



Date: 24/11/2025

*His Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary*

*His Majesty's Inspector of Fire & Rescue Services*

*6th Floor Globe House*

*89 Eccleston Square London*

*SW1V 1PN*

**Dear Martin Jones, CBE, and Michelle Skeer, OBE, QPM,**

I am writing in response to the joint HMICFRS and HM Inspectorate of Probation report, 'The Effectiveness of Diverting Children from the Criminal Justice System: Meeting Needs, Ensuring Safety and Preventing Reoffending' which was published October 2025, and in recognition of the ongoing recommendations first made in the 2018 inspection. As PCC, I am committed to holding the Chief Constable to account for ensuring these areas of concern are addressed by the Force in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland and fulfilling my statutory responsibility to do so. This includes ensuring that our approach to safeguarding children in contact with the criminal justice system is fair, proportionate and consistent with the 'child-first' principles that underpin the national youth justice policy.

I welcome the report's detailed consideration of the national framework for diverting children from formal criminal justice processes, and I acknowledge the areas of concern identified, including the need for consistent decision-making, robust oversight, attention to children's vulnerabilities, timely interventions, the engagement of victims, and equitable access to diversionary pathways. These are issues of clear national significance, that I recognise are of importance in ensuring positive outcomes for children diverted, where appropriate, from criminal justice processes in a manner that is proportionate, needs-led and in the interests of public safety.

**Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Police  
Headquarters, St John's, Enderby, Leicester LE19 2BX Telephone: 0116 229 8980 Email:  
OPCC@leics.police.uk Web: www.leics.pcc.police.uk**

Inconsistency in decision-making and governance is a significant concern. I acknowledge that children may receive differing outcomes depending on local practice or officer discretion, which has implications concerning fairness and public confidence. The Force implemented a Youth Out of Court Resolutions Policy in August 2024, establishing a clear child-centred framework for decision-making. This policy is reinforced by the Out of Court Resolutions Scrutiny Panel, which independently reviews decisions ensure proportionally, consistency and alignment with national guidance and has a focus on youth resolutions applied. As PCC, I will continue to hold the Chief Constable to account for ensuring that all diversion decisions meet and maintain these standards.

Oversight and multi-agency collaboration are an area of concern within the report, notably concerning the joint involvement of police, Youth Justice Services (YJS) and other partners is often limited. Locally, weekly multi-agency meetings allow for joint review of children's cases, ensuring risk, safeguarding and tailored intervention plans are considered. This approach supports timely, coordinated, and child-focussed outcomes. I will ensure to continue to maintain oversight of these arrangements, ensuring joint decision-making occurs as efficiently and effectively as possible, with full consideration of each child's needs in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

I acknowledge the timeliness, quality and consistency of interventions as critical to reducing reoffending and promoting positive outcomes. The Force and YJS work closely to provide early engagement and structured support, including mental health, safeguarding and educational interventions. We recognise the necessity to maintain and improve timeliness of responses and the quality of interventions. I will ensure to continue to monitor these processes, ensuring that children receive interventions promptly and that plans are tailored to their individual circumstances.

Regarding data collection, in Leicestershire, arrangements are in place to record all out-of-court disposals for children, supporting both operational review and strategic oversight. As PCC, I will continue to ensure that the Chief Constable provides regular, accurate data on use, outcomes and equity, enabling evidence-informed decision making and public accountability through our formal governance boards to improve the reliability and collection of data relating to children

Equity, disproportionality and the need for meaningful engagement with victims are also areas requiring attention nationally. In Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland we are aware that children from particular demographic backgrounds may be over-represented in youth justice pathways and that victims' perspectives must be embedded in diversion processes. Locally, restorative approaches are available for Children where appropriate and processes such as Victims' Right to Review ensure victims voices are heard. I will continue to hold the Chief Constable accountable for ensuring there is equity regarding access to diversion, and that children's vulnerabilities and victims' needs are consistently met to a high level.

I recognise your concern surrounding a greater need for transparency, continuous improvement, and evidence-based practice across youth diversion. Leicestershire Police has established processes for review, learning and partnership evaluation. I will continue to oversee these arrangements, holding the Chief accountable and ensuring that LLR's practices evolve in line with national standards and the inspection's recommendations. This includes supporting staff

development, implementation assessment and planning, and ensuring children and their parents understand the purpose and requirements of interventions.

In closing, I welcome the report's recommendations and recognise the critical importance of implementing them effectively. I know Leicestershire Police, working alongside the YJS and other local partner agencies have established strong partnerships to respond to these national challenges, but I understand more can be done. I will continue to provide scrutiny, challenge and oversight to ensure that these arrangements translate into consistent, equitable and child-centred outcomes, by ensuring the Chief Constable is held fully accountable for the Force's delivery.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Matthews', with a long, sweeping underline.

**Rupert Matthews,**

**Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland**