

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE – 7 JUNE 2022

QUESTIONS ASKED BY AN ELECTED MEMBER UNDER
STANDING ORDER 7

Question asked by Mr Max Hunt CC

- “1. Is the County Council broadly in support of Josh McAllister’s Independent Review of Children’s Services (May 2022) and will we be writing to MPs and Ministers urging the implementation of its major recommendations.
2. Some of the recommendations from Josh McAllister’s Independent Review of Children’s Services are or could be instigated independently of Government and, for example, the Report says that local authorities “need help to take back control of this system through establishing new Regional Care Cooperatives (RCCs)”. Is this something we could consider?
3. Would it be helpful or unhelpful to raise a windfall tax on the county council’s providers, as the Independent Review of Children’s Services Report suggests?
4. Was the County Council invited to give evidence to the Review and if so can this be made available for committee members?
5. The Review identifies a rising number of Looked After Children from 2011 to date and projected to rise to nearly 100,00 in the next ten years if the reforms are not implemented. What are the equivalent annual figures for this period in Leicestershire?”

Reply by the Chairman:

1. The Children and Family Services department welcomes the publication of the Independent Review of Children’s Social Care’s final report. The report has a welcomed emphasis on children’s rights and outcomes, on social justice and on relationships and doesn’t shy away from the big challenges children, families, public services and society faces, in particular the report highlights the need for significant investment in rebalancing the social care system towards early family support.

The Department are looking at the review and its recommendations and are keen to work with MPs and Ministers over the next few months to further understand what it will mean for Leicestershire. It is likely that government funding will be required to make significant changes to how services operate.

2. The Department are looking carefully at the review in order to understand what can be instigated independently of government. No decisions have yet been made around what this could look like.
3. The windfall tax is one of the recommendations in the review that government will comment on. It is too early for the County Council to make a comment on how helpful this would be.
4. Staff across the Department were involved in an engagement event as part of the review. A summary of the review's workforce engagement (that includes input from Leicestershire) can be found here [Workforce Engagement Summary](#).
5. In Leicestershire, the Department has done a five year projection of the number of children in the care of the Local Authority based on a 4% increase each year which will see the number of children in care in Leicestershire rise from 690 in 2022 to 840 in 2027.