FOSTERING ADVISORY PARTNERSHIP

17TH MAY 2019

@South Green Park, Mattishall NR20 3JY 10am start

Present: Tracy Collins, Laura Gavrila, Roni Kingston-Miles, Boo Dickens, Catherine Sutton, Alison Lees, Gary Shorter, Sharon Donoghue, Julia Spinks – Chair, Mike Woodward, Anne Ritchie, Stefan Rice, Rochelle Brophy.

1. Welcome and Introductions.

2. Apologies: Pam Weyer, Debbie Burrell, Duty Workers, Sarah Hunter, Owen Garrod, Keeley White, Craig Secker, Sharon read out the email from Owen which was said how it has been pleasure to listen to such committed and passionate Foster Carers.

3. Action Points:
   - The In-care Council have developed and now finalised their “Snap” profile. This will soon be shared with FAP and the format can then be used for our carers profile redesign.
   - Charter – The introduction has been completed by Roni and Pam, and the Charter has been put on the Hub. This has prompted disagreement within FAP as some carers believe the finished version should have been passed via FAP before being put on the Hub, because of the level of prior discord. Previously, new documentation and all operational changes concerning carers have always been brought to FAP for approval. There appeared to be some misunderstanding about whether agreement had previously been reached. Some carers expressed their concerns about carers and workers returning to working separately, whereas others said that the roles are different but the aims are the same, which is to make the lives of our Looked After Children better. All agreed that the wheel and introduction helped establish the working together ethos. The colouring on some pages meant that the wording could not be seen therefore some amendments are required and it was agreed that carers names should not be put on the document as it implies they are responsible. This wording was suggested instead of names “FAP in association with NFS”. 

PG1
Once amendments are carried out the Charter will be brought back to FAP for approval and in the meantime a message will be put on the Hub to advise carers that there are amendments required. Then it will be relaunched.

- **Building Foundation** – the purpose of this document is to set out expectations of corporate parents so that they are working in partnership with carers.
- **Disruptions** – This is being reviewed with Sharon Hawkins and the finished document will follow.
- **FAP** will commence at a new venue; Breckland Council Offices, Dereham, NR19 1EE in June.
- Roni has emailed Scott with the feedback from Foscars.
- **Confidentiality of carers addresses** – Carers have expressed their dissatisfaction that their address is being sent to Children’s birth parents and in some cases this has caused problems; Tracy has spoken to Social Care who will use a word document to delete the Carers address before sending out to parents where there is a pre-established safeguarding issue. A reminder will be given to carers that it is an expectation for parents to have a carers address, Boo will put this on Fostering Friends.
- **Conference** – Sarah, Anne and the CPD group have been busy preparing for the conference. They are looking at ways that the conference can be split between fostering and adoption, without the need for a separate conference. Anne has asked carers via Fostering Friends about what workshops they’d like and many ideas were given. Additionally, Stefan said that it would be good to have something specific for male carers such as “MenShed”.

**Suggestions for Marketplace** – All the usual stalls, Scentsy (Julia has a name of a contact), a stall with sensory toys, and Sensi (Sensory Integration Therapy). Anne will ask other carers for ideas and names of personal contacts.

**AOB:**
Julia told the group that she will be stepping down from the role of Chair to focus more on CWD group and her own fostering. Rochelle has volunteered to chair FAP and was nominated by Julia and seconded by Boo. The Vice Chair should be either Stefan/Tracy/Julia.

Laura – The new interactive Handbook is being proof-read this weekend by Anne and is almost ready to be circulated. A final draft will be available for the next FAP meeting. Thank you to all involved with this. At the next meeting governance/updates/reviews/launch and if it can be an app, will be decided upon.

PG2
Boo – Paperwork that has been sent from Social Care to some Children has been of poor quality, with words missing and generally not worthy of giving to Children. To identify what has gone wrong Boo to contact duty who can retrace the source and make this right.

Tracy – Tracy and the group are delighted that she will be staying in her role for another year.

Alison – Preschool Looked After Children Health Assessments have been done on time and are of very good quality.

