# Agenda – South East regional fostering network

**Chair incoming: Sarah Daly DCS Portsmouth** Attendees: Attendees: Adrian Sewell (East Sussex); Anisha Reed (Wokingham); Jackie Clark (Portsmouth); Liz Shields (Bucks); Catherine Tilzey (West Sussex), Karl Davis (West Berks); Peter Hodges (Bracknell Forest); Mark Vening (Kent), Nicola Anthony (Kent), Martin Smith (Southampton), Robert Wayman (Hampshire), Sarah Smith (Hampshire), Berni Farmer (Isle of Wight), Helen Field (Southampton); Keith Langley ( Harkiran Randhawa (Windsor and Maidenhead/Achieving for Children); John Donnelly (Brighton and Hove);

**Meeting details: July 13 2022** via MS Teams 10-11.30

**Items 1 and 2**

The minutes and actions from the last meeting were agreed

**Item 3: Mystery shopping**

Bracknell Forest presented their mystery shopping findings. Some LAs reflected that the process has been really helpful. Others (Brighton and Hove, AfC) reflected that it is becoming less helpful over time. Revisit after we have completed next two rounds or whether we want to continue to have a break

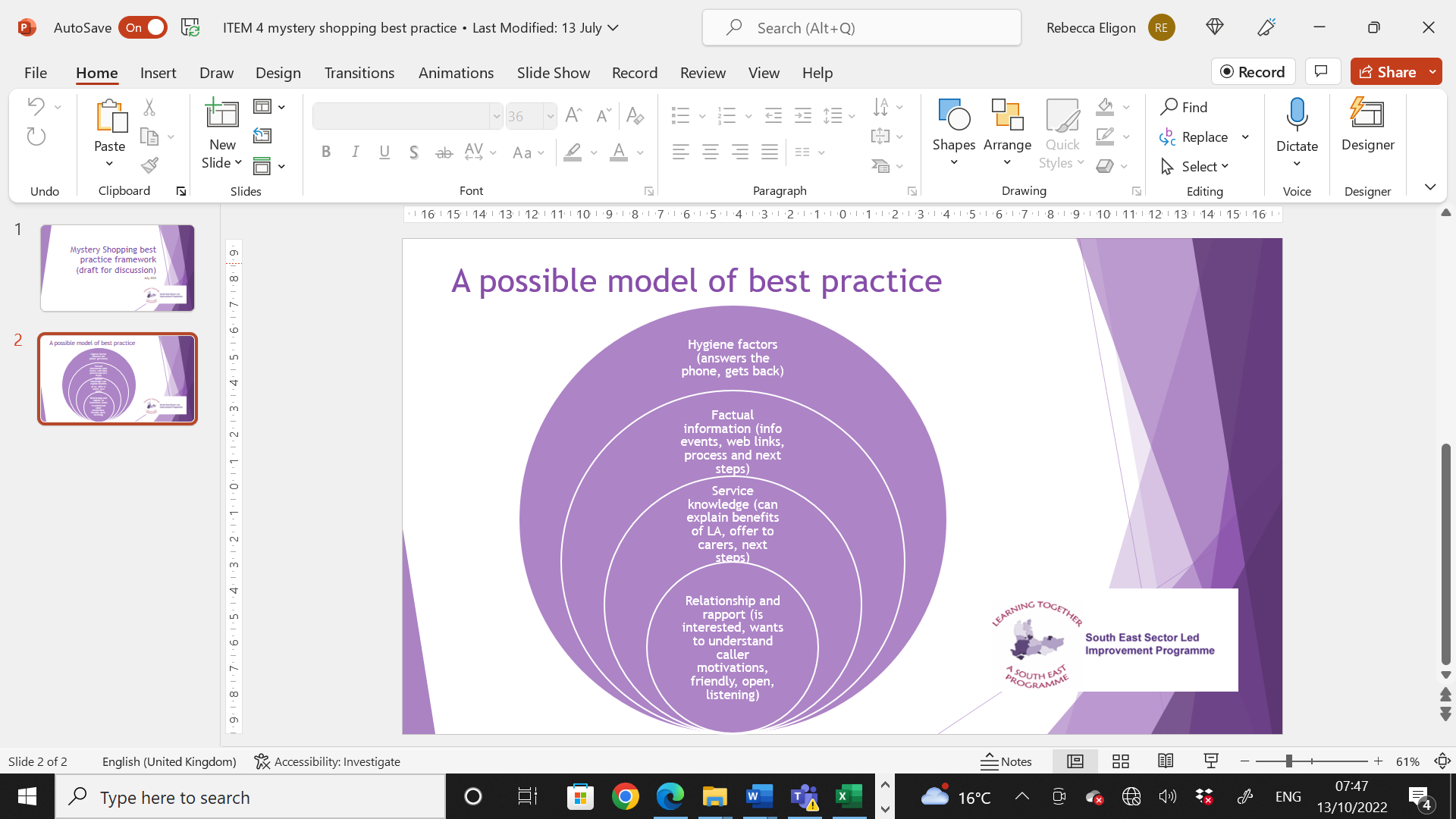
**Action:** Review after January meeting whether we continue Mystery Shopping. Group also agreed it would be useful to do mystery shopping of online contact rather than phone as this is where the majority of contact comes from initially. Bucks is due to complete January 2022, possibly they do an online mystery shop?

