

<b>Committee:</b> Safeguarding Sub-Committee	<b>Dated:</b> 02/07/2024
<b>Subject:</b> City of London Safeguarding and Quality Assurance, 2023–2024 LADO Annual Report	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	1–4
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	N/A
<b>If so, how much?</b>	N/A
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	N/A
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?</b>	N/A
<b>Report of:</b> Judith Finlay, Executive Director of Community and Children’s Services	For Information
<b>Report author:</b> Laura Demetriades, Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance, Department of Community and Children’s Services	

### Summary

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) role sits under the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service within the People’s Directorate. It is a statutory expectation that all local authorities must have a LADO. If allegations are made against staff (including volunteers) that call into question their suitability to work with or be in a position of trust with children – whether made about events in their private or professional life – they need to be formally reported to the LADO. The LADO has the responsibility to manage and have oversight of allegations. The Annual Report outlines the activity of the LADO from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024, the impact on safety for children, and effect on learning for individuals and organisations.

### Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

### Main Report

#### Background

1. The responsibility of the LADO is set out in *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (updated 2024), and the London Safeguarding Children Procedures 7th edition (updated April 2024), Chapter 7.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk/alleg\\_staff.html](https://www.londonsafeguardingchildrenprocedures.co.uk/alleg_staff.html)

2. In the City of London, the LADO's work is carried out by the Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance who reports directly to the Assistant Director of People's Services. In this reporting year there has been a change of personnel in the role, and therefore there are some differences in recording of contacts to the service.
3. Alongside the set criteria for reporting to the LADO, the role also provides wider safeguarding advice on low-level concerns, professional conduct issues, safer recruitment processes, or policy and procedure.

### **Current Position**

4. During the last year, 74 contacts were made to the LADO Service. The vast majority of these, in line with London and national trends, do not meet the LADO threshold, but are queries that require guidance and advice. Those instances where a consultation took place often result in further action by the employer, such as an internal investigation with oversight from the LADO, rather than requiring an Allegation against Staff and Volunteers Meeting.
5. During the year, there were five contacts that met the LADO threshold:
  - One was an individual who worked in multiple locations across London, and so the case was transferred to another LADO in the local authority where their head office was based.
  - Two cases went to Allegation against Staff and Volunteer (ASV) Meetings, where the concerns were substantiated. Both individuals were suspended while investigations were ongoing. One has subsequently been charged with an offence, and their professional registration has been revoked. In the other case, there are remaining HR actions being taken to review their employment, and a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) referral was made.
  - In one case, the Police investigation and bail conditions prohibited the individual from continuing their employment.
  - In the final case, the individual did not work substantively with children, or in a position of trust. Therefore an employment-based risk assessment was completed to analyse and mitigate any risk to those under the age of 18 years who may be present in the workplace.
6. Given the size of the City, there is often crossover with other local authorities in terms of where responsibility may fall. Often the City is involved because employment head offices are based here, rather than the risk to children necessarily being within the City boundaries, or in relation to City children.
7. Given the change in personnel, there have been proactive efforts to build relationships with key partners in the City, with in-person visits taking place to all primary, secondary and higher education providers, a number of Early Years providers, and City of London Police. There is also a consistent LADO training programme in place through the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership (CHSCP), with sessions taking place every quarter. Bespoke training sessions have also been offered and taken up with individual organisations.

## **Options**

8. The LADO role is a statutory function and will continue to operate as part of the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service. Awareness-raising will continue through the delivery of training sessions and bespoke support. Service development will include the creation of a LADO information leaflet, LADO referral form, and feedback form, to ensure that there is clear recording of contacts and advice given. This work is supporting a healthy children's workforce across the City to safeguard children and promote positive outcomes.

## **Proposals**

9. The above arrangements continue through the Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance within the People's Directorate.

## **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

10. There are no strategic implications directly related to this report.
  - Financial implications – N/A
  - Resource implications – N/A
  - Legal implications – N/A
  - Risk implications – N/A
  - Equalities implications – N/A
  - Climate implications – N/A
  - Security implications – N/A

## **Conclusion**

11. The LADO Service has been well used this year by a wide range of agencies. This is a positive demonstration that the process and role is known and understood across a broad range of partners. Strong working relationships with the CHSCP and Hackney LADO have enabled consistent and regular training opportunities for partners, as well as the creation of standardised resources and support tools. Internal recording processes are being strengthened and developed. These processes support reporting to ensure accountability for decision-making processes and the advice and oversight offered. They provide evidence that children are safer as a result of action taken by the LADO and partners.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – 2023-24 LADO Annual Report

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