

**Oldham Borough Council
Record of Decision**



1. **TITLE:** Additional resource to manage Children's Social Care Complaints

2. **SERVICE AREA:** Communities Directorate

3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to recruit a temporary, fixed-term Senior Complaints Officer via the Council's agency staffing contract (Reed) for a six-month period. The role will be contracted for 2.5 days per week (18.32 hours) to provide additional capacity in response to increasing demand within the Complaints Team in Children's Social Care and school contract SLA delivery. Details on how this time will be managed are outlined within the report. Between January and March 2025, the service received 45 complaints and 16 representations, compared to 23 complaints and 32 representations during the same period in 2024. This reflects a marked increase in formal complaints, many of which are complex and require statutory investigation. This represents a 96% increase in complaints and an 11% overall increase in total casework. This shift in both volume and case type has placed increased pressure on the team's capacity to meet statutory timescales and maintain quality. The immediate additional support will help ensure that complaints are managed effectively, statutory deadlines are met, and complainants, particularly children, young people, and families, receive timely and appropriate responses. Failure to act will likely result in further breaches of statutory timescales, increased risk of escalation to the Ombudsman, reputational damage to the Council, and reduced confidence from both residents and school partners.

4. **DECISION MADE BY:** Director of Communities

5. **DECISION:**

RESOLVED - That:

Approve the appointment of a temporary Senior Complaints Officer, on a part-time (18.32), six-month temporary contract, to assist with Children's Social Care, complex cases, and school contract SLA-related complaints

6. **REASON FOR DECISION**

To seek approval to recruit a temporary, fixed-term Senior Complaints Officer via the Council's agency staffing contract (Reed) for a six-month period.

7. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

Option 1 - Approve the appointment of a temporary Senior Complaints Officer, on a part-time (18.32), six-month temporary contract, to assist with Children's Social Care, complex cases, and school contract SLA-related complaints

Option 2 – Do Nothing

Option 1 was the preferred option

8. **INTERESTS AND NATURE OF INTERESTS DECLARED**

None

9. **PRINCIPAL GROUPS CONSULTED:** Not applicable
10. **DOCUMENT CONSIDERED:** DDR Complaints Service