

Tuesday, 6 January 2026

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**

A meeting of **Overview and Scrutiny Board** will be held on

**Wednesday, 14 January 2026**

commencing at **5.30 pm**

The meeting will be held in the Banking Hall, Castle Circus entrance on the left corner of the Town Hall, Castle Circus, Torquay, TQ1 3DR

### **Members of the Committee**

Councillor Long (Chair)

Councillor Cowell

Councillor Douglas-Dunbar

Councillor Fellows

Councillor Foster

Councillor Johns

Councillor Law

Councillor Spacagna (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Stevens

Councillor Tolchard

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## **A Healthy, Happy and Prosperous Torbay**

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**Town Hall, Castle Circus, Torquay, TQ1 3DR**

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# OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD AGENDA

1. **Apologies**  
To receive apologies for absence, including notifications of any changes to the membership of the Board.
2. **Minutes** (Pages 5 - 10)  
To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 4 December 2025.
3. **Declarations of Interest**
  - a) To receive declarations of non pecuniary interests in respect of items on this agenda  
  
**For reference:** Having declared their non pecuniary interest members may remain in the meeting and speak and, vote on the matter in question. A completed disclosure of interests form should be returned to the Clerk before the conclusion of the meeting.
  - b) To receive declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests in respect of items on this agenda  
  
**For reference:** Where a Member has a disclosable pecuniary interest he/she must leave the meeting during consideration of the item. However, the Member may remain in the meeting to make representations, answer questions or give evidence if the public have a right to do so, but having done so the Member must then immediately leave the meeting, may not vote and must not improperly seek to influence the outcome of the matter. A completed disclosure of interests form should be returned to the Clerk before the conclusion of the meeting.  
  
(**Please Note:** If Members and Officers wish to seek advice on any potential interests they may have, they should contact Governance Support or Legal Services prior to the meeting.)
4. **Urgent Items**  
To consider any other items that the Chair decides are urgent.
5. **Annual Review of the Events Strategy as aligned with Destination Management Plan** (Pages 11 - 24)  
To consider the submitted report on the above.
6. **Torbay Economic Development Company - Closure and re-integration into Torbay Council** (Pages 25 - 38)  
To review the closure of the Torbay Economic Development Company and integration into Torbay Council.
7. **Revenue and Capital Budget 2026/2027 - Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Board** (To Follow)  
To agree the final report of the Priorities and Resources Review 2026/2027 on the Revenue and Capital Budget for 2026/2027.

## **Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board**

**4 December 2025**

**-: Present :-**

Councillor Long (Chair)

Councillors Cowell, George Darling, Fellows, Foster, Johns, Law, Spacagna (Vice-Chair),  
Stevens and Tolchard

(Also in attendance: Councillors Billings, Barbara Lewis (virtually), Chris Lewis,  
David Thomas and Jacqueline Thomas (virtually))

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### **38. Apologies**

An apology for absence was received from the Cabinet Member for Adult and Community Services, Public Health and Inequalities, Councillor Tranter, who was represented by the Leader of the Council, Councillor David Thomas.

It was reported that, in accordance with the wishes of the Liberal Democrat Group, the membership of the Board had been amended to include Councillor George Darling in place of Councillor Douglas-Dunbar.

### **39. Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings of the Board held on 29 October and 5 November 2025 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### **40. Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

### **41. Brixham Town Centre Place Vision and Torbay Vision**

The Cabinet Member for Place Development and Economic Growth – Councillor Chris Lewis outlined the submitted Brixham Town Centre Place Vision and overarching Torbay Vision and responded to questions together with the Director of Regeneration and Place Delivery – David Carter. The purpose of the documents was to attract external investment in Brixham and Torbay.

Beth Huntley, member of the public made oral representations in respect of sustainable cycling provision within the Torbay Vision document.

The Mayor of Brixham Town Council, Councillor Nicholls made oral representations in respect of the Brixham Town Centre Place Vision and questioned if the Brixham document should clarify that it seeks external investment rather than Council delivery.

Members raised the following questions:

- What was the purpose of the Vision documents?
- Why does the Brixham Vision include completed projects like South Quay?
- How will language be adapted to reflect Brixham's identity?
- How will the document capture diversity across Torbay?

