

SUBJECT: Independent Safeguarding Review

MEETING: Cabinet

DATE: 7th October 2015

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All

1. **PURPOSE:** To inform Cabinet of the findings of the independent report undertaken by Ellis Williams into Safeguarding across the County.
2. **RECOMMENDATIONS:** That Cabinet note the report and that key recommendations will be taken forward via the Safeguarding Service Improvement Planning process.
3. **KEY ISSUES:**
 - 3.1 Members will be aware of the level of improvement activity around whole authority safeguarding. The WAO, ESTYN and CSSIW have each raised issues in this area and significant improvements have been put in place. Safeguarding remains a key priority for the Council and we recognise that we need to continue our journey to demonstrate the impact of our work on keeping children and young people safe.
 - 3.2 Consequently it is timely to seek an independent view of how we are progressing in this area and the Chief Officer, Social Care and Health, on behalf of the Whole Authority Safeguarding Group, commissioned a focussed review in May 2015. The stated purpose was to provide an independent external critique, based around the question *“How well does the authority ensure that children and young people are safeguarded?”*
 - 3.3 Ellis Williams, previously Director of Social Services in Newport and Rhondda Cynon Taff Councils was selected to undertake the work based on his extensive experience of the sector. He studied key documents and interviewed a number of officers and Members to form his judgment.
 - 3.4 Ellis William’s report is attached. There is a summary of his conclusions on page 4 of the report and his recommendations can be found on page 18. The report provides a balanced view of the Council and on the whole has a positive tone. It recognises that there has been significant change (see 4.1 of the Williams report) whilst making a number of constructive recommendations on how we should strengthen Safeguarding further.
4. **REASONS:** The attached independent report is an important document for us as we continue to improve our Safeguarding approaches in Monmouthshire.
5. **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:** The cost of commissioning the report was £5,000. This was funded from existing safeguarding budgets.

6. **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:** There are no implications arising directly from this report. Any subsequent decisions arising out of the Safeguarding agenda would be evaluated separately.
7. **SAFEGUARDING IMPLICATIONS:** Focus of this whole report is improving Safeguarding.
8. **CONSULTEES:**

Senior Leadership Team
All Cabinet Members
Head of Legal
Head of Finance
9. **BACKGROUND PAPERS:** None
10. **AUTHOR:** Simon Burch, Chief Officer
11. **CONTACT DETAILS:**

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