

## FCA Meeting minutes 27/02/2017

Attendee's – Kelvin Troake, Dave Cowler, Shirley Stephens, Aileen Butcher, Sally Newcomb, Rachel & Chris Butters, Annette Wickstead, Elaine Koerner, Kevin Hann, (team leader West Fostering), Caroline Cook (Communications team), Annie Baker (SSWA).

Apologies – Gwyn Samways, Melanie Chalfont-Griffin, Trudy & Matthew Patch, Rebekah Moore, Janet Beattie.

- Kelvin volunteered to chair the meeting, it was discussed that despite the SFCA running for a year the constitution had never been formally adopted so was not legal, the constitution was redrafted to be legal by Kelvin in January and was formally adopted at a meeting on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> January.
- It was established that not all committee positions are filled, there will need to be an extraordinary meeting to appoint the committee members, this will be circulated to all foster carers and Rachel suggested that a free raffle may be a good way to encourage carers to attend coffee morning/meeting. Rachel had received a family pass from @Bristol that could be used as the raffle prize.
- Kelvin proposed that the SFCA needed a clear purpose and that the main purpose should be as a voice for foster carers to the local authority and that links with the local authority should be developed and improved. He also suggested that there needs to be a specific purpose for the coffee mornings to make them distinctive from those offered by the Local Authority, it was discussed that they are for support for carers and that the numbers had been gradually improving over the past months.
- Shirley suggested that there could be some evening social events but not held in the hall; perhaps in a room at a local hotel or pub so that it is a bit more relaxed. There had been feedback from a foster carer after she had attended a coffee morning at Edgar Hall that the room was too small and had no windows so was unwelcoming. Dave said that the FCA should hold the next coffee morning in the larger council room at Edgar Hall as this would be more comfortable and have more room, this was agreed at the meeting, despite the extra cost, and has now been booked for Monday 27<sup>th</sup> March 10 – 12. Dave also suggested the SFCA hold an Easter coffee morning somewhere where there is an outside area for children to play, Annie said that both East & West fostering hold their own Easter events but wondered if something could be done that involved both East fostering and the SFCA?
- Treasurers report from Belinda given by Rachel – the budget available to the SFCA is currently £1193.58 Kelvin asked if the local authority will continue give the SFCA £500 annually.

- There was some general discussion about the future of the SFCA, do foster carers actually want the SFCA, do foster carers know what it is and what support it offers? Kelvin asked whether the foster carer feedback form that is sent out annually could be amended to have a couple of questions added to the end of it asking carers about the SFCA and if they will support it. Apparently the feedback form compilation is something Angie has been involved with but Angie is not at work at the moment – **Kevin said he would ask if he could possibly take this over from Angie and see if the questions could be added.**
- From this there was also discussion about the SFCA and if there should be a time limit on whether it should continue because of the lack of support and lack of committee member volunteers. Rachel suggested another six months to give it a good push to see if there is more interest. Kevin suggested that SSW's also promote the SFCA during supervision and asked if the SSW's get included in the SFCA emails.
- Caroline suggested forming a closed Facebook page for the SFCA, however this has been discussed before, this will be looked into again.
- Finally it was decided that there should be a committee section tagged on to the next coffee morning, this would be to formally appoint the five committee officers (trustee's) so that the SFCA can run. There are already a secretary, Rebekah Moore, a treasurer, Belinda Pickard and a vice treasurer, Rachel Butters in office but along with filling the chair and vice-chair positions they will need to be voted in again at the next meeting. Should another email go out to all carers asking for volunteers for the committee positions as well as SSW's promoting the SFCA during supervision?
- *At the end of the meeting Caroline asked if she could get some feedback from the carers who were present and use it as a focus group. Caroline discussed future events such as the flash mob choir event in Taunton on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> March as well as the fundraising event in May which is the Five Peaks challenge. Caroline is also looking at how fostering in Somerset can be promoted and discussed different media outlets that people use, explaining that the budget has been cut so there needs to be other ways of advertising fostering in Somerset.*
- **Next meeting at the SFCA coffee morning – Mon 27<sup>th</sup> March, Edgar Hall, 10 – 12.**