The following responses were received:

- The purpose of the documents was a regeneration vision to attract external investment, rather than being a delivery plan.
- The Brixham Vision document was a living tool for events such as UK Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum (UKREIIF) and investor engagement which promotes Brixham and identifies potential investment options.
- Feedback had been received from Brixham Town Council which would be incorporated into the final version presented to Cabinet in respect of local identity.
- Focus remains on regeneration of three town centres; community diversity was noted for consideration for future updates.
- The documents will clearly state their purpose as an investment vision.

Resolved (unanimously):

That Overview and Scrutiny Board recommend to Cabinet:

1. that, subject to the inclusion of the comments made by Brixham Town Council and it being made clearer that the intention of the document is a regeneration vision document to encourage external investment in Brixham rather than what the Council will deliver, and inclusion of reference to the ferry and park and ride, the Cabinet approve the use of the Brixham Vision document to steer both the delivery of current regeneration sites and the development of future proposals for the sites and areas of public realm identified by the vision as suggested priorities;
2. that subject to it being made clearer that the intention of the document is a regeneration vision document to encourage external investment in Torbay rather than what the Council will deliver and the document reviewed to ensure that suitable provision for cycling is included, the Cabinet approve the use of the Torbay Vision document to provide an overarching strategic place vision that works with the three Town Centre Visions and influences the delivery of current regeneration sites and the development of future proposals for the sites and areas of public realm identified by the vision as suggested priorities; and
3. that the documents are updated as and when is necessary by presenting the revised document and evidence base to Cabinet.

**42. Update on capital investment to implement the Play Park Improvement Strategy**

The Cabinet Member for Pride in Place, Transport and Parking – Councillor Billings and the Managing Director of SWISCo – Matt Reeks presented the submitted report which provided an update on the Play Park Improvement Strategy and responded to questions. The report set out the progress made to date including the consultation and engagement. The report proposed a focus on capital investment using the £500k for essential safety works whilst developing Masterplans for each park, with prioritisation given to destination play parks.

Margaret Forbes Hamilton, Tormohun Community Partnership and Chair of Torbay Greenspace Forum made oral representations in respect of the engagement carried out to date and the importance of some of the smaller play parks to the local community.

Members raised the following questions:

- What was the timeframe for developing the Masterplans?
- How and who will conduct the consultation and engagement?
- How do we prioritise sites for early consultation?
- How were destination play parks decided?
- Was the small consultation sample representative of Torbay's children across all areas?
- Which voluntary groups were engaged?
- How would different funding streams (Ward funds, donations, Community Infrastructure (CIL)) be tied together?
- How will local schools be involved in consultation?
- Why was engagement limited in deprived wards like Tormohun?
- Why were some parks being decommissioned without replacements?
- What was a cableway?
- Could funding be used for bins and benches in parks?
- When will the Council hear about the Lottery Funding?
- Will skateparks be included in later phases?
- What was being done to access £18m government funding?

The following responses were received:

- There was an aim to complete the Masterplans by Easter for high-priority sites.
- SWISCo staff would lead the work on the Masterplans, working with Play Torbay, schools, and community associations etc.
- Destination parks were based on Member visits and feedback from Play Week; larger parks offer more opportunities to more people.
- It was acknowledged that the sample size was small; future engagement would broaden the reach.
- SWISCo would look to combine Ward funds, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), donations and other funding opportunities during the Master Planning.
- Schools will be involved in site-specific consultations.

- Deprived areas had been considered, there was a commitment from the Managing Director of SWISCo and the Cabinet Member to visit Tormohun parks before Christmas; Barton Downs and Watcombe had been prioritised in the proposals.
- A cableway is a zipline, often decommissioned due to safety concerns.
- Benches and bins could be explored but had not been included in initial funding tranche.
- The previous bid for Lottery Funding was unsuccessful; feedback had been received and further bids and match funding opportunities were being explored.
- Skateparks were included in Phase 3 of the proposals.
- The Government's £18m investment in play parks requires groundwork and Master Planning; no immediate start date had been provided by the Government.

