

To: Chief Constables/Commissioners

13th July 2011

## **MUNRO REVIEW OF CHILD PROTECTION: GOVERNMENT RESPONSE**

Dear Colleagues

Just over a year ago, we established the Munro Review of Child Protection. Today sees the publication of the Government's response to the review and the 15 recommendations Professor Munro made.

In her final report, Professor Munro gave us a very thorough analysis of the issues. The Government accepts her fundamental argument that the child protection system needs to focus more closely on the effectiveness of help available to children and young people and the importance of professional practice and judgment in this work. To help redress this, we believe we need to move towards a child protection system with less central prescription and greater trust and responsibility placed in skilled professionals. We also need to make clear, that in doing this, we expect managers and leaders to continue to develop local arrangements for rigorous challenge of and improvement in the help that is offered to children and young people. We want to move to implementation which is shared with professionals and the sector itself.

The Government's response reflects these intentions. It does not seek to impose a one size fits all approach nor introduce a host of new procedures. We believe that local leaders with their partners should have the freedom to design and deliver services to improve outcomes

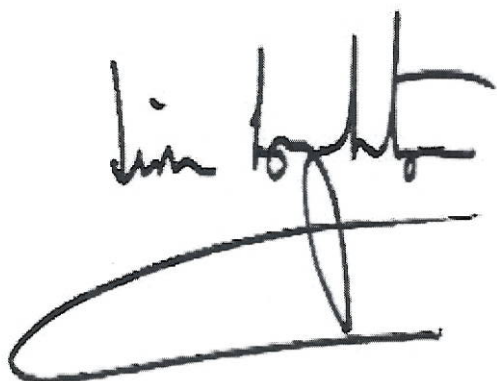
and meet the needs of children and young people and to account locally for those decisions and outcomes.

The review presents us with significant opportunities, but it also presents significant challenges. These challenges are not for central Government alone. We have worked closely with the sector, including with ACPO to develop the response, a response that marks the first steps of a journey of reform. We are committed to working in partnership on the detailed work that now needs to take place to help support that journey. Over the summer we will be looking to put in place the partnership working arrangements. We will draw on existing groups where possible, for example the Social Work Reform Board and the Implementation Working Group, which has already benefited from valuable input from CC Brian Moore, ACPO Lead on Violence & Public Protection but in other areas we will need to put in place new arrangements including a multi-disciplinary group of professionals.

We recognise the important part the police play in local child safeguarding partnership arrangements; continuing to strengthen these partnerships with children's services and other local agencies will be essential in implementing these reforms.

The Government will be looking to agencies, including the police, to show leadership in reforming the child protection system to focus on the needs of children and young people. We welcome your help in moving away from central prescription and creating a system that values and develops professional judgement, to enable and support police officers and other professionals in doing their best for vulnerable children and their families

As chief officers, we look forward to your ongoing leadership and engagement in bringing about these long term reforms with your local partners. Officials will be in contact with ACPO leads to discuss new arrangements shortly.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Loughton', with a large, sweeping underline.

**TIM LOUGHTON MP**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lynne Featherstone', with a large, circular flourish at the end.

**LYNNE FEATHERSTONE MP**