



**POLICE & CRIME  
COMMISSIONER**  
For Leicester,  
Leicestershire & Rutland

Your Communities - Your Commissioner

## Police and Crime Panel for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

*2<sup>nd</sup> December 2024*

*Rape Performance*

<b>Report Date</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> December 2024
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<b>Security Classification</b>	Official

## **Purpose of Report**

1. In his role as the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) the Commissioner is required to secure efficient and effective policing for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland and hold the chief constable to account for the performance of the force.
2. The PCC brings this report to outline for the Police and Crime Panel how he is fulfilling his duty by commissioning services to support victims of crime, specifically domestic and sexual offences and to outline how he is holding the Chief constable to account for the performance of the force in relation to rape offences.

## **Request of the Panel**

3. In their role to scrutinise the actions and decisions of the PCC, the Commissioner requests that the panel examines the contents of this report. He would specifically like to ask the panel their opinion on the following questions;
  - a. Is the Panel content in the way that the PCC has held the Chief Constable to account on this important subject?
  - b. Would the panel like to make any recommendations to the PCC in relation to this matter?

## **Summary**

4. It is the opinion of the PCC that the Chief Constable has made significant improvements in relation to the Force's performance in delivering positive outcomes for victims of rape offences. Nationally this is a challenging area for all police forces, however there is still work to be done to improve the offer to victims and deliver justice.
5. The PCC is satisfied with the performance and support offered to victims of rape and serious sexual offences through the commissioned services, however, has requested that more investigation into what prevention work can be commissioned is researched.
6. The PCC is confident that there are strong working relationships between the Force and representatives from the OPCC who regularly attend force operational and strategic meetings to ensure that commissioned services are appropriate and in line with those areas of most need.

## **Background, Relevant Data and Trends**

### Rape Performance

7. Rape performance was brought to the last Corporate Governance Board on the 21<sup>st</sup> November 2024 for discussion.
8. Rape continues to be a force priority, with a dedicated team of detectives progressing all Rape and Serious Sexual Offence investigations, complemented by the recent introduction of a Rape Response Investigators cadre.
9. This month (November 2024) has seen the refresh of the Force Rape Delivery Plan, with areas of enhanced focus and greatest opportunities within the 4 areas of Preventing Victims from being harmed, better Protecting the Public, ensuring the force and our staff are fully Prepared to identify and respond to Rape and increasing the number of offenders being Pursued and brought to justice being identified.
10. The force detection rate, as of October 2024, is currently 6.3%, which reflects a slight increase on previously reported performance (6% when reported into March 2024 CGB) and a continued upwards trajectory – but remains below the agreed initial target of 8%.
11. The Force is currently placed in the bottom half of all Police Forces for total rape outcomes, and whilst the percentage margins between top and bottom is small, there is an ambition to improve this performance. This is tracked and monitored through the Layer 3 board, which is chaired by ACC Michaela Kerr.
12. 1475 rape offences having been reported in the previous 12 months (1st October 2023 to 30th September 2024). This equates to 1.3 reported rapes per 1000 of our recorded local population.
13. The PCC scrutinised the performance of the Force in relation to rape offences and has tasked the OPCC with linking in with the Force to see where the PCC and OPCC can support with prevention activity through commissioned services to reduce the likelihood of rape offences.

### *Op Soteria Update*

14. Leicestershire Police hosted the College of Policing Operation Soteria Team in August to discuss our Operation Soteria Transformation Plan and receive feedback on areas of strength and opportunity following our self-assessment of our preparedness to embed Operation Soteria principles and national learning.

15. ACC Kerr and Rape Business Leads were present, as was the allocated Soteria Change Manager and a Senior CPS Manager to ensure that we maximised any insights and demonstrated a robust cross-sector leadership commitment to those.
16. Key strengths identified by the national team included our focus on suspects, our Threat Assessment Tool and relationships with partners: with CPS, the OPCC Commissioning Team and SARC being specifically highlighted as exemplars of strong, professional relationships improving service to victims
17. Areas for enhanced focus included better use of Early Investigative Advice opportunities and staff workloads – albeit the latter related not to numbers of cases being carried by officers (described by the team as ‘healthy’), but on ensuring the types of cases allocated to teams and individuals was more balanced.
18. These have been included in the refreshed Rape Delivery Plan and continue to be overseen via the Chief Officer Chaired Layer boards.
19. Our Operation Soteria implementation plan has now been signed off and supports both the current delivery plan priorities and our longer-term transformation ambitions.
20. An inspection into the 9 forces who were early adopters of Operation Soteria was undertaken by HMICFRS 2023, with the report published in August this year and the aim being to map out the benefits and challenges of the National Operating Model for Rape.
21. This report outlines 14 recommendations for the Home Office, Ministry of Justice, College of Policing, National Police Chiefs’ Council and Chief Constables to embed the lessons from the adopter phase. 7 of these are to be implemented by Forces and will be (or have already been) adopted by Leicestershire Police.
22. These recommendations are already incorporated in our Soteria Transformation and Rape Delivery Plans and will be tracked through the Layer 3 Vulnerability Board.