Resolved (unanimously):

That the Cabinet be recommended:

1. to provide written clarity on the proposed engagement process, to include in consultation with key community groups such as Torbay Communities, Torbay Greenspace Forum etc.;
2. to ensure that young people are engaged with in a meaningful way in respect of all play parks;
3. that the first tranche of funding should be focussed on repairs and not landscaping and that landscaping should be picked up as part of the later tranche;
4. that the Board note the emerging Play Park Improvement work and acknowledged that this is work on play improvement which will be further developed into a Strategy and used to inform Masterplans; and
5. to provide a written list of which groups have been engaged to date.

#### **43. Operation Brighter Bay and Town Centres**

The Leader of the Council – Councillor David Thomas, the Cabinet Member for Pride in Place, Transport and Parking – Councillor Billings, the Managing Director of SWISCo – Matt Reeks and the Strategic Lead for Community Protection – David Parsons, presented the submitted annual report which provided an update on Operation Town Centres and Operation Brighter Bay and responded to questions. It was agreed that a video on Operation Town Centres would be circulated to Councillors following the meeting.

Margaret Forbes Hamilton, Tormohun Community Partnership and Chair of Torbay Greenspace Forum made oral representations in respect of the weed spraying, recycling rates and the moving to standard timing all year round for gardening from longer hours in the summer and reduced hours in the winter.

Members raised the following questions:

- Why were residential areas neglected for weed spraying with focus being put on tourist and larger footfall areas?
- How would leaf clearance prevent flooding?
- What was being done about faded double-yellow lines?
- Could Members have a schedule for line painting?
- When would the fleet replacement schedule be shared?
- What support was given to people whose tents were removed?
- What support was given to veterans living who were rough sleeping?
- Has crime and antisocial behaviour increased in other areas since PSPOs?
- Do we have full Town Centre Officer coverage?
- Could the Council clean rubbish from Brixham Harbour at low tide?

The following responses were received:

- SWISCo would address weed spraying in residential areas progressively; new equipment was in place and scheduling was planned for next year.
- Two gully tanking crews were working with the sweepers to clear leaves from gullies to prevent flooding.
- 37km of line painting has been covered; it was agreed that a quarterly schedule would be shared with Ward Councillors.
- The fleet replacement schedule would be shared with Members; the Council had approved capital investment recently for replacements.
- The process for tent removal includes outreach, welfare checks, storage of belongings, and signposting to relevant support services, including support for veterans.
- It was noted that shoplifting had increased slightly; PSPOs focus on alcohol and antisocial behaviour, shoplifting was monitored with the Police. Members were advised of UK Partners Against Crime System (UKPAC) which provided a mechanism to report crime and incidences which were then collated and used by the Police – more information can be found at [uk-pac.com](http://uk-pac.com).
- All Town Centre Officers were in place and provided full coverage including key dates such as New Year's Eve.
- A second patrol vessel had been deployed by the Harbour Authority to help clean the Brixham Inner Harbour area; belly bins were also helping to reduce street litter entering harbour from the streets.
- Information on weed spraying would be provided to Members; prioritisation was based on high footfall areas.
- Recycling rates were based on residential waste only; staffing changes had not reduced capacity.

Resolved (unanimously):

That the Director of Pride in Place be requested:

- 1 that Ward Councillors be provided with details of the quarterly schedule for line painting in their Wards, and those that have been completed;

2. that all Members receive a copy of the fleet replacement schedule, including the SWISCo capital programme;
3. that future reports include what weed work had been done as a comparison over the last five years; and
4. to provide all Members with a dashboard of residential delivery for grass cutting and weed spraying;

That the Director of Adult and Community Services be requested:

5. to provide details of those people who have had tents removed and moved into accommodation; and
6. to provide a written response on the number of veterans sleeping rough who have been supported and where they have been signposted to.

