

### Attendees

Design Group members:

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

Review Team:

- Josh MacAlister, Chair
- Duncan Dunlop, Independent Adviser to the Review
- Design Group Secretariat
- Review Team Members

Apologies:

- Donna Hall
- Paul Kissack
- Jenny Thompson

### **Agenda item 1: Update on review activity**

- Josh thanked the group for their support in the review so far. The review team gave an update of the review's progress, covering the case for change feedback themes, local design visits to local authorities, Bridge the Gap events and other recent activity. The review is now moving towards developing options for change.

### **Discussion:**

- How is the review engaging social workers and other frontline practitioners? The review has been doing this through a wide range of means, including Practice Leaders Network, visits to local authorities, online events, and the Bridge the Gap process. We will publish a summary of the key messages we have heard.

- Is the review categorising the messages it has heard by type of care experience e.g. kinship care, foster care, residential care? The review will be publishing some engagement summaries later this week which highlight what we have been hearing in the engagement work – this won't be structured by placement type, but we have been looking at the research evidence on different experiences of care experience depending on placement.
- Impressive amount of work by the review team on the scale of engagement.

### **Agenda item 2: Recommendations development – ideas session**

- The review team gave an overview of the approach to recommendations development. The review is now moving into an options development phase using insights gained through the first phases of the review. The review wants to get a wide range of ideas and so plans to launch a public call for ideas shortly.
- The group then discussed possible ideas for change. The discussion included:

#### **Discussion: Ideas from group members**

##### Early help and protection

- Greater involvement of those with lived experience in decision making at a local and national level.
- Parental advocacy is valuable, but it should not replace legal aid.
- Family hubs for 0-25 across all 152 local authorities – not just the 75 which the programme is currently aimed at.
- More use of residential schools (e.g. state and private boarding schools) to create stable environment and relationships for those children who this is the right option for.
- Place based approach to family support, through a legal duty on all different public services to support children and families together rather than working in organisational silos.
- Greater application of problem-solving approaches to care proceedings as this could make a change to how parents perceive the proceedings.
- One stop shop – one front door where families can go and ask for help. This would include a range of services coming together and an open door which is non-stigmatising.

##### Children in care, care leavers and kinship

- Remove the age limit and cliff edge by abolishing the concept of a 'care leavers' so they aren't leaving. Doesn't necessarily cost any more money or require any more staff – it is a culture shift.
- Legal requirement to match the opportunities that a normal family would offer to a child for children in care e.g. support going to university, support getting employment.
- Each LA could have a care leaver housing association, with funding to buy and manage accommodation in the long term for care leavers.

- Mental health for children and young people should sit with DfE rather than DHSC so it is a joined up service for children.
- Training and entry requirements for social workers – we should have a similar model to NHS with more specialist roles and more senior staff continuing to work at the frontline in consultant roles.
- Introduce a mental health role which oversees the mental health support for children in care, care leavers and carers. Don't wait until they show signs of needing mental health support but fit it into the plan when they come in. Equivalent to virtual school heads but for mental health.
- Kinship - wider family help input and wider access to benefits. Break down the silos in emergency situations to make sure there are no barriers to kinship e.g. housing support.

### Systems enablers

- National care service – we have reoccurring issues across LAs with consistency of what support children receive, which suggests we need greater national oversight and accountability.
- Partners should come together holistically on extra-familial harms with a common set of data and purpose. More use of hubs that join up different services for young people.
- Clinical therapeutic staff working alongside social workers – social workers could learn from the therapeutic staff, and it would reduce the pressure and workload.
- Need a fresh look at the inspection framework - independent eyes are important to review the quality of safeguarding services but it shouldn't drive perverse behaviour.

### **Agenda item 3: Next meeting and AOB**

- Next meeting will be mid-January.