### *Lightening Review*

23. To further drive-up performance and providing a better service to victims, in July a thematic ‘Lightening Review’ was commissioned by the Chief Officer Team, with the specific focus of identifying opportunities to improve our rape detection rate and deliver faster justice for victims.

24. The Lightning Review team included Subject Matter Experts from across the Force and from The College of Policing, coordinated by the Corporate Services Team and made 14 recommendations to improve operational activity regarding rape investigations
25. All 14 recommendations from the Lightning Review have been accepted by the force and have been embedded into the updated Force Rape Delivery Plan, with progress being tracked by the Detective Superintendent Lead and reported into the Layer 3 Vulnerability Board Chaired by the Assistant Chief Constable.
26. These recommendations encompass updates to Force Policy, a stronger focus on repeat victims and offenders, greater use of technology to support victims and changes to cross-department resourcing and allocation arrangements

### LCJB

27. Enhancing justice for victims of rape continues to be an area of focus in the Leicestershire Criminal Justice Board, with commitment from partners to ensure a fully connected, whole-system approach from report through to court.
28. This includes recently strengthening the CPS and Police Joint Operational Meetings to have a specific meeting for Rape and Domestic Abuse offences and increased sharing of data to identify and address post-charging challenges and reduce delays in trials being concluded.

### Commissioning services/ Partnership

29. Priority 2 of the Partnership VAWG Strategy outlines how we will respond to violence against women and girls, this includes our response to victims of rape.
30. We understand that men and boys and those of other genders are also victims of rape, and any work which advances a better response to women and girls will subsequently improve our response to rape across wider demographics.
31. Priority 3 develops the partnership response to supporting victims and survivors. We are striving to ensure there is long term support to victim/survivors, for example by providing counselling and onward support, this is however dependent on MoJ funding which is not known post March 25 at this point.

### SARC (Sexual Assault Referral Centre)

32. Leicestershire Adult Sexual Assault Referral Centre based at Juniper Lodge New Parks supports victims of RASSO (Rape and Serious Sexual Offences) over the age of 18. The commissioned service sits alongside the SARC offering ISVA (Independent Sexual Violence Advocates) support with specialist support

for male victims, victims from BAME communities, neurodivergent victims and victims from the LGBTQ+ communities. The service also offers CHISVA (Children's ISVA support to victim/survivors under 18).

33. Victims are supported through forensic examinations, evidence collection, immediate crisis support and are referred for onward therapy and counselling, which can take place at Leicester Rape Crisis Centre.
34. In Quarter 2 the centre received 74 referrals (5 which declined and 5 from out of area) and supported 70 individuals, 64 females and 6 males, 50 of which were referred via the police, 4 self-referrals with the remainder from substance use services, GPs and voluntary sector organisations.
35. 42 forensic examinations were conducted including one in hospital. Each individual has a safeguarding plan raised and alongside therapy referrals the centre made onward referrals to substance use services, the mental health crisis team and specialist ISVAs.
36. As part of service delivery, the centre offers essential medication options as required such HIV Prep and Emergency Contraception; 6 clients started HIV Prep medication, 20 clients were given emergency contraception, 19 commenced Hep B vaccination schedules, with 27 clients being referred to Sexual Health Services to receive specific or extended treatment.
37. The SARC provides 24-hour availability for forensic examination and met the 100% compliance metric to provide forensic examination within 60 minutes of being called out. No medication, patient safety, out of hours or forensic management incidents or client complaints have been reported in the financial year to date.
38. In conjunction with the SARC the OPCC identified that in order to gain onward referral support a victim needed to attend the SARC so that a needs assessment with a crisis worker could be made.
39. We have commissioned a 12-month pilot to provide additional Crisis worker capacity, coupled with Good Sam App access to SARC staff, facilitated by attending police officers, 24 hours a day will support victims who do not wish to attend SARC receive the same level of wraparound support.
40. Recruitment and vetting have been completed, and the pilot is expected to start in December. Good Sam is already used across other police channels and allows for WhatsApp style video calls, translated into multiple languages in real time, free to the victim with no digital footprint on the victim's device.

