

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – 13 October 2021

Subject: Managing Allegations against Adults who work with children - Local Authority Designated Officer Annual Report 2020-2021

Report of: Strategic Lead (Safeguarding and Practice Improvement) and Service Lead (Safeguarding)

Summary

The purpose of the report is to provide an overview of the management of allegations in Manchester and the role of the Designated Officers (known as LADO throughout the report) between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2021.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Scrutiny Committee Members consider the management of allegations against adults who work with children by the Designated Officers and seek assurance that the service continues to deliver on its statutory duties.

Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city

In the reporting year 2020-2021 the LADO have successfully moved to delivering Allegation Meetings virtually using Microsoft Teams video conferencing, reducing the transport requirements of professionals attending the meetings. This has not impacted on the quality of the service and will continue.

Our Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	The LADO service employees 1.4 full time equivalent LADOs (Local Authority Designated Officer) and 1 Business Support member of staff.

A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	1 LADO has been within the service for 30 years and shares her knowledge and expertise across the service. The Manchester LADO takes a significant role in driving the improvements and developments on a regional basis through the NW forum.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Throughout 2021-2021 the LADO has moved to deliver training virtually and briefing sessions to a wider section of the workforce, the impact of this is that more services across the city have a greater understanding of their role in managing allegations against staff who work with children and the role of the LADO.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	The LADO service provides advice and guidance throughout Manchester, promoting Manchester as city that has safeguarding at the heart of everything we do and provides an excellent quality service.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	The LADO for Manchester is involved within the North West LADO network and national work to ensure we share learning and to ensure we are continuously developing in line with regional and national practice.

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Background documents (available for public inspection): None

1.0 Introduction

The purpose of the annual report is to provide members with an overview of the management of allegations against adults who work with children in Manchester, for the period 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021. The report offers an analysis of allegations against adults who work in a paid or voluntary capacity with children in Manchester and how effectively the safeguarding partnership is discharging its statutory responsibilities.

2.0 Background

The role of the LADO in Manchester is responsible for ensuring itself and its partners comply with their statutory obligations as outlined in *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 - A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children¹* in relation to the management of allegations against adults working in a paid or voluntary capacity. These procedures are in line with the DfE Guidance - *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021*.

The LADO Service sits within the Safeguarding & Improvement Unit and is managed by the Service Lead for Safeguarding.

It is important to note that during the period relevant to the report, we entered a global pandemic that forced the service to work differently in managing allegations against adults, which is discussed throughout the report.

3.0 Recommendations

The last twelve months have been unprecedented times with managing a global pandemic while ensuring we continue with business as usual. The ability of the LADO service to adapt over the last twelve months has allowed us to continue to deliver a good quality service and ensure the right outcomes that ensure Manchester's children are appropriately safeguarded. Within the context of the adaptations required over the last twelve months this report outlines the learning and development and how this will shape the service moving into 2021/2022.

The focus for 2021/2022 for the service is:

- Promote the use of virtual meetings where this is effective and more efficient, whilst most of the children's social care will not suit virtual communication, in the LADO sphere it is an effective method.
- To broaden the training offer to increase awareness about when to refer to LADO, the difference between an allegation and concern about the quality of care and/or practice or a complaint.
- To develop a Quality Assurance Framework to assure ourselves of the effectiveness of our service through regular performance checks, auditing, feedback, observations.

- To continue to develop smarter ways of managing enquiries and allegation meeting to reduce the amount of time needed by LADO to gather information and ensure we are focusing on outcomes.