

Swyddfa Comisiynydd yr Heddlu a Throseddau, Gwent
Office of Police and Crime Commissioner, Gwent

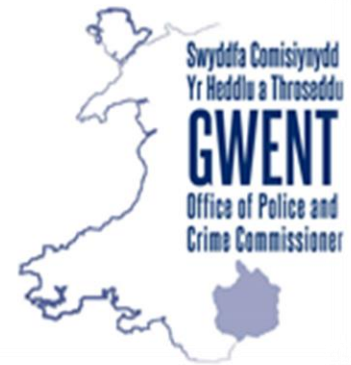
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Comisiynydd Heddlu a Throseddau Gwent | Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent:
Jeff Cuthbert B.Sc., MCIPD



The Rt Hon Priti Patel MP
Home Secretary
Home Office
2 Marsham Street
LONDON
SW1P 4DF

15th August 2019

Dear Home Secretary

Gwent - National Child Protection Inspection

As required by statute, I am writing to you to respond, from a Gwent perspective, to the recommendations contained within the HMICFRS 'National Child Protection' inspection report for Gwent.

I was extremely pleased with the largely positive report on the child protection practices within Gwent Police, especially in relation to the strong commitment to safeguarding the vulnerable. I was also pleased that the work Gwent Police has undertaken in recent years to prioritise the wellbeing of staff within the force has been recognised, particularly the support that is in place for those who work in the areas of child protection.

Protecting the most vulnerable in our communities is a priority, both for my office and for Gwent Police; this is evidenced by the focus within my Police and Crime Plan on protecting children.

I am proud of the on-going work in Gwent to continue to build on the practices already in place to safeguard children from abuse, exploitation and harm, including the implementation of Operation Encompass to support children experiencing domestic abuse. Another positive initiative is our Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, which brings partners together to safeguard and protect the most vulnerable in our society.

I acknowledge that some recommendations for improvement have been provided by HMICFRS, primarily around improving communication with children who have witnessed an offence and improving our internal processes to ensure children are able to receive support at the earliest opportunity.

Gwent Police has already begun to implement some of these recommendations and I will continue to monitor progress in order to ensure that victims and witnesses in Gwent receive the best possible service.

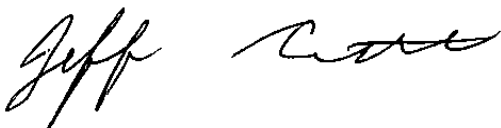
Despite Gwent Police making significant improvement in its response to protecting children in recent years, the Chief Constable and the Head of CID and Protective Services have assured me that the recommendations made in the report are being taken extremely seriously and that there are plans in place to address these concerns. Gwent Police is also working hard to improve how it manages risk and provides protection and support to children by working closely with partners in social care, education and health.

Prior to the inspection, Gwent Police had spent time understanding the demands placed on the Public Protection Unit (PPU). This review identified that the demand placed on the PPU was growing and needed to be addressed. The PCC and the Chief Constable decided to invest in this area, and, as a result, a further 30 investigators will be added to the unit and a restructure will take place to ensure it can cope with current and future demand.

I note that Gwent Police has been required to develop an action plan within six weeks of receiving the report to indicate how the recommendations will be met. This action plan will be discussed at my Strategy and Performance Board meeting, which is the forum at which I hold the Chief Constable to account, on 4th September 2019.

Protecting children is one of the most important roles that the police service undertakes and I welcome the quick response of the force to address the recommendations identified in the inspection. I will continue to support the Chief Constable to ensure further progress is made against the recommendations identified by the inspectorate.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeff Cuthbert', written in a cursive style.

Jeff Cuthbert B.Sc., MCIPD
Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent