

Meeting: Cabinet **Date:** 19 August 2025

Wards affected: All

Report Title: Local Authority Designated Officer Annual Report 2024 - 2025

When does the decision need to be implemented? For Information

Cabinet Member Contact Details: Cllr Nick Bye, Lead Cabinet Member for Children's Services, nick.bye@torbay.gov.uk

Director Contact Details: Nancy Meehan, Director Children's Services, Nancy.meehan@torbay.gov.uk

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Annual Report provides an overview of allegations referred to the LADO regarding people in a position of trust working or volunteering with children in the Torbay locality.
- 1.2 It summarises the statutory role of the LADO and both the national and regional context of the role, the number of consultations and referrals, a breakdown of the types of allegations and the profile of the LADO's work from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025.

2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

- 2.1 Whilst there is not a statutory requirement for each Local Authority to produce and publish an Annual Report in respect of the work of the LADO, there is an expectation that one is completed to inform both the local authority and partner agencies of the number and nature of contacts over the period and to identify trends and learning from the data to inform any local action plans.
- 2.2 The information within this report helps us to deliver our ambition for Torbay to become child-friendly in every sense of its meaning, whereby the community and key partners are aware of their duty to consult and refer to

the LADO service when safeguarding concerns about those in a position of trust become known.

- 2.3 The nature of the LADO role, as set out within Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2015), is such that it forms an integral part of the safeguarding response to children, and therefore fits with Torbay's ambition to ensure enhanced and robust response to vulnerable groups, with children often being especially vulnerable. This is particularly the case in regards to Torbay's corporate parenting responsibilities.

3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

1. That the Local Authority Designated Officer Annual Report 2024-25 be endorsed and published in accordance with Council's requirements.

Appendices

Appendix 1: LADO Annual Report 2024 - 2025

Background Documents

None

Supporting Information

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The LADO Annual Report provides an overview of allegations referred to the LADO regarding people in a position of trust working or volunteering with children in the Torbay locality. It summarises the statutory role of the LADO and both the national and regional context of the role, the number of consultations and referrals, referral sources, a breakdown of the types of allegations and the profile of the LADO's work from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025.
- 1.2 The report notes that there has been a reduction in the number of consultations in the 2024-25 year (377 reduced from 412 in 2023-24), with the majority referred by education (120 consultations); 63 of those consultations related to cared for children placed in Torbay. This year, there was a significant rise in consultations relating to the behaviour of a trusted adult (108 consultations).
- 1.3 Of the 377 consultations, 39 consultations met the LADO harm threshold and resulted in an Allegations Management Meeting. The outcomes of those meetings were: four unfounded; twenty unsubstantiated; eight substantiated; and seven pending outcomes i.e. a complex investigation or awaiting the outcome of police processes.
- 1.4 The report also outlines the work of the LADO in raising awareness across the partnership and provides an update in respect of key service actions and outcomes.

2. Options under consideration

- 2.1 N/A – No other options have been considered.

3. Financial Opportunities and Implications

- 3.1 N/A

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 The role of the LADO and the LADO's responsibilities remain set out in Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2023, Keeping Children Safe in

Education (KCSIE 2015) and the Southwest Child Protection Procedures. There are no legal implications as a result of the decision to endorse this Annual Report.

5. Engagement and Consultation

- 5.1 The nature of the LADO role is such that engagement and consultation occurs naturally as an integral part of the role. The Torbay LADO continues to take an active role in the regional Southwest LADO network meetings, to share learning and improvement. Close informal arrangements also include peer observations and audits, to support service-led improvement and strengthen effective cross-boundary working.

6. Purchasing or Hiring of Goods and/or Services

- 6.1 N/A

7. Tackling Climate Change

- 7.1 N/A

8. Associated Risks

- 8.1 There are no associated risks with endorsing this Annual Report.
- 8.2 Should the Report not be endorsed, there will be no change to the function of the LADO as this is set out within relevant legislation and policy; however, the Report would not be published and this may impact on the ability of partners and other agencies to learn from the patterns and trends identified within the report.

9. Equality Impacts - Identify the potential positive and negative impacts on specific groups

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
Age	18 per cent of Torbay residents are under 18 years old. 55 per cent of Torbay residents are aged between 18 to 64 years old. 27 per cent of Torbay residents are aged 65 and older.	The LADO service ensures that children are safeguarded from people in a position of trust appropriately.		
Carers	At the time of the 2021 census there were 14,900 unpaid carers in Torbay. 5,185 of these provided 50 hours or more of care.	Enhanced confidence in the safeguarding procedures in place through people in a position of trust and services/providers.		
Disability	In the 2021 Census, 23.8% of Torbay residents answered that their day-to-day activities were limited a little or a lot by a physical or mental health condition or illness.	The LADO service ensures that children are safeguarded from people in a position of trust appropriately.		

Gender reassignment	In the 2021 Census, 0.4% of Torbay's community answered that their gender identity was not the same as their sex registered at birth. This proportion is similar to the Southwest and is lower than England.	The LADO service ensures that children of all gender identities are safeguarded from people in a position of trust appropriately.		
Marriage and civil partnership	Of those Torbay residents aged 16 and over at the time of 2021 Census, 44.2% of people were married or in a registered civil partnership.	There is no differential impact.		
Pregnancy and maternity	Over the period 2010 to 2021, the rate of live births (as a proportion of females aged 15 to 44) has been slightly but significantly higher in Torbay (average of 63.7 per 1,000) than England (60.2) and the South West (58.4). There has been a notable fall in the numbers of live births since the middle of the last decade across all geographical areas.	There is no differential impact.		
Race	In the 2021 Census, 96.1% of Torbay residents described their ethnicity as white. This is a higher proportion than the	The LADO service ensures that children of all ethnic backgrounds are safeguarded from people in a position of trust appropriately.		

	<p>South West and England. Black, Asian and minority ethnic individuals are more likely to live in areas of Torbay classified as being amongst the 20% most deprived areas in England.</p>			
Religion and belief	<p>64.8% of Torbay residents who stated that they have a religion in the 2021 census.</p>	<p>The LADO service ensures that children with any religious belief or lack of belief are safeguarded from people in a position of trust appropriately.</p>		
Sex	<p>51.3% of Torbay's population are female and 48.7% are male</p>	<p>There is no differential impact.</p>		
Sexual orientation	<p>In the 2021 Census, 3.4% of those in Torbay aged over 16 identified their sexuality as either Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or, used another term to describe their sexual orientation.</p>	<p>The LADO service ensures that children of all sexualities are safeguarded from people in a position of trust appropriately.</p>		
Armed Forces Community	<p>In 2021, 3.8% of residents in England reported that they had previously served in the UK armed forces. In Torbay, 5.9 per cent of the population have previously served in the UK armed forces.</p>	<p>There is no differential impact.</p>		

Additional considerations				
Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child poverty and deprivation)		The LADO service ensures that children, no matter their socio-economic status, are safeguarded from people in a position of trust appropriately.		
Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay)		The role of the LADO ensures the physical, emotional and sexual safety of the children living in and supported by Torbay; as such, its integral safeguarding function has a positive impact on the general health of children and young people.		
Human Rights impacts		There is no differential impact.		
Child Friendly	Torbay Council is a Child Friendly Council, and all staff and Councillors are Corporate Parents and have a responsibility towards cared for and care experienced children and young people.	There is no differential impact.		

10. Cumulative Council Impact

10.1 None.

11. Cumulative Community Impacts

11.1 None.