

**Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel,
Tuesday, 13th July, 2021, 10.00 am**

Director Children's Service and Education PDS Report

Care Review

Josh McCallister, Chair Independent Review of Social Care has now published **The Case for Change**. The full interim report is attached for consideration and review.

The Department of Education has announced a number of opportunities for Local Authorities to contribute. These include:

- **Children in care councils and Coram Voice programme** – more info and link to sign up [here](#).
- Share the **workforce expression of interest survey** round to encourage sign up, you can also sign up collectively as one LA - [link here](#).
- Share the **lived experience expression of interest survey** round to carers, parents, care leavers and children in care to encourage sign up - [link here](#)
- **Feedback on the case for change** document recently published. The Case for Change is attached as a separate document for review. Feedback through the survey published on our website - [link here](#).

B&NES are actively involved in the Care Review.

Children's Social Care

Children's Social Care continues to be incredibly busy and we are seeing a rise in the complexity of work, despite this the workforce continue to work hard to support the needs of our local communities.

Children's Social Care continue to facilitate monthly multi agency meetings, all attendees find this valuable as it offers an opportunity to share any challenges and achievements across the partnership.

Children's Social Care have retained the link social workers for all schools, including independent schools and academies across B&NES, that was established in the second Covid 19 lockdown: this has been well received.

Virtual School

As the panel has been previously advised, our virtual school for looked after children has been part of a national pilot to support children in care and children on child protection plans. We have been pleased to be able to offer this support and it has been invaluable during school lockdowns and has enabled us to provide additional support to some of our most vulnerable young people. In late June, we were notified that the DFE would be funding all LA's across the country to expand their Virtual Schools. This is positive news and we like to consider that our work on the pilot locally (1 of 3 in the country) has influenced this national rollout. We will provide more detail on both evaluation of the pilot and the expanded school in the autumn.

Children's Social Care Covid-19 Regional Recovery and Building Back Better Fund

Children and Families Minister Vicky Ford announced in her Association of Directors of Children Services (ADCS) Conference speech on 8 July 2021, **the Children's Social Care Covid-19 Regional Recovery and Building Back Better Fund**. Each Regional Improvement and Innovation Alliance is invited to submit a single response on behalf of the region, with each Local Authority, including B&NES, contributing to the regional recovery plan. We will provide an update on what that actually means for B&NES at the next PDS.