

Decision Maker: CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES PDS COMMITTEE

Date: 14 March 2023

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED OFFICER SIX MONTH UPDATE REPORT

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Chief Officer: Richard Baldwin
Director of Children's Services

Ward: All Wards

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 This report is written to provide an overview of the activity of the Designated Officer (LADO) for the period April 2021 – January 2022 in managing allegations against people who work or volunteer with children and are therefore in a position of trust.
- 1.2 Nationally, all agencies and settings that provide services or staff working with children are required (under statutory guidance – *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, 2018), to have clear procedures for responding to allegations against staff, whether they are paid or voluntary, such as sports clubs and associations. Within education services, additional guidance '*Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018*' outlines specific requirements considered when managing allegations against staff working in educational settings. The requirements of the LADO process are set out in the London Child Protection Procedures and Practice Guidance and are followed by all London Boroughs.
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2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2.1 Members of the Committee are asked to note the report.

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: The report demonstrates the impact of the Local Authority Designated Officer in ensuring positive outcomes for all Bromley children where they have cause to make an allegation against a member of staff or a volunteer.
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Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Not Applicable:
 2. BBB Priority: Children and Young People:
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable:
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable:
 3. Budget head/performance centre: N/A
 4. Total current budget for this head: £N/A
 5. Source of funding: N/A
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Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): N/A
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory Requirement:
 2. Call-in: Not applicable: No Executive decision.
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Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: Not Applicable
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): All Bromley children
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: Not Applicable

3. COMMENTARY

3.1 The role of the LADO is to:

- Provide advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations
- Liaise with the police, children's social care and other relevant agencies.
- Monitor the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistent with a thorough and fair process.

3.2 Every agency that works with children and young people should have a Designated Officer whose job it is to liaise with and refer to LADO.

3.3 The LADO should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- Behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.
- Behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (includes transfer of risk, risk by association)

3.4 SOURCE OF REFERRALS

3.5 Referrals and consultations come from a range of agencies. Most referrals have been from education, early years, and social care. Training and awareness of the LADO role has been targeted to these agencies within the year as well as with faith groups and health agencies. The data highlights the need for the LADO in the coming year to continue to work with the Bromley Safeguarding Children Partnership in improving awareness and links within Police and Health and also the voluntary sector.

Q1/Q2 2022	Contacts	Consultations	Referrals
Number of allegations referred to LADO	263	135	128

3.6 CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY

3.7 The number of referrals from the 1st April 2022 to 30th September 2022, which met threshold for harm is on a higher trajectory than the last reporting year which was 204. As the above chart indicates the trajectory for the reporting year 2022/2023 for referrals will be 256. Of the 128 Q1/Q2 2022 referrals, 31 were substantiated, 8 were unsubstantiated, 24 unfounded, and 47 are ongoing. There was no evidence to support any allegation deemed malicious.

3.8 The full Local Authority Designated Officer 6 Month Update report can be viewed at Appendix 1.

4. IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN

See Section 2 above

Non-Applicable Sections:	Policy/Personnel/Financial/Legal/Procurement Implications.
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	[Title of document and date]