

Attendees

Design Group members:

- Rashida Baig MBE
- Nick Pendry
- Angela Frazer-Wicks
- Gareth Edwards
- Mrs Justice Gwyneth Knowles
- Stuart Carlton
- Paul Kissack
- Jenny Thompson
- Baroness Blake of Leeds
- Lord Farmer
- Councillor Robert Waltham MBE
- Margaret Mulowska
- Carol Culley OBE
- Dr Claire Dimond
- Charlotte Ramsden OBE

Review Team:

- Josh MacAlister, Chair
- Review team members
- Duncan Dunlop, Independent Adviser to the Review

Apologies:

- Donna Hall
- Isabelle Trowler

Agenda Item 1: Role of the group and ways of working

- Josh provided an overview of the Terms of Reference for the Group. Members confirmed they are happy with the outlined approach.

Agenda Item 2: Learning from Scottish and New Zealand Care Reviews

- Duncan ran through key lessons learnt from his involvement in the Scottish and New Zealand care reviews, including the need to balance short-term actions with longer-term planning for whole-system change.

Action: Duncan will run a session with interested attendees about the two reviews.

Agenda Item 3: Review structure and Case for Change

- Review team member outlined plans to publish a Case for Change in early summer which will set out the scale of the challenge, present our interpretation of the evidence, and provide the opportunity for comment on whether our initial diagnosis is right.
- The review has drawn on various evidence bases, including our Call for Evidence, Call for Advice, research seminars and consultation events with people with lived experience of children's social care.
- The Case for Change will present the review's initial thinking and will pose challenging questions for discussion.

Action: The review will share a working draft of the Case for Change with the Design Group for comment.

Discussion:

- Stating the positive and bringing out what works is powerful.
- Drawing out the distinction between family stress, including poverty, and child protection is welcome.
- The Case for Change should highlight what we do not know, as well as what we do.
- Need to be clear on what we mean by “early help” or related phrases.
- Need to highlight the importance of the whole system and wider services e.g. housing, substance misuse, community sector etc.

Agenda Item 4: Early thinking on Design Approach

- The review will move through four stages of design:
 - 1) Diagnosis (through the Case for Change)
 - 2) Consultation and understanding drivers
 - 3) Developing options
 - 4) Recommendation testing, costing and implementation planning
- We will naturally move at a different pace across different issues, and external milestones – such as the Spending Review – will influence the work too.
- We are considering running deep dives in a number of areas to develop a problem analysis and understand issues in different areas. We will consider picking one or two areas to consider issues more deeply, starting from the perspective of children and families.
- Our focus is to listen to families and hear more about what they need and want.

Discussion:

- Challenges presented by the delivery timeline.
- Need to balance risks of zooming in on areas (may not be representative) with knowing more about what is happening on the ground.
- Example of using a charitable organisation to embed themselves in the local community and draw out the lived experiences of those in the area.
- Importance of developing a review which has a true sense of heart and direction which can be stronger than multiple recommendations.
- Need to design something which works for different characteristics of local authorities.

The next Design Group meeting will take place in July.