

Committee:	Date:
Safeguarding Sub Committee	25 September 2015
Subject:	Public
Local Authorities Designated Officer Annual Report	
Report of:	For Information
Director of Community and Children's Services	

Summary

This report will give Members information about the Local Authorities Designated Officer (LADO) activity for the period of April 2014 to March 2015, which is contained in the annual report for the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children's Board. During this period there have been a total of five LADO referrals from various sources, which is lower than the City of London's statistical neighbours.

Members will be advised of the activity that has taken place to raise the profile of this role and the recommendations for 2015/2016 in relation to multi agency training. Outlining the progress that has already been made with these recommendations and how this has increased the number of referrals for this period from five the previous year to six, within a five month timeframe.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to: Note the Report

Main Report

Background

1. Local Authorities Designated Officer (LADO) Role

The responsibilities of the LADO are set out in the statutory guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015) and the London Child Protection Procedures (5th edn. 2015, Chapter 17). All allegations 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, need to be formally reported to the LADO.

In the City of London the LADO work is carried out by the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager who reports directly into the Assistant Director People. Guidance and training on professional allegations is available through the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board website and agencies have access to consult with the LADO in the City of London.

The LADO would become involved when a professional or volunteer;

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children.

Current Position

2. LADO Activity for April 2014 to March 2015

There have been concerns raised by the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children's Board about the low number of referrals to the LADO, which has been scrutinised within the quality assurance sub group of the board. In total there have been five referrals during the period of 2014 to 2015. Two were historical allegations, with one relating to a historical allegation against a teacher currently working in the City, which was unsubstantiated. The other relating to an incident that occurred in the late 50's and early 60's, which was investigated by the City of London Police.

Due to the number of referrals it is difficult to discern any particular themes, but there has been an increase in the number of historical allegations, which reflects a wider national picture. Despite efforts to raise awareness around the LADO role there continues to be a low referral rate of professional allegations from school's nurseries, voluntary agencies and commissioned services in the City of London.

For 2014 to 2015 the key priorities have been to raise the profile of the LADO role with staff across the City of London Corporation and with external partners. This has been achieved by;

- working closely with agencies around their safeguarding responsibilities.
- offering advice and support around individual case concerns.
- assisting agencies with the referral process to the LADO.
- providing support and guidance to maintained and independent schools in the City through the Education Forum in regard to the referral process and criteria re professional allegations.
- raising awareness with partner agencies who attend the Children's Executive Board.

- introducing a Corporate Safeguarding Policy for Children and Adults in January 2014 which clearly sets out the guidance for professionals allegations.
- working with safeguarding champions across the City of London Corporation as to the role of the LADO.
- explaining the role of the LADO in briefing within the wider safeguarding campaign, "Notice the Signs".

The priorities for 2015 to 2016 will be to continue raising awareness; this will be achieved by;

- Ensuring that all professionals who work with children, from the statutory, voluntary and independent sectors, are engaged and understand the LADO process. Training events will also be held.
- A Safeguarding Conference was to be arranged in the City; this has now taken place and has been well attended by partner agencies.
- Quality assurance of in-house and independent safeguarding training will be taken to ensure that it is to an appropriate standard.
- There will be a review of how agencies ensure that parents feel confident and able to raise safeguarding concerns about professionals.
- A peer review of City of London LADO cases will be completed by another local authority.

Conclusion

3. It has been concerning that there have been a low number of LADO referrals in the City of London, despite efforts to increase awareness. One of the recommendations from the annual LADO report was to increase awareness around professional allegations by delivering multi-agency training. Training sessions were commenced in August 2015 and further training is planned for October 2015 and February 2016.

Since April 2015 there has been a significant increase in the number of LADO referrals. For 2014 to 2015 there were a total of five referrals for the whole year and since April of this year there have been six. It is not clear at this stage whether the increase in the number of referrals is due to professionals having increased awareness, however this will be reviewed and the findings will be incorporated in the annual report for 2015 to 2016. Guidance on Local Authorities Designated Officer role is now on the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children's Board web site.

Appendices

Local Authorities Designated Officers Annual Report for 2014 /2015

Background Papers

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)

[https://www.gov.uk/.../Working Together to Safeguard Children.](https://www.gov.uk/.../Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children)

London Child Protection Procedures 5th edition, 2015, Chapter 17

www.londonscb.gov.uk/procedures/

City of London Local Authorities Designated Officer Guidance

www.chscb.org.uk

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