

TORBAY COUNCIL

Report No: **445/2005**

Title: **Paignton Multi-Agency Advice Network**

To: Executive on 11th October 2005

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To seek Members support for the vision developed by Advice Strategy Steering Group for a “state of the art”, cross sector, multi-agency, One Stop Shop for advice and information services in Torbay:

‘To maximise, simplify and increase access for everyone to quality assured, consistent, joined-up advice services across the Bay.’

- 1.2 To seek Council support before time and resources are committed by both the private and public sectors.

2. Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 This proposal directly supports seven of the Council’s Corporate Priorities:

- **Making Torbay a Safer Place**

The proposed advice centre brings together a number of agencies to provide advice on a wide range of issues, a key part of this proposal is the provision of legal advice which will directly support the Corporate Plan outcome of ‘A Community that Feel Safe and is Safe’ The project has been nominated by the Community Legal Advice Commission as a regional pilot. It will be in a position to give advice on issues such as domestic violence in support of key action. Torbay Citizens Advice Bureaux are a key partner in delivering this advice. In addition a free legal information service will be run by local solicitors.

- **Improving Health and Social Care**

The project will directly support this theme with Age Concern Torbay and Torbay Disability Information Service providing a service to clients from this outlet. Young people will be supported through Checkpoint & Torbay Youth Enquiry Service. It brings together a range of advice services to one location ensuring services are available where people wish to receive them supporting key action (I).

- **Improving access to good quality affordable homes**

This brings together a number of agencies able to give advice on a number of housing related issues and as a result could through this advice help to prevent homelessness and enable people to access housing services. It directly supports action (i) to raise standards of advice offered through a programme of accreditation across agencies as part of the Torbay Advice Strategy.

- **Improving Torbay’s Economy**

Could increase footfall to Paignton Town Centre who will make use of shopping facilities. Last year over 45,000 people visited the various agencies that are involved in the partnership.

- **Valuing our Environment**

Could improve the physical environment of Paignton as part of the larger development of a central site.

- **Placing Learning at the heart of our community**
Training programmes and personal development plans for advice providers will contribute to effective advice services across agencies including raising capacity with the voluntary sector to respond to the government's agenda for the voluntary sector to work more closely with statutory agencies in the delivery of services
- **Creating Sustainable Communities**
This directly supports the theme outcome of equal access to services through the provision of services that people recognise as being accessible - a key measure of success for this theme. It supports the delivery of actions supporting the voluntary sector to enable it to provide services in partnership with the council.
- **Corporate Improvement**
The proposal will directly contribute to the outcome of accessible services which are available to suit customers and a recent survey has shown 95% support for the proposal. It supports the Councils customer focus Review key action v. Bringing together service will result in long term efficiency savings through use of common reception facilities and staff and the provision of a 'joined up service' with reduced bureaucracy. Contributing to key action (c).

3. Recommendation(s)

- 3.1 That the vision for a cross sector, multi-agency, One Stop Shop for advice and information services in Torbay be supported in principle.
- 3.2 That bids for external funding be pursued through the Torbay Citizens Advice Bureaux in partnership with the council.
- 3.3 That the Council commits the necessary resources and expertise to bring the project to fruition.
- 3.4 That any Council funding which may be required to support the development of the project be considered through the annual Capital Plan budget review process.
- 3.5 That the provision of a Council owned site be approved in principle.
- 3.6 That the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Strategic Director (Community), the Director of Law and Support and the relevant Executive Member, be authorised to discuss potential land swaps to enable a suitable site to be assembled.
- 3.7 That the Council enters into negotiations with Torbay Citizens Advice Bureaux to set up appropriate management arrangements for the facility.

4. Reason for Recommendation(s)

- 4.1 Support for the scheme will increase the likelihood of obtaining external funding and will improve customer service and perception, reinforce the Council's commitment to partnership working with the voluntary sector to deliver services (Government agenda & corporate improvement). It will also support both the corporate and community plan aims, provide joined-up quality assured services and an accessible service for all removing the poor quality facilities at various locations currently occupied by the advice providers involved.

5. Key Risks associated with the Recommendation(s)

- 5.1 The key risk of not following the recommendations in this report is that funding bids to enable the project to be realised are unsuccessful, however a funding strategy has been developed with a range of funding options identified. All bids however would require some funding from the Council.

Likelihood	6	6	12	18	24
	5	5	10	15	20
	4	4	8	12X	16
	3	3	6	9	12
	2	2	4	6	8
	1	1	2	3	4
		1	2	3	4
		Impact			

Low risk
 Intermediate risk
 High risk

The "x" in the above matrix denotes where the author has assessed the level of final risk to fall

6. Alternative Options (if any)

- 6.1 Not to pursue the project:

- Existing provision would continue to be fragmented, delay in the project would leave Torbay Citizens Advice Bureaux operating from a building without disabled access.
- An opportunity to secure external funding of £1.5 to support the objectives of the Council and its partners could be lost.
- The need of 50,000 customers would continue to be met in an unco-ordinated manner.
- Opportunities for efficiency saving for the council and its partners would be lost.

