

**CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE –
5 SEPTEMBER 2022**

**LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN
PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23**

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the views of the Committee on the draft Annual Report of the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership for 2022/23.

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, Integrated Care Board (ICB) 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.
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. These were updated in October 2022 and are published on the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Board's website.

8. 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

9. The key purpose of the Annual Report is to assess the impact of the work undertaken in 2022/23 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 2022/23.
10. The Draft Annual Report 2022/23 is appended to this report. This is the content of the report which has been to design but can be updated as necessary before being published.
11. The report outlines the learning, assurance, training, and improvement activity of the LRSCP and its partners, and the impact this has had on safeguarding children. Key messages from the SCP specifically in relation to Leicestershire are:
 - a) Partner organisations, workers and managers have worked well together to safeguard children and to identify needs and areas for improvement to safeguard children in the midst of ongoing challenge and change relating to the post-pandemic era and other societal pressures such as the cost-of-living crisis.
 - b) The partnership has continued its work to respond to emerging risks, such as safeguarding babies. For example, early in 2022/23, ICON was launched across the local Safeguarding Children Partnerships. ICON is an evidenced-based programme focused on reducing abusive head trauma (AHT) triggered by crying. The mnemonic ICON outlines the key messages of the programme: **I**nfant crying is normal, **C**omforting methods can help, **I**t's **O**K to walk away, and **n**ever, ever shake a baby.
 - c) We continued with work established in 2021 around Child Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing.
 - d) We completed lots of work seeking assurance on Keeping Adolescents Safe / Supporting Safe Adolescents after establishing a Task & Finish group.
 - e) Work has continued to understand how well the partnership works to safeguard children from diverse backgrounds.
 - f) The partnership has worked to improve engagement with schools from all sectors and improve learning processes with its priority of Effective Safeguarding in independent and out of school settings. This included setting up an independent schools' forum during 2022/23. The forum allows independent schools to consider topics specific to them such as safeguarding across borders, the independent inquiry into child sexual abuse on residential schools, and guardian arrangements.
 - g) The partnership will continue to work together, consider, and respond to national developments relating to safeguarding, foster a reliable, trusting culture in organisations and across our area and challenge and drive improvement in multi-agency safeguarding of children.

Proposals/Options

12. 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

13. The Annual Report includes a summary of the consultation and engagement work the SCP has carried out with children and young people. There are several quotes.
14. All members of the SCP have had opportunities to contribute to and comment on earlier drafts of the Annual Report.

Resource Implications

15. 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.
16. As part of this agreement Leicestershire County Council contributed £119,266 to the SAB and SCP in 2022/23. This is 33% of the total funding for the Leicestershire and Rutland SAB and SCP (£364,633). This compares with £102,496 in the previous year which was 31% of the total budget for the Leicestershire and Rutland SCP and SAB of £327,126 in 2021/22.
17. Expenditure overall was broadly in line with the previous year. Expenditure on support services has significantly decreased with only legal advice for the partnership now funded from this budget. The increase in expenditure on operating costs is linked to the development of new training resources, including video assets. Vacancies in the support office team and underspend on case reviews reduced expenditure. The Safeguarding Partnership's reserve funds, as of 1 April 2022 stand at £168,895. Plans for further use of these reserve funds will be drawn up in the coming year.
18. Leicestershire County Council also hosts the Safeguarding Boards' Business Office that supports the SCP and SAB.

Timetable for Decisions

19. The Annual Report of the Safeguarding Children Partnership will be presented to the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 5 September 2023 and the Cabinet on 15 September 2023. The Annual Report will be published by the end of September 2023. Any comments will be considered and addressed prior to the final report being published.

Background Papers

Leicestershire and Rutland Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements:

<https://rsb.org.uk/uploads/leicestershire-rutland-multi-agency-safeguarding-arrangements-october-2022.pdf?v=1668441670>

Circulation under Local Issues Alert Procedure

20. None.

Relevant Impact Assessments:

Equalities Implications

21. 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 had a specific priority in 2021/22 exploring safeguarding of children from diverse backgrounds. The work on this has continued into 2022/23.

Human Rights Implications

22. There are no human rights implications arising from this report.

Crime and Disorder Implications

23. 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.

Partnership Working and associated issues

24. 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.

List of Appendices

Appendix A - Annual Report of the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership 2022/23.

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