

**CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE –
7 SEPTEMBER 2021**

**LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN
PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21**

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to present the draft Annual Report of the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership for 2020/21.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. The Children Acts of 1989 and 2004 set out specific duties for local authorities, working with partner organisations and agencies, to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area. Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 puts a duty on the local authority to provide services to children in need in their area; section 47 of the same Act requires local authorities to undertake enquiries if they believe a child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm.
3. These duties can only realistically be discharged with the full co-operation of other partners, many of whom have individual duties when carrying out their functions under section 11 of the Children Act 2004.
4. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 and Working Together 2018 (statutory guidance on inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children) give responsibility for this join-up locally with the safeguarding partners, the Police, Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and the local authority, which have a shared and equal duty to agree and make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in a local area.
5. The multi-agency safeguarding arrangements locally are managed through the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership that covers the counties of Leicestershire and Rutland. The arrangements were published on 28 June 2019 and commenced on 29 September 2019. These arrangements replaced the former Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).
6. It is a statutory requirement, as set out in Working Together 2018, that the Safeguarding Partners publish a report at least once every twelve months on the arrangements and their effectiveness.

Background

7. The multi-agency safeguarding arrangements for Leicestershire and Rutland were presented to this Committee on 5 March 2019, prior to being published on 28 June 2019.
8. An update on progress including the first annual report of the Safeguarding Children Partnership, and the business plan for the period this Annual report relates was presented to this Committee on 1 September 2020.
9. The Safeguarding Children Partnership shares some operational arrangements with the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board (LRSAB) and some partnership structures with the Leicester Safeguarding Children Partnership Board (LSCPb).

Annual Report

10. The key purpose of the Annual Report is to assess the impact of the work undertaken in 2020/21 on service quality and on safeguarding outcomes for children in Leicestershire and Rutland. Specifically it evaluates performance against the priorities that were set out in the LRSCP Business Plan 2020/21.
11. The Draft Annual Report 2020/21 can be found at Appendix A to this report. This is the content of the report which will go to design to be finished into the document that will be published.
12. The report will include an independent scrutiny assessment of progress from the Independent Advisor to the Partnership, Kay Whyte-Bell. This has not been able to be completed in time for this meeting due to the availability of the Advisor, but will be included in the final report.
13. The report outlines the learning, assurance, training and improvement activity of the LRSCP and its partners, particularly the response to difficult circumstances of the pandemic and the impact this has had on safeguarding children. Key messages from the SCP specifically in relation to Leicestershire are:
 - a) Partners have worked well together to safeguarding children and to identify needs and areas for improvement to safeguard children during the difficult and changing circumstances of the pandemic.
 - b) Continued work is required to sustain approaches that hear the voice and understand the lived experience of children in safeguarding and respond to this.
 - c) Safeguarding babies and the mental health of young people are notable areas to improve safeguarding identified during the pandemic.
 - d) The partnership will continue to work together and develop links across partnerships to foster a reliable, trusting culture in organisations and across the area and challenge and drive improvement in multi-agency safeguarding of adults.
14. The report outlines a change to the existing arrangements that the delegated officers of the statutory safeguarding partners will chair the partnership in place of the Independent Advisor. This comes into place in October 2021 and has been identified as the partnership has reviewed its working, in order to allow the Independent Advisor to give a greater focus to independent scrutiny of the effectiveness of the arrangements.

Proposals/Options

15. The Committee is asked to consider the Annual Report and make any comments or proposed additions or amendments to the report that will be addressed prior to the final version being published.

Consultation

16. The Annual Report includes a summary of the consultation and engagement work the SCP has carried out with children and young people and with practitioners.
17. The Business Plan has been directly influenced by the priorities identified by children and young people as part of the Leicestershire and Rutland SCP Young People's Advisory Group.
18. All members of the SCP have had opportunities to contribute to and comment on earlier drafts of the Annual Report and have been consulted in developing the Business Plan.

Resource Implications

19. Safeguarding partners have, along with Safeguarding Adults Board statutory partners, set a single agreement of principles to share the operating costs of the Safeguarding Children Partnerships and Safeguarding Adults Boards for Leicestershire and Rutland.
20. As part of this agreement Leicestershire County Council contributes £102,496 to the SAB and SCP in 2021/22. This is 31% of the total funding for the Leicestershire and Rutland SAB and SCP (£325,779). This compares with £112,633 in the previous year which was 31% of the total budget for the Leicestershire and Rutland LSCB, SCP and SAB of £358,500 in 2020/21.
21. This compares with £137,897 in the previous year which was 40% of the total budget for the Leicestershire and Rutland LSCB, SCP and SAB of £343,419 in 2019/20.
22. Leicestershire County Council also hosts the Safeguarding Boards' Business Office that supports the SCP and SAB.
23. The Director of Corporate Resources and Director of Law and Governance have been consulted on the content of this report.

Timetable for Decisions

24. The Annual Report of the Safeguarding Children Partnership will be published by the end of September 2021. Any comments will be considered and addressed prior to the final report being published.

Background Papers

25. Report to the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 September 2020.

Circulation under Local Issues Alert Procedure

26. None.

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List of Appendices

Appendix A - Annual Report of the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership 2020/21.

Relevant Impact Assessments:

Equality and Human Rights Implications

27. Safeguarding children, young people and adults concerns individuals who are likely to be disadvantaged in a number of ways. Information on differing needs of and impacts on different groups of individuals with regard to safeguarding is considered as part of the process to develop the Board's Business Plan. The Partnership has a specific priority in 2020/21 exploring safeguarding of children from diverse backgrounds..

Crime and Disorder Implications

28. There is a close connection between the work of the LRSCP and that of community safety partnerships in Leicestershire. For example the LRSCP works closely with community safety partnerships to scrutinise and challenge performance in community safety issues that affect the safeguarding and well-being of individuals and groups, for example domestic abuse and Prevent. The LRSCP also supports community safety partnerships in carrying out Domestic Homicide Reviews and acting on their recommendations.

Environmental Implications

29. The published LRSCP Annual Report will be made available on-line in electronic form, rather than paper. There are no other environmental implications.

Partnership Working and associated issues

30. Safeguarding is dependent on the effective work of the partnership as set out in national regulation, Working Together 2018, published by the Department for Education.