- 6.2 Citizens Advice Bureaux (CAB) standalone initiative:

- The project started three years ago as a standalone proposal to deliver a purpose build office for the Torbay CAB and the Council agreed in principle a 40 year lease to enable the project to be implemented. By pursuing this option there would be less likelihood of delivery given limited resources and funding available to CAB.

7. Background

- 7.1 Three years ago Torbay Citizens Advice Bureau and the Council agreed in principle a 40-year lease to enable the development of a CAB office at Victoria Square in Paignton. The proposal has been further developed to serve not only CAB but a number of other organizations and agencies resulting in an innovative project that will lead to improved accessibility for customers seeking information about services offered by the voluntary sector and the Council. A key part of the proposal is the relocation of the Councils Connections Service to the advice center.

8. Progress to date

- 8.1 A potential site was identified in Victoria Square, Paignton dependent upon negotiations with Lidl, the primary leaseholder for part of the desired accommodation.
- 8.2 Proposals were drawn up and draft approval obtained from the council.
- 8.3 As the Advice Strategy Steering Group with the remit of producing an advice strategy for Torbay developed, other organisations expressed an interest in sharing the premises and the vision of a multi -agency, partnership approach to advice provision began to grow.
- 8.4 The organisations currently interested in a full time, outreach, drop in or surgery presence are Torbay Council - Connections, Disability Information Service, Housing Advice, youth offending team and the library service, - voluntary Sector - CAB, Age Concern, YES, Checkpoint, - Statutory - ConneXions, Pension Service and jobcentreplus.
- 8.5 Funding streams have already been identified and one bid from GOSW has been successful in the sum of £40,000. Details of potential funding streams are identified in Appendix 2
- 8.6 An alternative site on land in Council ownership at Station Lane Paignton has been identified with the potential to hold a much larger premises and on 12 September 2005, a workshop for all interested parties was held. It was agreed to explore the alternative site with a view to moving the vision to project status governing both the programme development and build and the setting up of a 'not for profit' company to look at how the shared advice provision will work and the future management of the premises.
- 8.7 It is possible that the Legal Services Commission will be interested in adopting this development as one of six innovative national pilots.

9. Finance & Funding

- 9.1 The estimated costs are outlined in the table below. Implementation of this project will enable the rationalization of advice services and there is therefore potential to generate capital funding through the disposal of other assets currently in use at Winner Street.
- 9.2 There currently no budget provision for the potential contribution from the Council and this will have to be considered through the Capital Plan review process.

Year	Expected Capital Spend	Funding		
		Torbay Council Resources (£'000)	Other Funding (£'000)	Source and Status of Other Funding
	(£000)			
2005/06			40	
2006/07		300	1,200	Change-up funding £40 secured for design work Invest to save bid submitted (national) CLAC bid submitted
2007/08				
2008/09				
Totals		300	1,240	

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IMPLICATIONS, CONSULTATION AND OTHER INFORMATION

Part 1

These sections may have been completed by the Report author but must have been agreed by the named officers in the Legal, Finance, Human Resources and Property Divisions.

Does the proposal have implications for the following issues? If "Yes" - give details. <i>delete as appropriate</i>		Name of responsible officer
Legal	Yes – Facilities management and joint working arrangements need to be formalized through an appropriate legal agreement	Bill Norman
Financial – Revenue	Yes – Bringing together services will could result in long term efficiency savings through use of common reception facilities and staff and the provision of a 'joined up service' with reduced bureaucracy. Contributing to key action (c). in the Corporate Plan	Richard Thorpe
Financial – Capital Plan	Yes – Any Council funding which may be required to support the development of the project be considered through the annual Capital Plan budget review process	Lynette Royce
Human resources	Yes – Existing Connections Staff Terms & Conditions – discuss with Trish Webster & trades unions	Geoff Williams
Property	Yes - This project will enable the rationalization of advice services and there is therefore potential to generate capital funding through the disposal of other assets currently in use at Winner Street.	Sam Partridge

Part 2

The author of the report must complete these sections.

Could this proposal realistically be achieved in a manner that would more effectively: <i>delete as appropriate</i>		
(i)	promote environmental sustainability?	No
(ii)	reduce crime and disorder?	No
(iii)	promote good community relations?	No
(iv)	promote equality of opportunity on grounds of race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief?	No
(v)	reduce (or eliminate) unlawful discrimination (including indirect discrimination)?	No

If the answer to any of the above questions is "Yes" the author must have addressed the relevant issue/s in the main report and have included a full justification and, where appropriate, an impact assessment.

