



<u>Committee and Date</u>
Cabinet
9 November 2022

<u>Item</u>
<u>Public</u>

## **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED OFFICER**

**Responsible Officer**

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### **1. Synopsis**

- 1.1. This report outlines the work of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), a statutory role overseeing complaints and enquiries as to concerns raised about individuals who pose a risk or are a risk to children in roles which are a position of trust.

### **2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1. The total number of contacts and referrals received for the period 2021/22 is 407 in comparison to 342 for the previous year.
- 2.2. This year, referrals have increased by 62, putting figures on a par with those seen in previous years, indicating that the post-covid re-opening of clubs, schools and sports centres has returned stats to a more 'usual' figure.
- 2.3. The majority of referrals to the LADO, continue to be from children's homes - 51%, which has been consistent for several years. Shropshire has a large number of children's homes in the area and children placed from other areas.
- 2.4. Referrals from education this year are 24% compared to 20% last year which is low considering schools were largely closed the previous year.

- 2.5. The percentage of referrals from foster care is 8% compared to 9% last year and the small percentage of referrals from other sources (17%) is also unchanged compared to previous years.
- 2.6. There remains a culture across the board with residential care that they will 'run things by' the LADO rather than making an organisational decision whether the criteria is met or not. All contacts to the LADO are recorded and if they do not meet the criteria will result in NFA. Work is being undertaken with residential organisations to prevent inappropriate contacts.
- 2.7. Of all referrals to the LADO between 2021-2022, 178 allegations resulted in "No Further Action", 59 were found to be substantiated, 78 unsubstantiated, 12 were false accusations, 0 malicious and 80 contact were still open at the end of the financial year.
- 2.8. Good communication has remained with partner agencies including monthly meetings with the main care home providers and training for new Shropshire Children's Services Council Staff monthly. We have listened to feedback from our partner agencies and as a result will be reviewing the LADO referral pathway to ensure that it is clear.

### **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1 Recommend that Members note the content of the Annual Report.

## **REPORT**

### **4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal**

*(NB This will include the following: Impact on Children and Vulnerable Adults, Risk Management, Human Rights, Equalities, Community and other Consultation)*

- 4.1. The Local Authority is required to provide a Local Authority Designated Officer, which is a statutory service. The risk in not providing this service is that that Local Authority would fail in its statutory duties.

4.2. Assurance about the impact and effectiveness of the LADO role in Shropshire was gained during the OFSTED inspection, it was looked at in depth and found to be robust and effective.

## 5. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications in the 2021-2022 financial year

## 6. Climate Change Appraisal

6.1. There are no identified implications for climate change.

## 7. Background

7.1. N/A

## 8. Additional Information

8.1. N/A

## 9. Conclusions

9.1 Cabinet is asked to note the content of the report as a key statutory function of the Local Authority in Safeguarding Children.

**List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)**

**Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)**

**Local Member**

**Appendices**

Appendix A - LADO Annual Report 2021-2022 FINAL