Chair

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**Meeting:** Overview and Scrutiny Board

**Date:** 14 January 2026

**Wards affected:** All wards

**Report Title:** Annual Review of the Events Strategy as aligned with Destination Management Plan

**When does the decision need to be implemented?** N/A

**Cabinet Member Contact Details:** [Councillor Jackie Thomas, Cabinet Member for Tourism, Culture & Events and Corporate Services. Email Jackie.Thomas@torbay.gov.uk](#)

**Director Contact Details:** Alan Denby, Director Pride in Place. Email [Alan.Denby@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:Alan.Denby@torbay.gov.uk)

## 1. Purpose of Report

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- 1.1. To review the delivery of the Torbay Council English Riviera (Outdoor) Events Strategy 2021 – 2027 and English Riviera Destination Management Plan 2022 – 2030 to ensure that delivery of the Strategy and Plan remain achievable, arising from Events, Culture and Tourism Review.

## 2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

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- 2.1. The proposals in this report help us to deliver our vision of a healthy, happy, and prosperous Torbay by the Events Team providing and supporting a range of events year-round for the benefit and wellbeing of residents in accordance with the updated Events Strategy and supporting the Destination Management Plan in attracting day and staying visitors to the area.
- 2.2. The reasons for the proposal, and need for the decision are to ensure that the Events Team is fulfilling the requirements set out in the Events Strategy and the requirements set out by the Overview and Scrutiny Board Task and Finish Group at the end of 2024, and that this is in line with the Destination Management Plan.

## 3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

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- 3.1. That Overview and Scrutiny Board considers this report and makes any recommendation it considers appropriate to Cabinet.

## 4. Appendices

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Appendix 1: English Riviera (outdoor) Events Strategy 2021 – 2027 updated May 2024

Appendix 2: Progress matrix for English Riviera (outdoor) Events Strategy 2021 – 2027 updated December 2025.

Appendix 3: Destination Management Plan Matrix Growth Theme 4 Culture and Events

## 5. Background Documents

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- The Destination Management Plan can be found here: [English Riviera Destination Management Plan - Torbay Council](#)  
The Destination Management Plan is currently under review ahead of a new iteration scheduled to be developed and presented to cabinet on 14 July 2026.

## Supporting Information

### 6. Introduction

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- 6.1. The English Riviera (outdoor) Events Strategy has been in place since 2021 and runs until 2027 however it was updated in May 2024 as a result of recommendations to Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Board following a Task and Finish Group enquiry at the end of 2024.
- 6.2. The Events Team element of Culture and Events was increased to 3.6FTE in May 2024 following the 2024/25 budget setting process, and a further 1 FTE joined the team at the start of September 2025. It's anticipated that this level of personnel will just about allow for the management of the existing workload with some limited time available for growth of certain elements such as income generation to meet the income target. Income streams, such as commercial events on council land, will continue to be a focus for the team. However, due to a member of staff leaving and sickness within the team, the team is yet to realise a full complement.
- 6.3. The team has made some good progress in delivering the Events Strategy and also the recommendations set out by the Overview and Scrutiny Board, however due to the English Riviera Airshow now being delivered inhouse, and the limited staffing available until recently, as well as staff leaving and sickness, there are some areas that need to be progressed further in the following quarter.
- 6.4. The Progress matrix for English Riviera (Outdoor) Events Strategy 2021 – 2027 updated December 2025, appendix 2, shows progress. This progress is in addition to the team's work on key events English Riviera Airshow, Bay of Lights Illumination Trail, Electric Bay which are very significant in terms of the team's time resource, as well as organising income generation areas such as the big wheel, fairs, circus, and also civic events including Remembrance Sunday and supporting approximately 90 applications on council land each year.
- 6.5. The benefit of key events to the local economy such as English Riviera Airshow, Bay of Lights Illumination Trail, Electric Bay and Brixham Pirate Festival are significant. A 2023 economic impact study showed the significant benefit of the airshow to the hospitality and accommodation sectors of £5m, but also, a recent economic impact study for Electric Bay showed that it was worth £1.75M to the local economy in 2024, in addition to offering contracts and employment for local businesses and people. It was notable that there was wave after wave of people coming from harbour hospitality businesses ahead of the Fat Boy Slim gig with reports of premises running out of beer and feedback of them having their "best trading day ever". Although Electric Bay will not take place in 2026, it will return in 2027. Bay of Lights Illumination Trail 2025 attracted significant numbers in excess of 2024's 1.25M people. And there was good feedback from traders in the hospitality sector. Here's an example "We loved being down on the seafront for The Bay of Lights launch night, it was brilliant to see so many people out enjoying the trail and all the events going on. Our venues have been packed with families and trail visitors ever since, so it's been great to feel the buzz across the Bay again this year."