**Item 4: Initial recruitment contact best practice framework**

RE presented a summary of the findings from the last 7 waves of mystery shopping. The group agreed this was a useful framework and shared that different LAs have different approaches to resourcing their initial contact with prospective foster carers.

RW reflected that in Hampshire they have a recruitment team and assessment team to focus on this. BF said in IOW they have a mix of qualified SW and fostering practitioners responding to duty line.

**Action:**  KL (West Berks) and JC (Portsmouth) offered to share their recruitment crib sheet.



**Item 5: Practice sharing Kent**

Kent shared their journey to Outstanding, and focused their presentation on their approach to recruitment using online and digital (including use of google ads) to develop a unique ‘Foster for Kent’ approach. LS shared that in Bucks they have fosterweb a closed site for carers. Other LAs reflected they have not been able to be as flexible and creative as they would like due to corporate policies.

**Action:** MV to circulate slides

**Action:** Milton Keynes to present at October meeting. Remaining LAs are Medway, Surrey and Wokingham

**Item 6: Mockingbird and Inside Out**

RE updated on the Mockingbird programme which is progressing well although some LAs have had to stand down, so there is capacity if any other LAs want to explore starting up. The first LAs in this cohort are due to go live in the autumn (Bucks is first).

Inside out is going well for most of the 11 participating LAs, with the exception of two LAs where progress has been more limited. Inside out is focused on using a small amount of funding creatively with 5 or more families to prevent placement breakdown. Some LAs have taken a highly bespoke approach, others are offering something consistent to each family. Some are focusing on kinship carers, whilst others it is fostering or residential. A learning report will be available for January

**Action:** Schedule Learning report findings for January meeting

**Item 7: Mapping survey feedback**

At the April meeting participants said they would like regional mapping work undertaken relating to

* + Staff structure
  + Standard Respite/sleepover offer
  + Approach to back up carers
  + Receptiveness to sharing panel members
  + Staying put
  + Cost of living increases

There is very useful information, but only the following LAs responded: Milton Keynes, Kent, Bucks, West Berks.

**Action:**  Other LAs to respond to mapping

**Item 8: Practice issues**

**CCTV policy:**  LS from Bucks was seeking input on whether other LAs have a CCTV policy. HF said they include this in their safer caring policy.

**Action:** LS to circulate Bucks CCTV policy

**Ukraine:**  LAs reflected that at the moment they have been able to support the needs of Ukraine children; however, there are issues with the timeliness of medicals across the region.

**Action log:** This action log was updated on 13 October 2022. Shaded lines, actions are complete

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Action** | **Responsible** | **Date issued** | **Status** |
| **21** | LS to circulate CCTV policy from Bucks | LS | July 2022 | Complete |
| **20** | MV to circulate Kent slides | MV | July 2022 | Complete |
| **19** | KL (West Berks- circulated) and JC (Portsmouth) offered to share their recruitment crib sheet. | KL and JC | July 2022 | Partial |
| **18** | Bucks to do mystery shop for Jan (poss testing online/email contact), review mystery shopping in Jan | LS | July 2022 | Open |
| **17** | Can we monitor and discuss Ukraine again next meeting | DG | April 2022 | **Closed** |
| **16** | Chair to escalate issues re: Inside Out | DG | April 2022 | Closed |
| **15** | West Sussex to share retention officer JD | JB | April 2022 | Open |
| **14** | Kent to share practice next time | MV | April 2022 | Closed |
| **13** | Map management structures and roles, map respite/sleepover offer through survey | RE | April 2022 | Closed |
| **12** | Draft model of excellence for next time based on learning over the last several waves | RE | April 2022 | Closed |
| **11** | Next waves of mystery shopping are Bracknell Forest (July), then Milton Keynes (October) then Bucks (Jan) | RE | April 2022 | Closed |
| **10** | RE to contact IoW Milton Keynes and Surrey who have had no reps at the last two meetings | RE | Jan 2022 | Closed |
| **9** | Terms of reference to be finalised and uploaded to SESLIP website. | RE | Jan 2022 | Closed |
| **8** | JB and MS to share contact details for training delivered on anti-racist practice | JB and MS | Jan 2022 | Closed |
| **7** | Discuss at April meeting which of the areas for regional collaboration the group want so take forward first (discuss with new chair) | All | Jan 2022 | Closed |
| **6** | LS to share legal advice received in relation to case where unions involved, re: foster carers and employment rights. | LS | Jan 2022 | Closed |
| **5** | Rebecca to draft Terms of reference and regional priorities for consideration at next meeting | RE | Oct 2021 | Closed |
| **4** | Any LAs interested in forming project team to develop regional recruitment website contact Rebecca. Revisit this action in Jan 2023 pending outcome of Care review and capacity of Las to take forward. | All | Oct 2021 | Open |
| **3** | Reading to share practice and mystery shopping at January meeting | SJ | Oct 2021 | Closed |
| **2** | All to contact Alistair Herbert to arrange support with using the fostering projection tool. Fostering projection tool to come back once further work complete. (Agenda for Jan 2023) | All | Oct 2021 | Open |
| **1** | All to publicise regional online SG conference | All | Oct 2021 | Closed |