Meeting @ South Green Park, Mattishall

17th June 2015 10am – 12.30pm

Present: Chair – Mark Buckle, Vice Chair – Peter Ronan, Natalie Samways, Anne Ritchie, Pam Weyer, Julia Spinks, Sharon Donoghue, Antonella Parker, Cathy Mouser, Kevin Martin, Steve Ginn, Martyn Lovett, Antonella Parker, Stefan Rice, Sarah Hunter.

Apologies: Sheila Lock, Anja Grau.

- Minutes of 17th April agreed.
- Action points from previous minutes :-

Visit to Fostering Advisory Partnership by an independent person Helen Keaney from Fostering Network in respect of external valuation – A date to be arranged in due course with Antonella and Mark to construct an agenda which suits her visit.

Antonella has checked to see if there is a fostering association similar to Fostering Advisory Partnership in Blackburn, but there doesn’t appear to be one. However Antonella has found a group called FAG which are based in Staffordshire and will do some further investigation with this group.

Adoption Planning and nursery time for under 3’s: Peter has carried out some research which strongly indicates that the primary focus for this age group should be on time spent with the child building attachment to the primary carer. Although there is no empirical evidence, his understanding is that this is treated as priority over the benefits of early socialisation with other children in a nursery setting. Where adoption planning is in progress nursery time should be looked at on a case by case basis between the foster carers and child’s social worker.

Signs of Safety – the two day course would be for carers who are taking on the role of trainers, for other carers the half day course would be sufficient.

Newsletter – will go out to all by the end of the week. It was agreed that the minutes of all Partnership meetings did not need to go out separately each time by email as they are available on the website for all to view.

- SUPPORT GROUPS

Kings Lynn – well attended and no issues raised.
North Walsham – No issues. Feedback that Jo Felgate from EDT was excellent and Julia recommended that if possible she should attend other support groups. Martyn to ask Jo Felgate and organise.

Gt Yarmouth – Well attended. A carer had carried out St Johns first Aid for babies which they had funded themselves and said this was excellent. We discussed the possibility of rolling this out to carers and Sarah confirmed that the new first Aid providers do cover babies during the training.

Norwich – was well attended and as no guest speaker, a questions and answers discussion took place. No issues. Sharon sent an email to carer who couldn’t attend to advise them of what was discussed.

Thetford -The meeting on the 18th May was attended by three carers. Natalie said they discussed moving to a different venue to attract more carers as the group in generally poorly attended. Iain Temperton from the Casualty Reduction Team was the guest speaker. They discussed cycling proficiency and the possibility of children gaining a certificate for this via an organised day out on bikes in the School holidays. Also discussed was child car seat safety and the likelihood of Iain checking that carers had fitted seats properly in the car parks at the end of a course or other carers gatherings.

CWD – No issues.

Teenage support group – An informal support group has been set up and there was outing at UEA with a BBQ. There has been positive feedback from this group. Mark will invite Nichola to the next Fostering Advisory Partnership meeting.

• **CONFERENCE**

The joint carer and social worker conference will take place on the 16th October at the Holiday Inn Airport (North). The venue can accommodate 240 people and there will be a market place as before. Parking is available at park and ride. Sarah and her team have looked at the content of the day and suggested a mixture of presentations by Head of Children’s Services, Fostering Advisory Partnership, Norfolk In Care Council and our guest speaker in the afternoon – Dr Marks. There will be some facilitated discussions at the tables with subject areas such as; How can social workers and foster carers work together for the benefit of the child?

It was felt that more social worker involvement was needed in the planning of the day so that the content reflected a joint approach. It was also hoped that the revised Foster Carers Charter would be introduced at the conference. Peter will talk with Ann McKendrick regarding greater social worker involvement in respect of the conference and possibility set up an organising group to achieve this.

Thank you to Sarah and her team for all the work they have done so far on planning the conference.
• **A. Team Around the Child**

Please refer to minutes of 4\textsuperscript{th} June.

