

**CABINET – 8 SEPTEMBER 2026****DRAFT LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN
PARTNERSHIP YEARLY REPORT 2025-26****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 the Cabinet's attention the Yearly Report 2025-26 for the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership (referred to in this report as the SCP) for consultation and comment.
2. The Yearly 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 Yearly Report before it is published at the end of September 2026.

Recommendations

4. It is recommended that the Cabinet notes and comments on the draft Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership Yearly Report for 2025-26.

Reasons for Recommendations

5. Leicestershire County Council is one of the statutory Safeguarding Partners which have a shared and equal statutory duty with the local Integrated Care Board, Leicestershire Police, and Rutland County Council to agree and make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in Leicestershire and Rutland.
6. It is a statutory requirement, as set out in "Working Together" 2026 (statutory guidance), that the Safeguarding Partners publish a report at least once every twelve months on the arrangements and their effectiveness.
7. In Leicestershire and Rutland, the Yearly Report has traditionally been presented to the Cabinet and the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
8. Presenting the Yearly Report enables the Cabinet to comment on the 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)

9. The Yearly Report will be considered by the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 1 September 2026. Its comments will be reported to the Cabinet meeting.
10. Any proposed additions or amendments to the Yearly Report made by the Cabinet will be considered by the Safeguarding Partners for incorporation into the final document which will be published by the end of September 2026.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

11. 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.
12. 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.
13. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 and Working Together 2026 (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.
14. The SCP manages the statutory multi-agency safeguarding arrangements for the counties of Leicestershire and Rutland. The arrangements were originally published in June 2019 and commenced in September 2019. These arrangements replaced the former Local Safeguarding Children Board. They were updated in 2024-25 to cover Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (see below).

Resource Implications

15. There are no resource implications arising from this report, as this is a retrospective report.
16. The SCP operates within a budget to which partner agencies contribute.
17. Safeguarding partners have, along with the 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.
18. As part of this agreement, Leicestershire County Council contributed £66,258 to the SCP in 2025-26. This is 32% of the total funding for the SCP (£206,989) and matches the contribution provided in 2024-25.

19. Expenditure overall was £249,210. 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.
20. As of 1 April 2026, the SCP's reserve funds stand at £103,315. 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 SCP is self-sufficient.
21. Leicestershire County Council also hosts the Safeguarding Partnerships Business Office that supports the SCP and Safeguarding Adults Board.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

22. None.

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PART B

Background

23. 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, as of December 2024, joint [Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements](#) are now published.
24. In line with Working Together 2026, updates to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements are required when there are key changes, such as changes to the Lead Safeguarding Partners, or the list of relevant agencies. Updates are sent to the Department for Education. In 2025-26, updates were implemented to reflect:
 - The change of Lead Safeguarding Partner for the Integrated Care Board, Police and Leicestershire Local Authority
 - The change of Delegated Safeguarding Partner for the Police, Rutland Local Authority and Leicestershire Local Authority.
25. The 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 2025-26

26. The key purpose of the Yearly Report is to assess the impact of the work undertaken in 2025-26 on safeguarding outcomes for children in Leicestershire and Rutland. Specifically, it evaluates performance against the priorities that are set out in the [Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnerships' Business Plan 2025-27](#).
27. A pre-publication draft of the Yearly Report 2025-26 is appended to this report.
28. The Report outlines the learning, assurance, training and improvement activity of the SCP and its partners and the impact this has had on safeguarding children. Key messages from the SCP to Leicestershire are:
 - There has been a significant amount of work completed around child sexual abuse and the progress made was reflected in the findings of the local system-wide child sexual abuse snapshot, completed by the NSPCC, and the positive result of the Leicestershire Joint Targeted Area Inspection.
 - The SCP has supported a system change around how Health shares more detailed health information with Children's Social Care and highlights the impact / potential impact of abuse and neglect upon a child's health needs.
 - The SCP has been liaising with and seeking assurance from the Adolescent Safety and Diversion Board and the local Child Exploitation and Serious

Violence Group on Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) work across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, in light of the findings of Baroness Casey's report.

- The reflective questions for Safeguarding Children Partnerships, posed in the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel's briefing ["It's Silent": Race, racism and safeguarding children](#) (March 2025), have been addressed. A multi-agency audit has been completed, new training commissioned, and learning promoted and embedded.
- The Partnership has been awaiting publication of the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel's [Child Neglect: A thematic analysis](#). This was released in April 2026. Work will now be carried out to respond locally to the national learning.
- The Partnership continues to benchmark itself against and consider learning from key national and out of area reviews. In 2025-26, it has particularly focused on the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel's [Protecting all vulnerable babies better: national review into the broader safeguarding issues raised by the death of baby Victoria Marten](#) and the Sara Sharif Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review.

Consultation

29. The Yearly Report includes a summary of the consultation and engagement work the SCP has carried out with children, young people and families.
30. All members of the SCP have had opportunities to contribute to and comment on drafts of the Yearly Report.
31. As stated above, the Yearly Report will also be considered by the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its comments will be reported to the Cabinet.

Equality Implications

32. 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, which continued until 2024-25. This work is now overseen under the "Belonging" priority included in the 2025-27 Business Plan.

Human Rights Implications

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

Crime and Disorder Implications

34. There is a close connection between the work of the SCP 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 SCP 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

35. 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.

Background Papers

Report to the Cabinet on 12 September 2025: [Draft Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2024-25](#).

Appendix

Draft Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership Yearly Report 2025-26.