- 6.6. It should also be noted that Torbay Council on behalf of the Destination Management Group have just commissioned a review and refresh of the English Riviera Destination Management Plan 2022–2030. This aims to align the strategy with evolving market needs and interests, and to futureproof its delivery. This review process will incorporate input from various stakeholders including the Events and Culture Team to ensure the refreshed strategy is aligned with the existing and future strategies and activity, and enables a cohesive, place-based approach.
- 6.7. The team works collaboratively with the English Riviera BID Company (ERBID) on many events, mutually supporting events financially, with Torbay Council also providing event and project knowledge and ERBID providing national marketing support. A Memorandum of Understanding between Torbay Council and ERBID has been in place for a four year term for a number of events that both organisations support, running to the end of ERBID2. For instance, ERBID puts in circa £20,000 plus significant national marketing time and support towards the English Riviera Airshow. ERBID puts in a similar level of support of the Bay of Lights Illumination Trail. The Council jointly funds the ERBID organised England's Seafood Feast and the English Riviera Walking Festival events. Both organisations have also contributed towards the Agatha Christie Festival the SUP Championships and SUP World Cup and Brixham Pirate Festival. Both organisations support other events such as Torbay Pride in various ways. There are regular discussions about these and potential future events.
- 6.8. The next iteration of the English Riviera Business Improvement District (ERBID3) is currently in development. The current BID ERBID2 will conclude on 31 December 2026 and the English Riviera BID Company is now preparing for a new ballot to secure a third five-year term, ERBID3, beginning in January 2027. In addition to other vital components such as destination marketing, the focus on key event support and development is vital. It is very important that a positive ERBID3 ballot is secured in June 2026 to allow for continued partnership working between the ERBID Company and the Council and a further £500k (£100k pa) invested in key Events from 2027-2031.
- 6.9. Event costs have risen significantly since the pandemic, especially in areas such as infrastructure and security, the Events Team has worked hard over the past three years to keep events costs at an affordable level, whilst providing the best possible content for the English Riviera Airshow and the Bay of Lights Illumination Trail. In fact, a whole new element was added to the airshow in 2025, with a Friday night opening event including pyro-planes and fireworks which was successful, attracting good numbers. The English Riviera Airshow 2025 cost a total of £338,500 with £133,000 coming from the Council's Events budget. A £20,000 contribution came from ERBID who also provided national marketing support in-kind, and the rest of the costs came from trader, sponsorship and car parking income.
- 6.10. The council's other main event The Bay of Lights Illumination Trail cost circa £480,000, subject to reinstatement costs (currently estimated). This is broken down as £190,000 for the light trail and supporting infrastructure including £100,000 on the actual lights, £53,000 on security costs and the rest on infrastructure. This does sound a lot, but other resort spend on similar lighting "events" can easily be upwards of seven figures. The cost of providing the Christmas Market was £59,000 including staffing, power and infrastructure.

Marketing costs were £3,750. Video mapping was £54,000. Opening night entertainment and fireworks was £9,000. The ice-rink cost £165,000. This was all funded by £177,000 that comes from the Council's Events budget, £20,000 from ERBID who also provide national marketing support in-kind, and the rest of the costs are covered by bar income, trader income, and a small amount of sponsorship income. There was also a contingency towards the ice-rink of £40,000 (which may not all be required due to good sales).

6.11. New legal implications such as Martyn's Law are likely to have a significant impact on how events will be run in future and there is already a growing expectation from regional Police and Government Home Office for increased levels of Counter Terrorism and Hostile Vehicle Mitigation being in place for larger and significant events, all of which comes at significant cost. For instance, one unit of H-Stop which is "rated" Hostile Vehicle Mitigation barrier and is now expected as the "norm" cost £2,500 to hire for the entirety of Bay of Lights Christmas Market. We would need upwards of 60 units for the airshow. At the moment we rely on Swisco refuse vehicles which aren't officially rated as Hostile Vehicle Mitigation, don't add to the event in terms of look and feel, and add significant cost to the event as they require a constant staffing presence at weekend rates of pay.