CWD group will be revising the medication form.

Your life in our house form will be renamed at the launch of the new recording system – “OUR LIFE TOGETHER”, as suggested by Julia. (Mike/Martyn.)

**B. Continuous Professional Development**

A meeting was held on 9\textsuperscript{th} June with Sarah Hunter, Suzy Holman, Jackie Venables, Anne Ritchie. Minutes can be viewed separately. Two additional items which came out of this meeting are that more carers are needed on this group and teams in general are unaware of the Fostering Advisory Partnership.

Foster Carers as trainers – a letter will shortly be going out to all those who have taken up this role and a meeting is happening on the 1\textsuperscript{st} July.

A new course “Stepping Stones” is being devised for new carers and carers who have transferred from agencies to cover all the areas you need to know at the beginning stages of fostering.

**C. Support Groups and Social**

Sadly Steve Ginn will be stepping down from this post with immediate effect due to other commitments. Steve hopes to keep a hand in and re-join the groups at a later date. Thank you Steve for all your hard work for the partnership during your time here and we wish you well.

Julia has offered to assist with this role. Thank you Julia.

Minutes for all the groups should be online for all to view. Once they have been checked by attendees could the chair forward to Genevieve.Bouquet@norfolk.gov.uk so Gen can put these online. With a view to saving time at the FAP meetings could a copy also be forwarded to j.donaghue1@ntlworld.com so that Sharon can distribute them to FAP members to read before the FAP meeting please.

**Fostering Advisory Make up and participation**

Whist all the working groups are important, it was felt that the main focus should be The Team Around the Child, and improving communication starting with the Foster Carers Charter and the Conference. Peter reminded us that isolation is still a key issue for carers and this needs further addressing.

Greater Involvement in Partnership - Mark has sent out the newsletter, and asked if any more carers would like to be involved. Pam will be asking a carer to join the TAC team.

Raising the profile of the Partnership – At the CPD meeting it was pointed out that many workers are not familiar with the role of the Partnership (especially in the West of Norfolk) and Peter said this is
true of the county as a whole. We discussed ways of increasing awareness of the groups with one idea being FAP carers going to management meetings to advise on the work of the partnership and on a regular basis provide them with updates. Another idea (which TAC are taking forward starting with Breckland) is to go to social workers offices to meet workers over a bit of lunch.

Part of the Terms of Reference was to review the effectiveness of the group and measuring short medium and long term goals. This review will take place in November unless the Partnership agree that it is needed at an earlier date.

- **To Charter or not to Charter?**

All agreed that the Foster Carers Charter should be rewritten. A small group has been tasked with this; Pam, Antonella, Mike and Nina with other individuals being consulted as the charter progresses section by section. (Others - James Joyce, In Care Council)

- **Signs of Safety – see section one.**

- **Fostering Advisory Partnership Literature:**

At the presentation to Corporate Parenting Board on the 4th June, Pam felt that it would have been beneficial to have a something we could give out which would have the logo and a brief strapline. It was agreed that “**GETTING IT RIGHT TOGETHER FOR THE CHILDREN**” would be used. Julia suggested having photos of members and the logo/strapline on a notice board at each of the children’s services offices to raise awareness.  Badges with Logo and Leaflets should also be produced and Antonella said she could hand these out at “Skills to Foster” when they are available. Mark to talk with Paul Jackson about implementing this.

**AOB** – Peter is going to be presenting the “Fostering Advisory Partnership” to the Children’s Services Committee. This is a meeting on the 7th July at 10am with councillors who will view the document and question him if they feel they need to, on the content. Mark and Julia will also be attending to represent the Partnership.

Date and venue of next meeting to be circulated – Peter to ask Gen.

Peter to thank the In Care Council for their involvement in the Corporate Parenting Presentation, via Irene.

Need to get FAP logo added to web pages.

Minutes written by Sharon Donoghue 17/6/2015

Checked by Mark Buckle 22/6/2015