



CABINET – 13 SEPTEMBER 2024

**LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN
PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24**

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

PART A

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to bring to advise the Cabinet of the Annual Report 2023/24 for the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership (LRSCP). The draft Annual Report is appended to this report.
2. The final Annual Report is the report of the identified Safeguarding Partners who must publish an annual report on the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements for safeguarding children.
3. Any comments or proposed amendments made by the Cabinet will be addressed in the final report before it is published at the end of September 2024.

Recommendations

4. It is recommended that the Cabinet notes the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership (LRSCP) Annual Report for 2023/24.

Reasons for Recommendations

5. The County Council is one of the statutory Safeguarding Partners which have a shared and equal statutory duty with the local Integrated Care Board and Leicestershire Police to agree and make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in Leicestershire.
6. It is a statutory requirement, as set out in Working Together 2023, that the Safeguarding Partners publish a report at least once every twelve months on the arrangements and their effectiveness.
7. The multi-agency safeguarding arrangements locally are managed through a partnership – the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership – that covers the counties of Leicestershire and Rutland. They were last updated and published in October 2022 [here](#). Following the publication of the new Working Together 2023 in December 2023, the Leicestershire and Rutland Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements being reviewed and updated. They are due to be republished by December 2024, in line with government timescales.

8. In Leicestershire and Rutland, the Annual Report has traditionally been presented to the Cabinet and the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
9. Presenting the Annual Report enables the Cabinet to comment on the content of this document and consider whether it identifies matters that it wishes to address in relation to the effectiveness of safeguarding within the work of the Authority.

Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)

10. The Annual Report of the LRSCP was considered by the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3rd September 2024. Its comments will be reported to the Cabinet meeting.
11. Any proposed additions or amendments to the Annual Report made by the Cabinet (and the Scrutiny Committee) will be considered by the Safeguarding Partners for incorporation into the final document which will be published by the end of September 2024.
12. The Annual Report will be presented to Leicestershire's Health and Wellbeing Board on 26 September, to highlight safeguarding matters relevant to the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board and to support effective partnership working.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

13. 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.
14. 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.
15. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 and Working Together 2023 (statutory guidance on multi-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.
16. As stated above, the LRSCP manages the statutory multi-agency safeguarding arrangements for the counties of Leicestershire and Rutland. The arrangements were published on 28th June 2019 and commenced on 29th September 2019 (replacing the former Local Safeguarding Children Board).
17. It is a statutory requirement, as set out in Working Together 2023, that the Safeguarding Partners publish a report at least once every twelve months on the arrangements and their effectiveness.

Resource Implications

18. There are no resource implications arising from this report, as this is a retrospective report.
19. The LRSCP operates within a budget to which partner agencies contribute.
20. Safeguarding partners have, along with the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board (LRSAB) partners, set a single agreement of principles to share the operating costs of the LRSCP and the LRSAB. As part of this agreement, Leicestershire County Council contributed £119,266 to the LRSCP and LRSAB in 2023/24: 33% of the total funding for the Boards (£364,633). This matches the contribution provided in 2022/23.
21. Expenditure overall was £206,271. The Safeguarding Children Partnership's reserve funds, as of 1st April 2023, stand at £95.350. Plans for further use of these reserve funds will be drawn up in the coming year.
22. Leicestershire County Council also hosts the Safeguarding Partnerships Business Office that supports the LRSCP and LRSAB.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

23. None.

Officers to Contact

Jane Moore, Director of Children and Family Services
Telephone: 0116 305 6340
Email: Jane.Moore@leics.gov.uk

PART B

Background

24. The multi-agency safeguarding arrangements for Leicestershire and Rutland were published on 28th June 2019 and commenced on 29th September 2019. They were last updated and published in October 2022 [here](#). Following the publication of the new Working Together 2023 in December 2023, the Leicestershire and Rutland Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements are in the process of being reviewed and updated. They are due to be republished by December 2024, in line with government timescales.
25. 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.

Annual Report 2023/24

26. The key purpose of the Annual Report is to assess the impact of the work undertaken in 2023/24 on safeguarding outcomes for children in Leicestershire and Rutland. Specifically, it evaluates performance against the priorities that were set out in the Leicester Leicestershire and Rutland SCP Business Plan 2023-25.
27. A pre-publication draft of the Annual Report 2023/24 is appended, and a summary of key issues is given below.
28. 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 specifically in relation to Leicestershire are:
 - a. There has been sustained and demonstrable progress around the Safeguarding Babies business priority, with involvement in a national research project; improvement of local procedure informed by quality assurance processes and review learning; increased number of learning events and resources offered in response to practitioner feedback. This included further promotion of the ICON¹ work, an evidence-based programme focused on reducing head trauma and developing and launching the Safer Sleeping Risk Assessment Tool.
 - b. The Partnership continued with work established in 2021 around Child Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing. This included receiving assurances from CAMHS² about the progress of the Triage and Navigation Service, a pathway to improve the quality of referrals for children's emotional well-being, and also the CAMHS Traffic Light System that assesses children's requirement for intervention.
 - c. Work continued in relation to the Keeping Adolescents Safe / Supporting Safe Adolescents, including representatives from the Business Offices and several partner agencies of the Safeguarding Children Partnerships attending meetings of the newly formed Child Criminal Exploitation and Serious Violence Delivery Group. The Partnership received assurance from the Violence Reduction Network (VRN) about how feedback is sought from children and young people

¹ The mnemonic ICON outlines the key messages of the programme: Infant crying is normal, Comforting methods can help, It's OK to walk away, and Never, ever shake a baby.

² Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.

and how they are engaged in evaluating and improving services for children affected by serious youth violence and/or exploitation.

- d. Work has continued on the priority Safeguarding for children from diverse backgrounds by promoting the locally agreed definition of cultural competency and the standard of expected practice. It has been shared with the Safeguarding Children Partnerships' Trainers' Network as something to include in training wherever relevant and appropriate. Assurance was sought from member agencies of the Case Review Group about their training in respect of equality and diversity and that guidance is in place to support practitioners so that they can proactively deliver inclusive services.
- e. Regarding the priority Effective Safeguarding in independent and out of school settings, there was continued engagement via the local Independent Schools Forum, with the schools selecting topics for discussion that are specific to them. This year autism and safeguarding and PREVENT were featured themes.
- f. For the priority Transitional Safeguarding, the Partnership set up a Task and Finish Group, including representatives from both children's and adults' services, to consider if transitional safeguarding is being managed in the most appropriate and effective way. This work is ongoing.
- g. There has been an improved learning and development output, with the running of several large-scale events and the publication of numerous resources, including those that disseminate Rapid Review learning in a timely manner.
- h. There has been continued positive feedback from the national Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel regarding the quality of the Partnership's review processes and identification of learning.

Consultation

29. The Annual Report includes a summary of the consultation and engagement work the LRSCP has carried out with children, young people and families. There are several quotations.
30. All members of the LRSCP have had opportunities to contribute to and comment on drafts of the Annual Report.
31. As stated above, the Annual Report has also been considered by the County Council's Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Equality Implications

32. 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 Partnership's Business Plan. The Partnership initiated a specific priority in 2021/22 to explore the safeguarding of children from diverse backgrounds. The work on this is continued into 2023/24.

Human Rights Implications

33. There are no human rights implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Crime and Disorder Implications

34. 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.

Appendix

Draft Annual Report of the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership 2023/24.

Background Papers

Report to the Cabinet on 15th September 2023: [“Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2022/23”](#)