Part 3

The author of the report must complete this section.

	<i>delete as appropriate</i>	If "Yes", give details
Does the proposal have implications for any other Directorates?	Yes	A joined up, one stop shop approach to providing advice and information may enable services to close reception points in other locations in Paignton, demonstrating value for money, efficiency savings and clearer direction for customers

Part 4

Is this proposal in accordance with (i.e. not contrary to) the Council's budget or its Policy Framework?		<i>delete as appropriate</i>
		Yes
1.	If "No" - give details of the nature and extent of consultation with stakeholders and the relevant overview and scrutiny body.	
2.	If "Yes" - details and outcome of consultation, if appropriate.	
	Strong support from potential users of the service see details at Appendix 1	

Part 5

Is the proposal a Key Decision in relation to an Executive function?	<i>delete as appropriate</i>	If "Yes" - give Reference Number
	No	

Part 6

Wards

All wards

Appendices

Appendix 1

Details of Consultation

Appendix 2

Potential Funding Streams

Documents available in Members' Room

None

Background Papers:

The following documents/files were used to compile this report:

None

The Consultation and Research Team



Torbay Advice Network

Have your say on our development proposal for a one stop shop Torbay Advice Centre at Victoria Square.

A range of agencies to include CAB (rear of Palace Avenue), Age Concern (Dendy Road), Disability Information Service (Hollacombe), Housing Services (Union Street, Torquay) and Connections (rear of Palace Avenue Theatre) have the opportunity to move to a single shared location in Victoria Square near to the multi- storey car park and Lidl's.

Copies of the questionnaire were sent out to interested agencies to seek the views of this proposal.

Question 1: Are you visiting:

Table 1	Count	% of Responses	% of Respondents
Age Concern	50	16.0%	17.7%
CAB	63	20.1%	22.3%
DIS	2	.6%	.7%
Housing	51	16.3%	18.0%
Connections	147	47.0%	51.9%
Total responses	86	100.0%	110.6%

5 missing respondents; 283 valid respondents; 283 of 288 respondents made a total of 313 choices.

- Over half (51.9%) of respondents stated that they were visiting connections.

Question 2: Are you satisfied with the current location of this service?

Table 2	Count	%
Very Satisfied	86	30.8%
Fairly Satisfied	83	29.7%
Don't know	31	11.1%
Fairly Dissatisfied	50	17.9%
Very Dissatisfied	29	10.4%
Total	279	100.0%

- 60.6% (169 of 279) of respondents expressed a positive level of satisfaction with the current location of the service visited in question 1.

Question 3: Do you ever visit the other agencies on the list?

Table 3	Count	%
Yes	105	39.3%
No	162	60.7%
Total	267	100.0%

- 60.7% (162 of 267) stated that they did not visit the other agencies on the list.

Only respondents answering yes to question 3 are included in the analysis of questions 3a and 3b.

Question 3a: If so, which ones - Filtered for 'yes' to Q3

Table 4	Count	% of Responses	% of Respondents
Age Concern	28	20.0%	29.5%
CAB	57	40.7%	60.0%
DIS	10	7.1%	10.5%
House Services	19	13.6%	20.0%
Connections	26	18.6%	27.4%
Total responses	140	100.0%	147.4%

10 missing respondents; 95 valid respondents; 95 of 105 respondents made a total of 140 choices.

- 60% (57 of 95) of respondents visit CAB.

Question 3b: How often do you visit these agencies - Filtered for 'yes' to Q3

Table 5	Count	%
Weekly	16	15.5%
Monthly	20	19.4%
Occasionally (every 3 months)	37	35.9%
Yearly	17	16.5%
Other	13	12.6%
Total	103	100.0%

- Over a third (35.9%) visit the other agencies Occasionally (every 3 months)
- Details on other, can be viewed in appendix A

Question 4: Would you like to be able to visit one place (a one-stop-shop advice centre) to use a range of services including, CAB, Disability Information Service, Connections, Housing Services and Age Concern?

Table 6	Count	%
Yes	258	95.6%
No	12	4.4%
Total	270	100.0%

- The vast majority, 95.6% (258 of 270) would like to be able to visit a one stop shop advice centre.

Question 4a: If No, please state why below (please include any suggestions you may have for an alternative to this approach)?

- Text comments can be viewed in appendix B

Question 5: Victoria Square, Paignton has been identified as a possible location for a Torbay Advice Centre. Would you support this proposal to develop a centre in Victoria Square?

Table 7	Count	%
Yes	241	88.0%
No	33	12.0%
Total	274	100.0%

- 88% (241 of 274) of respondents stated that they would support a proposal to develop a Torbay Advice Centre in Victoria Square.

Question 5a: If No, please give details why below (please include any suggestions you may have for an alternative to this location)?

- Text comments can be viewed in appendix C