

Manchester City Council Report for Information

Report to: Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – 8 November 2023

Subject: LADO Annual Report 2022 - 2023

Report of: Strategic Director (Children and Education Services)

Summary

The annual report provides an overview and analysis of the work of the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) in the management of allegations against adults who work with children in a paid or voluntary capacity in Manchester, for the period 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022. This includes how effective the safeguarding partnership is discharging its statutory responsibilities. The report considers the learning and development over the last twelve months and sets priorities for 2023-2024 against this.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to: -

- (1) Consider the progress and impact being achieved by the LADO service in Manchester.
 - (2) Agree the priorities set out for 2023-2024 with regards to continuous drive for improvement of service delivery and the impact on the children's workforce and children in Manchester.
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Wards Affected: All

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

The LADO Service has successfully embedded a hybrid model of working by utilising technology, which has reduced the transport requirements of professionals attending meetings. We have a flexible working approach with LADOs having the ability to work part of the week in the office and part at home, again reducing the need to travel into Manchester.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments

The LADO service works has and continues to work with partners in making sure that organisations conduct investigations that are fair and equitable across our diverse workforce in Manchester. We ensure that equality and valuing diversity is reinforced by our values and embedded in our day to day working practice.

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	The LADO service employees 2 members of staff of a permanent basis that contributes to the diverse workforce within Children's Safeguarding & Review Service.
A highly skilled city: world class and home-grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	The LADOs in Manchester all have at least 20 years post qualifying experience in Social Work and share their knowledge and expertise across Children's Services and the wider children's workforce.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Throughout 2022-2023 we have successfully delivered several training sessions both face to face and virtually to a wider section of the workforce, the impact of this is that more services across the city have a greater understanding of the role of the LADO.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	The LADO service has adopted a hybrid model for managing allegation meetings and use technology to facilitate. This reduces the need for professionals to travel to meetings.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	The LADOs in Manchester are involved within the Northwest LADO network and national work to ensure we share learning and continuously develop in line with regional and national practice.

Full details are in the body of the report.

Financial Consequences – Capital

Not applicable

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

LADO ANNUAL REPORT 2022 - 2023

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The written annual report is produced by Manchester City Council Children's Service to provide assurance of the effectiveness of the role of the Local Authority LADO in its duty to provide advice, guidance and management and oversight of allegations of people who work with children.
- 1.2 The annual report provides Manchester Safeguarding Partnership with an overview and analysis of the management of allegations against adults who work with children in a paid or voluntary capacity in Manchester, for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. This includes how effective the safeguarding partnership is in discharging its statutory responsibilities.
- 1.3 The report considers the learning and development over the last twelve months and sets the priorities for 2023-2024 based on the analysis of activity. It also builds on previous annual reports and Northwest comparative intelligence.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The LADO Annual Report is a statutory requirement from Working Together to Safeguarding Children and their Families (2018) to outline the work of the Local Authority LADO. It is required in Manchester to be presented to Scrutiny Committee and Manchester Safeguarding Partnership.

3.0 Recommendations

- 3.1 The following priorities are identified within the report to continuously improving how we deliver the LADO service and evidence the impact of the training in raising awareness of managing allegations against professionals who work with children.

Priority 1. To safely and effectively support employers whilst managing the LADO demand.

- We will look at developing a way forward, in consultation with partners, to manage enquiries which works well for employers and effectively manages the increasing demand for the service.
- We will develop a dedicated LADO email box to make it easier to communicate with the LADO as currently the main way to communicate is via telephone or a general Children's Safeguarding & review Service email.
- We will agree and implement a timescale for the completion and distribution of minutes to ensure employers receive the minutes in a timely way to assist them in their planning.

Priority 2. To raise awareness and develop the training offer to the children's workforce.

- We will work closer with MSP to ensure that there is a cross section of attendees from all of Children's Workforce.

- We will next year demonstrate, which key agencies have attended training and evaluate the impact of this by asking them to evidence the change to practices.
- We will provide bespoke training to early years and education to ensure they understand LADO thresholds and have the confidence to deal with low level concerns or conduct internally where appropriate.
- We will identify low referrers such as Faith Groups, Voluntary agencies and Transport and target bespoke training. We will commit to do this when we identify agencies or key partners require a targeted approach to managing allegations.
- We will work with commissioners in Manchester to help us understand the increased demand in information requests.

Priority 3. To build on the performance framework, to quality assure activity to focus on learning and improvement.

- The monthly Performance and quality assurance Report will introduce new measures as discussed within this report, timeliness of minutes sent out, breakdown of key agencies making contact for example health, we will breakdown into acute, primary etc. We will also report against training provided and measure the impact throughout the year.
- We will use the Northwest Audit tool to develop an effective audit process and ask for moderation by another NW authority.
- We will develop a more learning environment through the QA process linked to regular peer audit, thematic audit and observation of practice.
- In learning from SAR requests and the complaint this year, we will consider how best we inform adults of the role of the LADO and who will feedback to them for transparency throughout the process.

3.2 In conclusion, the priorities identified within the report will shape how we continuously improve our effectiveness in both managing allegations and raising awareness of duties and responsibilities of employers and organisations in managing allegations and concerns of people who work with children in Manchester.