

**CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE****1 SEPTEMBER 2026****DRAFT LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND SAFEGUARDING
CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP YEARLY REPORT 2025-26****MINUTE EXTRACT**

The Committee considered a report relating to the Draft Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership Yearly Report 2025-26. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 12', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were raised:

- (i). The Committee was informed that young scrutineers had been appointed in order to ensure additional independent oversight of independent young scrutineers for both children's and adults' safeguarding arrangements. The Scrutineers reviewed reports from performance groups, case review meetings and statutory audits, attended Board meetings, and provided independent challenge and oversight. The young scrutineers had joined a number of Partnership sub-groups, and were already contributing to safeguarding initiatives, including the development of safeguarding awareness posters. Members noted that the contribution of the young scrutineers would be reflected in future reporting periods, as their appointments had taken place after the period covered by the current report.
- (ii). In response to a question regarding the impact of the Safeguarding Partnership's work and the evidence that interventions had improved outcomes for children, the Director stated that the Safeguarding Partnership operated a comprehensive governance structure designed to hold all partner agencies accountable for their safeguarding responsibilities. Senior oversight was provided through governance arrangements extending from director level representatives across partner organisations to chief executive level. An annual safeguarding plan, informed by local and national evidence, learning from reviews, and identified priorities, provided the framework for Partnership activity. The Partnership also shared learning from local case reviews, rapid reviews, and national safeguarding reviews, including joint learning arrangements across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. The Director assured the Committee that feedback received from a national review panel following submitted rapid reviews had been positive regarding safeguarding practice within the local area.

- (iii). Members were pleased that performance monitoring formed a key element of the governance structure. The Director stated that a dedicated subgroup reviewed safeguarding performance across agencies, identifying areas of concern and seeking improvement where necessary. Where issues could not be resolved, a formal escalation process existed, allowing matters to be raised through the governance structure to chief executive level and equivalent senior leadership positions.
- (iv). A question was raised regarding escalation arrangements where concerns arose about the performance of partner agencies. The Director stated that the escalation process applied consistently across all partner organisations. Where necessary, concerns could be escalated through the relevant organisation's management structures, including to Chief Officers such as the Chief Constable, Chief Executive of a local authority, or the equivalent senior leadership within health organisations. The Partnership retained the ability to escalate concerns where it considered a partner agency's response to be insufficient.
- (v). In response to a question regarding the principal areas of safeguarding risk and evidence of improvement, the Director stated that significant work had been undertaken relating to child sexual abuse. This included collaboration across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland with partner agencies, the development of services and local strategies, and extensive auditing to assess the quality and impact of interventions. Members noted that a Joint Targeted Area Inspection undertaken in December 2025 had resulted in positive feedback from inspectors. Further examples included work promoting safe sleeping for babies, supported by public awareness campaigns and workforce training to ensure key messages reached new parents.
- (vi). Concern was raised regarding the potential impact of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) on safeguarding arrangements, particularly the loss of existing district council functions which contributed to safeguarding processes. Clarification was sought regarding planning for future arrangements. The Director assured the Committee that preparations for LGR would ensure that safe and effective services for children and families would be maintained throughout the transition period and beyond. It would be essential that service users should experience continuity of service, regardless of organisational changes. Work was being undertaken to ensure that appropriate structures, staffing and responsibilities were in place within future arrangements, and that no gaps or loopholes would emerge as a result of transition. Safeguarding responsibilities would continue to be discharged effectively wherever families came into contact with services.

RESOLVED:

- (a). That the draft yearly report assessing the impact of the work undertaken in 2025/26 on safeguarding outcomes for children in Leicestershire and Rutland be noted.
- (b). That the views expressed by the Committee would be presented to the Cabinet at its meeting on 8 September 2026.