



CABINET – 15 SEPTEMBER 2023

**LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN
PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23**

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 Annual Report 2022/23 for the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership (LRSCP) for consultation and comment.
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.

Recommendations

4. It is recommended that the Cabinet notes and comments on the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership (LRSCP) Annual Report for 2022/23.

Reasons for Recommendations

5. Leicestershire County Council is one of the statutory Safeguarding Partners who have a shared and equal statutory duty with the local Integrated Care Board and Chief of 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 2018, 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 updated and published in October 2022 [here](#).
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 5 September 2023. The Committee welcomed the content of the Annual Report.
11. Any proposed additions or amendments to the Annual Report made by the Cabinet will be considered by the Safeguarding Partners for incorporation into the final documents which will be published by the end of September 2023.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

12. 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.
13. 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.
14. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 and Working Together 2018 (statutory guidance on inter-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.
15. As stated above the LRSCP manages the statutory multi-agency safeguarding arrangements for the counties of Leicestershire and Rutland. The arrangements were published on 28 June 2019 and commenced on 29 September 2019. These arrangements replaced the former Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).
16. It is a statutory requirement, as set out in Working Together 2018, that the Safeguarding Partners publish a report at least once every twelve months on the arrangements and their effectiveness.

Resource Implications

17. There are no resource implications arising from this report, as this is a retrospective report. The LRSCP operates within a budget to which partner agencies contribute.
18. Safeguarding partners have, along with Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) statutory partners set a single agreement of principles to share the operating costs of the Safeguarding Children Partnerships (SCP) and Safeguarding Adults Boards for Leicestershire and Rutland.

19. As part of this agreement Leicestershire County Council contributed £119,266 to the SAB and SCP in 2022/23. This is 33% of the total funding for the Leicestershire and Rutland SAB and SCP (£364,633). This compares with £102,496 in the previous year which was 31% of the total budget for the Leicestershire and Rutland SCP and SAB of £327,126 in 2021/22.
20. Leicestershire County Council also hosts the Safeguarding Boards' Business Office that supports the SCP and SAB.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

21. None.

Officers to Contact

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PART B

Background

22. The multi-agency safeguarding arrangements for Leicestershire and Rutland were published on 28 June 2019 and commenced on 29 September 2019. The arrangements are reviewed each year by the Safeguarding Partners and changes are reported in the Annual Report.
23. 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 (LSCPb).

Annual Report 2022/23

24. The key purpose of the Annual Report is to assess the impact of the work undertaken in 2022/23 on safeguarding outcomes for children in Leicestershire and Rutland. Specifically, it evaluates performance against the priorities that were set out in the LRSCP Business Plan 2022/23.
25. A pre-publication draft of the Annual Report 2022/23 can be found as the Appendix to this report.
26. 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 specifically in relation to Leicestershire are:
 - a. Partner organisations, workers and managers have worked well together to safeguard children and to identify needs and areas for improvement to safeguard children in the midst of ongoing challenge and change relating to the post-pandemic era and other societal pressures such as the cost-of-living crisis.
 - b. The Partnership has continued its work to respond to emerging risks, such as safeguarding babies. For example, early in 2022/23, ICON was launched across the local Safeguarding Children Partnerships. 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 **O**K to walk away, and **N**ever, ever shake a baby.
 - c. We continued with work established in 2021 around Child Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing.
 - d. We completed lots of work seeking assurance on Keeping Adolescents Safe / Supporting Safe Adolescents after establishing a Task and Finish group.
 - e. Work has continued to understand how well the Partnership works to safeguard children from diverse backgrounds.
 - f. The Partnership has worked to improve engagement with schools from all sectors and improve learning processes with its priority of Effective Safeguarding in independent and out of school settings. This included setting up an independent schools' forum during 2022/23. The forum allows independent schools to consider topics specific to them such as safeguarding across borders, the independent inquiry into child sexual abuse on residential schools, and guardian arrangements.

- g. The Partnership will continue to work together, consider and respond to national developments relating to safeguarding, foster a reliable, trusting culture in organisations and across the area and challenge and drive improvement in multi-agency safeguarding of children.

Consultations

27. The Annual Report includes a summary of the consultation and engagement work the SCP has carried out with children and young people. There are several quotes.
28. All members of the SCP have had opportunities to contribute to and comment on drafts of the Annual Report.

Equality Implications

29. 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 had a specific priority in 2022/23 to explore the safeguarding of children from diverse backgrounds. The work on this is continued into 2022/23.

Human Rights Implications

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

Crime and Disorder Implications

31. 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.

Background Papers

Report to the Cabinet on 17 September 2021 "Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2020/21"

<https://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=6446&Ver=4>

Appendix

Draft Annual Report of the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership 2022/23.

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