## EM CYP SARC (East Midlands Children & Young Peoples Sexual Assault Referral Centre)

41. East Midlands OPCC Authorities co-commission with NHS England (lead commissioner) the East Midlands Children & Young Peoples Sexual Assault Referral Centre, located in Nottingham and Northampton.
42. This service support CYP who have been raped or seriously sexually assaulted. Referrals can be for recent and non-recent offences.
43. In Quarter 2 2024 20 CYP were assessed at the CYP SARC, 22% of the overall number seen, with LLR being the second highest referrer to the service. 15 were referred for rape, 5 for sexual assault.
44. There were no males referred in the period, all referrals were female. 18 referrals were made by the police and 2 by social care. Of those referred 3 were LAC children, 8 displayed self-harm behaviours and 4 were identified with a learning disability. 18 were White British, due to identifiable factors the ethnicity of the remaining children cannot be provided.
45. All cases referred were non parental rape or sexual assault, perpetrators were no relation, other family member or family friend. Referral to onward therapy where appropriate was offered to 18 CYP and declined by 4.
46. The EM CYP SARC make presentations to appropriate agencies to improve knowledge and understanding, in Quarter 2 the team presented to Leicester Children's Services.

## Commissioned ISVA service (Independent Sexual Violence Advocate)

47. Last quarter (July to September 2024) the commissioned Independent Sexual Violence Advocate service received 238 referrals: referrals can be from the police, from other agencies and through self-referral.
48. Of these 105 were from the city, 126 from the county, 5 from Rutland and 2 from outside the area. All 238 referrals were triaged, 23 declined further engagement, of the remaining 212, 100% were supported through a dedicated support plan. The average length of support is 12.5 months but can be as long as 7.4 years due to court backlogs in the criminal justice system.

## Partnership working

49. At the next SPB Exec (28/11/24) the OPCC will be raising the re-launch of Female Offender Strategy to support work for women and girls in or at risk of being in the criminal justice system.

50. We know that many women and girls in the criminal justice system have been subject to RASSO (Rape and serious sexual offences) and in many cases ongoing sexual violence.
51. The partnership will be asked to come together to respond to this call to action. The Director of Strategy, Partnerships & Commissioning sits on an East Midlands wide working group with OPCC's and probation to progress this strand of work.
52. The OPCC sits on the R2SV (Responding to Sexual Violence) Delivery group which consists of all sexual violence partners across LLR to share best practice, identify delivery gaps and create progressive solutions.
53. The last R2SV meeting was addressed by the CPS (Crown Prosecution Service) Regional Lead for RASSO who talked through the delays and backlog in the criminal justice system regarding rape cases and steps that were being taken to mitigate this including scrutiny panels to assess cases and make forward recommendations.

#### Community Safety Partnership

54. Several CSP (Community Safety Partnerships) have utilised CSP funding to deliver sexual violence education, prevention, and targeted work. These include:
- a. Love 4 Life in Charnwood delivering an accredited level 4 relationship and sex education focused workshop on 'what it means to be a man', with staff going into 6 schools within Charnwood borough and delivering a whole day workshop, to an identified year group reaching around 180 young people per year group, totalling 1100 young people within Charnwood Borough
  - b. In Blaby Solomon Theatre Group will deliver three sessions of a drama workshop for secondary schools in the district covering alcohol use, healthy relationships and consent supported by BDC children's workers and Police.
  - c. Hinkley & Bosworth CSP are providing personal alarms and anti-spiking drinks covers, as are Northwest Leicestershire CSP.
  - d. Rutland CSP use funding to deliver targeted support to a small group of young girls that have various unmet needs and require concentrated inputs that are bespoke to them. So far, they have successfully supported two separate cohorts. Their needs include high risk CCE/CSE concerns. Some experience missing episodes, placing the girls in dangerous situations, where substance misuse was a feature and they were at risk of, or were already experiencing, exploitation.



## Safer Streets work

55. The OPCC were successful in obtaining Safer Streets 5 funding to facilitate educational VAWG (Violence Against Women & Girls) work primarily focussed on education and prevention and developing Bystander programmes.
56. An element of this delivery involves the development of a range of age-appropriate resources and activities which can be used by schools, youth/community groups, and sports clubs working with children and young people (and particularly boys) in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.
57. These resources will focus on improving awareness of sexual, dating and relationship violence, on how to seek support and/or to report incidents if they happen, and how to safely intervene/support children and young people affected by it.
58. This intervention also includes consultancy from subject matter experts to review resources and activities on VAWG / Sexual harassment, stalking, violence with and without injury, rape and other sexual offences.
59. The age ranges covered by this preventative work is 11 to 19, two distinct programmes have been developed for under 15's and 16- to 19-year-olds and training plus dedicated resource will rolled out to 45 community organisations by March 2025.

----- **End of Report** -----

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