060.
- Sharon is starting a voluntary job so her availability - in particular to respond to emails will decrease.
- In Care Council – Sharon to ask Irene for the dates and venues so that carers can share this with their children. The child’s social worker must put the young person forward if they wish to attend.
- CWD – Julia will be starting a CWD group to look at solving some problems encountered by this group of children and young people. *Julia to put a request for members on the hub and fostering friends.*

Written by Sharon Donoghue 17th March 2017

Checked by Julia Spinks 19th March 2017

Next meeting 26th April 2017