Anne – The new portal will be phased in to Stepping Stones.

Catherine – Is linking in with health for <5’s.

Sharon – Can a reminder go to Social Care that emails to and from carers are not confidential and should be encrypted?

Fostering Advisory Partnership
Self Evaluation May 2019

Suggestions made at FAP are written in red and to be agreed, or not at the next meeting.

Suggestions made by Joanna in 2016:

- Find incentives for Carers to attend the various AP groups.
  Carers attendance at the different AP groups is good; CPD has a group of regular carers with one new carer who has brought her skills to the group. Team Around the Child has around 10 carers but it is acknowledged that not all of these attend each meeting. The location of TAC meeting at County Hall has become a problem in respect of parking. TAC to look at whether a new venue or to add the TAC meeting on to the FAP meeting would be achievable. Stefan will look into this.

How manageable are the large groups? – look at size, frequency, structure.
Group size is working however the groups still need Social Worker representation on FAP and TAC. Other members needed to make FAP work are; Fostering Manager and LAC Service Manager. Tracy will organise for this to happen, to ensure that the voice of the child is heard in our meetings.
• Do support groups mirror the objectives and do support groups and social need to be added together? Support groups need to be operational, with a business element and learning and development. Aim to get all NWG working in the same way i.e target the guest speakers to relevant Carers. Agreed that the NWG do work in this way and because they are facilitated by the Duty Workers they work really well and numbers have increased in the past year to all the groups. This is largely because the Duty Workers organise the speakers and where a speaker cannot attend an alternative is sought. Social outing and get togethers are now organised by carers on Fostering Friends.

• Anonymous feedback so that carers can voice concerns. Issues can be passed to FAP carers via NWG and Fostering Friends and brought up anonymously and this appears to be working well.

• AP more structural and revisit objectives with an operational and business slot. Objectives to be revisited more regularly. More focus needed to scrutinise the outcomes of the actions to see if these have effected change. and the achievements log to be revisited regularly so that previous points are not forgotten. Action Points log to include an expected date for completion so that the same points are finalised quicker.

• Utilising Carers who are experiencing lack of placements. Carers are being utilised with the Buddy service via recruitment and as part of the recruitment team. There are only 6-10 empty beds at any one time at the moment. Ideally there would be more carers with availability so that there is a wider range of matches. The split is roughly 55% inhouse and 45% agency.

Suggestions made by Peter in 2016:

• Voice of child has not been instigated. Hearing the voice of the child through Social Workers/our own children/incare council could be actioned via NWG and via the ICC meeting which Laura attends and through discussion with our own children. This will be discussed in greater depth at the June FAP.

• Achievement log, to share at roadshows. This has been actioned but the points are not revisited.

• Getting the word out at events. This happens now via the recruitment team and at the FAP stand at conferences.
Make up of the Fostering Advisory Partnership

There are still some disenfranchised carers and it would be useful to involve other carers in some way because they will bring a different perspective. Carers might feel that FAP carers have been chosen to attend FAP rather than having volunteered and many don’t know what really goes on in the meetings. It was suggested that all FAP members including subgroups spend a maximum of three years on FAP which will be reviewed at 18 months, this suggestion to include rotation of staff on FAP so that fresh ideas are brought to the table. If agreed the terms of reference should be amended to reflect this change.

There should be more advertising of FAP on the Hub and Fostering Friends. Undecided how this should be carried out, therefore to be added to next agenda.

New carers to be given a “This is FAP” leaflet. Sharon will pass the one she uses to Laura.

Measures must be put in place to assess the effectiveness and the difference the group has made to the child. A 6 monthly revisit of priorities/self evaluation together with a year end review to fall into the timing of the annual conference in the autumn. Using the achievements and questioning carers “You said…. We did”. Chair and admin to instigate this.

Sharon to ask Joanna to attend in the Autumn for evaluation of FAP which will give us a chance to put the above into place.

PG 5
Meeting ended at 1pm

Minutes written by Sharon Donoghue 18th May 2019
Checked by Julia Spinks 18th May 2019