

REPORT TO: OSC

DATE: 5th September 2018

REPORT TITLE: Annual LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) Report

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PURPOSE OF REPORT:

For the committee to be updated about the work of the LADO during the period 2017-18

SUMMARY:

This report updates the Overview and Scrutiny Panel on the annual LADO work during the period April 2017 to March 2018.

- The role of the LADO is set out in the “Working Together to Safeguard Children” guidance. The guidance was updated in 2018.
- It has been a requirement since 2015 that the LADO is sufficiently qualified and experience to fulfil this role effectively and requires newly appointed officers to be qualified social workers.

1. BACKGROUND

- In Enfield, the role of the LADO is undertaken by the Head of Safeguarding and Quality Service (SQS) who has responsibility for overseeing investigations, alerting senior council officers to allegations of a serious nature and making referrals to the Disclosure and Baring Service. Child Protection Conference Chairs/Independent Reviewing Officers in SQS will lead on investigations in the absence of the LADO.

- In addition to leading on investigations, the service offer advice and guidance when there may be concerns about a person's conduct and when the threshold for a formal investigation has not been met.
- In addition to the above activities, the LADO has liaised with the Schools Standards and Support when there have been referrals from OFSTED, to co-ordinate responses in a timely fashion
- Training is an integral part of staff development and several training sessions have been delivered to LSCB agencies and Enfield foster carers. There were 62 allegations between 1.4.17 and 31.3 2018 of which 22 (approximately 35%) of the allegations were substantiated.
- In addition to the above 62 allegations, there have been 80 consultations with the LADO, where the threshold for formal LADO intervention had not been met.
- The number of allegations has increased by 25% this year and the number of substantiated ones has also increased significantly. These figures would suggest that the LADO intervention has been appropriate and measured.
- There has been one dismissal two people resigned from their positions. DBS referrals have been made or are being processed in these cases.
- There are five ongoing investigations. Four of these are led by the police and three are pending decisions by CPS on whether charges will be made. There have been charges on one and court date has now been confirmed. One allegation is being managed under disciplinary procedures.
- As part of the internal audit programme the LADO work was reviewed there were no safeguarding concerns raised the 4 findings related to process and quality assurance which have been accepted and actioned.

2. ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Several allegations have been of a complex nature and have not been concluded. These have been police led and CPS have taken a very long time to decide on whether to charge. This has had a significant impact on the professionals being investigated and the agencies employing them. It also has an impact on children/young people who have made the allegations, and when appropriate, they have been signposted to agencies for support.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the scrutiny panel notes the findings of this report and the attached LADO annual report 2017-18.



LADO ANNUAL
REPORT 2017-18.pdf

4. NEXT STEPS

- Implement the 2018 -10 work plan including completion of a peer on peer review by the end of the financial year and revision of the LADO procedures by October 2018.