

Committee(s)	Dated:
Community and Children Services – For Information Safeguarding Sub Committee – For Information Establishment Committee – For information	13 May 2016 2 June 2016 12 July 2016
Subject: Local Authority Designated Officer 2015/16 Annual Report	Public
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Summary

This report updates Members on the activity and performance of the Local Authority Designated Role (LADO) for 2015/16. This update is further to the 2014/15 annual report that was submitted to the Committee in September 2015 which provided Members with background information on the role of the LADO, referral data and highlighted the need to raise greater awareness of the role both across the City of London Corporation and partners.

The Community and Children Services Committee requested that the 2014/15 report be taken to several committees to raise awareness of the role.

In addition to sharing the 2014/15 report with Members across a number of committees, a significant amount of training and briefings on the role of the LADO was carried out. As a result of this awareness-raising activity there has been a significant percentage increase in referrals to the LADO in 2015/16 compared to previous years.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report.

Main Report

Background

The responsibilities of the LADO are set out in “Working Together” to safeguard children, March 2015, and the London Child Protection Procedures, 5th edition, 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 in to 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.

Current Position

Raising Awareness

As a result of the low referral rate to the LADO, as reported in the 2014/15 Annual Report, the Community and Children Services Committee requested that the report be circulated to other relevant committees in order to raise awareness of the role.

Between September 2015 and January 2016, the report was presented to the following committees;

- Safeguarding Sub (Community & Children's Services) Committee
- Establishment Committee
- Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee
- Barbican Residential Committee
- Board of Governors of the City of London Freeman's School
- Board of Governors of the City of London School
- Board of Governors of the City of London School for Girls
- Board of Governors of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama
- Chief Officers Group

In addition to attending these committees, the LADO has updated partners on the City of London Executive Safeguarding Children Board, the Safeguarding Education Forum and Domestic Abuse Forum. As part of the LADO role, support and advice is offered to partners around their safeguarding duties, policies and procedures, as well as individual case advice on potential referrals to social care.

There has also been a considerable focus on delivering LADO training across the multi-agency partnership, and within individual agencies during 2015/16. This has included the LADO delivering the following training and/or briefings:

- Forty representatives from voluntary sector-based organisations attended a children services briefing event, which included a slot on the role of the LADO.
- Forty-nine City of London staff attended Child Protection training that included the role of the LADO.
- Nine City of London staff attended allegations management and private fostering training.
- Approximately 30 staff from Sir John Cass Foundation Primary School received training on the LADO role and professional allegations at an inset day in January 2016.
- The role of the LADO has been included in the City of London Children Services Induction programme, which has been delivered to approximately 70

professionals from across a number of agencies working with children and families.

In addition to these sessions, the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board has delivered training in the City on the role of the LADO and Safer Recruitment, as part of the Board's core training offer:

- Twenty-two people from the Police, Health, Youth Services and Education attended training on safeguarding in October 2015.
- Forty people from Early Years Settings, City of London HR, Health, Education and the voluntary sector attended two sessions on Safer Recruitment in February and March 2016.

Referrals

As a result of this activity there has been a significant increase in the number of LADO referrals, compared to the three previous years:

3 – 2012/13
2 – 2013/14
5 – 2014/15
11 – 2015/16

The referrals in 2015/16 have come from a range of sources:

- 1 - Youth Service
- 2 – Independent Schools
- 3 – Maintained School
- 1 – City of London Corporation
- 1 - Anonymous
- 1 – Early Years Setting
- 1 – Other Local Authority
- 1 – Education Employment Agency

The reasons for the referrals were:

3 – Physical
3 – Sexual
5 – Behaviour

Learning

As a result of no referrals being made by Health, the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board commissioned the Safeguarding Lead in the Clinical Commissioning Group to carry out a review of safeguarding practice across relevant health partners to ensure staff were aware of the role. This review concluded that the practice was appropriate and staff were aware of the role.

In March 2016, a similar exercise was initiated in respect of the Police in Hackney and the City. Initial discussions have commenced between the LADO and the Professional Standards Division in the City of London Police to review police awareness of the role.

A recurring theme that has been coming through on the LADO referrals has been concerns around safer recruitment practices within organisations. In some agencies safer recruitment practices are not always consistently being implemented, especially in relation to checking references and DBS checks. There have also been issues with staff who have been employed for some considerable time, whereby when checks have been made on their employment background there is limited information on their employment history and references for the post. These findings resulted in the commissioning of training into safer recruitment, as referenced above.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

The work of the LADO is a statutory requirement and supports the City of London's responsibility to ensure safeguarding children duties are in place and effective. The role of the LADO is a key role in implementing the City of London Corporation Safeguarding Policy and aligns with a key priority in the Department of Community and Children Services Business Plan.

Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Conclusion

The report has highlighted LADO activity and referral rates for 2015/16, and demonstrated the impact that raising awareness and delivering training and briefings has had on the increase in referrals to its current highest level in the City. The delivery of training and briefing sessions will continue as part of the 2016/17 LADO work plan.

Appendices

Not applicable.

Background Papers

Local Authorities Designated Officer Annual Report 2014/15.

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