



**CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:**  
**2 SEPTEMBER 2025**

**DRAFT LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN**  
**PARTNERSHIP YEARLY REPORT 2024-25**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

**Purpose of report**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the views of the Committee on the draft Yearly Report of the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership (LRSCP) for 2024-25.

**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 2023 (statutory guidance on multi-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children) give responsibility for this join-up locally to the safeguarding partners, the Police, Integrated Care Board 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 LRSCP that covers the counties of Leicestershire and Rutland.
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.

## **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. In 2024-25, the arrangements were reviewed in light of the updated government guidance [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#). Multi-agency safeguarding arrangements should be based on Local Authority areas. Arrangements can cover two or more local authority boundaries by agreement. As a number of partners are shared with Leicester Safeguarding Children Partnership, joint [Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements](#) are published now. They were published in December 2024, in line with government timescales.
8. The Safeguarding Children Partnership (SCP) shares some operational arrangements with the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board and some partnership structures with the Leicester Safeguarding Children Partnership.

## **Yearly Report**

9. The key purpose of the Yearly Report is to assess the impact of the work undertaken in 2024-25 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 Safeguarding Children Partnerships' [Business Plan 2023-25](#).
10. The draft Yearly Report 2024-25 is appended to this report. This is the content of the report which has been to the Design Team 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 to Leicestershire are:
  - The “Safeguarding Babies” priority has been in place since 2021-22 and a lot of work has been completed in this time, with the implementation of ICON<sup>1</sup>, an updated Pre-Birth and Post Birth Planning procedure and the launch of the Safer Sleeping Risk Assessment Tool. Also, during this time, there have been numerous training events and individual courses, both in person and online, and a range of learning and development resources have been produced and disseminated. It is evident that this business priority has achieved a good level of assurance and so it has not been carried over to the 2025-27 Business Plan. It is acknowledged, though, that further awareness raising is required around key guidance and resources, particularly with a large and dynamic workforce. Therefore, babies will always be seen as a key cohort of focus for the SCP.
  - Since its inception in 2021-22, it is felt that the “Child Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing” business priority has achieved a good level of assurance and so it has not been carried over to the 2025-27 Business Plan. It is

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<sup>1</sup> 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 **OK** to walk away, and **N**ever, ever shake a baby.

acknowledged, though, that children's mental health continues to be a subject of both local and national importance. Therefore, the Planning and Delivery Group of the SCPs will continue to seek assurance that mental health and safeguarding are effectively addressed together locally by receiving CAMHS highlight reports.

- A priority on "Harm Outside the Home" has been included in the [Business Plan for 2025-27](#), which will build on the progress made since 2022-23 around the "Keeping Adolescents Safe / Supporting Safe Adolescents" priority. This acknowledges the continued prevalence of this theme nationally, with persistent concern about the themes raised in the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, including group-based Child Sexual Exploitation and grooming gangs. Implementation of the Online Safety Act 2023 is also at the forefront of national interest, following the release of the Netflix drama *Adolescence*, and with Ofcom's child safety measures coming into force for social media, search and gaming apps and websites in July 2025.<sup>2</sup> Assurance around the local response to these themes continues to be required.
- A priority on "Belonging" has been included in the Business Plan for 2025-27, which will build on the progress made since 2021-22 around the "Safeguarding children from diverse backgrounds" priority. This will continue to seek assurance around the work already in progress and address the questions for SCPs raised in the briefing from the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel – "[It's Silent': Race, racism and safeguarding children](#)".
- It is evident that the "Effective Safeguarding in independent and out of school settings" business priority has achieved a good level of assurance and has led to the embedding of key, and ongoing, forums and so it will not be carried over to the 2025-27 Business Plan. The role of Local Authorities around safeguarding and supporting home educated children is due to increase, in light of the new duties and responsibilities to be introduced through the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill. This includes the creation of a Children not in School Register. These national changes will inform any required changes to local policies and procedures.
- "Transitional safeguarding" has been carried forward to both the SCPs' Business Plan for 2025-27 and the [Safeguarding Adults Boards' Business Plan for 2025-27](#). It has been incorporated into a thematic priority, on "Belonging" for the SCPs and "Equality, Diversity and Inclusion" for the Safeguarding Adults Boards, so that the cohort of children and young people to be addressed can be clearer and more targeted.

## **Proposals/Options**

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

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/online-safety/protecting-children/new-rules-for-a-safer-generation-of-children-online>

### **Consultation**

13. The Yearly Report includes a summary of the consultation and engagement work the SCP has carried out with children, young people and families.
14. All members of the SCP, including the Independent Scrutineer, have had opportunities to contribute to and comment on earlier drafts of the Yearly Report.

### **Resource Implications**

15. Safeguarding partners have, along with Safeguarding Adults Board partners, set a single agreement of principles to share the operating costs of the SCP and Safeguarding Adults Board for Leicestershire and Rutland.
16. As part of this agreement, Leicestershire County Council contributed £66,258 to the SCP in 2024-25. This is 33% of the total funding for the SCP (£203,092). This matches the contribution for 2023-24.
17. Expenditure overall was £246,270. Although costs have risen, evidence suggests that the output of the Partnership demonstrates value for money. The difference between funding and expenditure was covered by the SCP's reserve funds.
18. As of 1 April 2025, the SCP's reserve funds stand at £117,721. This amount has been held due to a foreseen increase in costs and has meant that partners have not been asked for an increase in contributions; however, this surplus will eventually be used and therefore all partners will be expected to ensure that the LRSCP is self-sufficient.
19. Leicestershire County Council hosts the Safeguarding Partnerships Business Office that supports the SCP and Safeguarding Adults Board.

### **Timetable for Decisions**

20. The Yearly Report of the SCP will be presented to the Cabinet for noting on 12 September 2025. The Yearly Report will be published by the end of September 2025. Any comments will be considered and addressed prior to the final report being published.

### **Conclusions**

21. The Committee are asked to comment on the draft LRSCP Yearly Report 2024-25.

### **Background papers**

22. Report to the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3 September 2024: [Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2023/24](#).

### **Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure**

23. None.

### **Equality Implications**

24. Safeguarding children and young people concerns individuals who are likely to be disadvantaged in a number of ways. Information on the differing needs of and impacts on different groups of individuals with regard to safeguarding is considered as part of the process to develop the Business Plan. The Partnerships initiated a specific priority in 2021-22 exploring safeguarding of children from diverse backgrounds. The work on this continued into 2024-25. It will now be overseen under the “Belonging” priority included in the 2025-27 Business Plan.

### **Human Right Implications**

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

### **Crime and Disorder Implications**

26. There is a close connection between the work of the LRSCP and that of Community Safety Partnerships in Leicestershire. For example, the SCP 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 Abuse Related Death Reviews, previously called Domestic Homicide Reviews, and acting on their recommendations.

### **Health Implications**

27. Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility. Health and care needs can be linked to safeguarding risk for adults and children and the health and care system can support the prevention of identification of and response to safeguarding risk.

### **Appendices**

Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership Yearly Report 2024-25

### **Officer to Contact**

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