6.12. The Events Strategy sets out six key actions as follows:

- **Strategic Focus** - Shift the strategic focus to achieving more with the limited resources available.
- **Events Charter** - Develop an Events Charter to set clear expectations from organisers and to cement the actions that are important to local communities in event planning.
- **Capacity Building** - Build capacity in the sector to make the English Riviera a centre of events excellence across the spectrum of event types and sizes.
- **Events Infrastructure** - Review investment into events infrastructure in order to develop key sites and promote them so that the English Riviera is welcoming and able to meet the needs of regionally and nationally significant events, with an ambition to support UK renowned and world class events.
- **Event skills development** - Support the development of local event organisers, producers and promoters to create high-impact events and enable job skills and job creation.
- **Events marketing** - Ensure the events offer of the English Riviera is promoted far and wide as a welcoming and vibrant destination that has a diverse range of appeal.

6.13. Details of progress against these actions can be found as Appendix 2. Progress matrix for English Riviera (outdoor) Events Strategy 2021 – 2027 updated December 2025.

6.14. The English Riviera Destination Management Plan Matrix Growth Theme 4 Culture and Events can be found as Appendix 3

## 7. Options under consideration

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7.1. In addition to the key actions in the revised Events Strategy, further actions set out by the Overview and Scrutiny Board Task and Finish Group at the end of 2024 have been included in the matrix – Appendix 2. Progress matrix for English Riviera (Outdoor) Events Strategy 2021 – 2027 updated September 2025

## 8. Financial Opportunities and Implications

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- 8.1. The Events Team, in line with the Events Strategy, uses the resources currently available in the team and externally in order to reduce the cost to the council and increase income.
- 8.2. Costs are currently managed within the available events budget, however the cost borne by the Council is significant compared to investment from consumers, sponsors and commercial clients, and this is not sustainable. For these significant events to be sustainable in the short-term or longer term, there needs to be more of an awareness of event costs and more significant contributions from the various sectors and beneficiaries of these events taking place.
- 8.3. For instance, the English Riviera Airshow costs £318,500. Of which Torbay Council directly invested £131,500 (41%) as well as significant staff resources. £92,400 (29%) was income from traders. £53,000 (17%) was ticketing – car parking, seating and programmes. ERBID direct funding at £20,000 (6.5%) as well as significant marketing support worth £5,000. Sponsorship was £17,000 (5.5%). Donations was £2,900 (less than 1%). Merchandise income was £1,800 (less than 0.5%).
- 8.4. For the Bay of Lights Illumination Trail and associated activity. The income has not been finalised from ice-rink sales and bar income, and reinstatement costs are not yet known, but it seems likely that the council will have invested £210,000 (44%), with ERBID directly funding £20,000 (4.3%) this is specifically for the illumination trail (and represents a 10.5% towards that cost) as well as significant marketing support worth £5,000. Other sponsorship £9,500 (less than 2%). The rest of the costs were covered by trader income, bar sales and ice-rink sales.

## 9. Legal Implications

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- 9.1. All events must meet a minimum standard of competence in the management and delivery thereof. Events should be in compliance with health and safety legislation (where reasonably practicable). The council is liable for all activity on council land. Events should also be in align with Purple Book Guidance. Most events will be assessed by the area's Public Safety Advisory Group who will apply legal principles to any event management plans received.

## 10. Engagement and Consultation

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- 10.1. Stakeholders were consulted in the development of the Events Strategy and subsequently with the update where possible.

## 11. Procurement Implications

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- 11.1. All events that are tendered by the Council are done so in line with Procurement legislation and with guidance and support from the Council's Procurement Team.

## 12. Protecting our naturally inspiring Bay and tackling Climate Change

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- 12.1. Reducing the carbon footprint of events is one of the key considerations in the development and delivery of events run by the Council's Events Team. Equally this is a significant factor when considering Event Management Plans submitted to the Council by event organisers.

## 13. Associated Risks

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- 13.1. The Events Strategy plays a key part in the development of strong cultural experiences for our community and in attracting visitors to the area. Events are also significant in supporting local businesses within the area, such as equipment suppliers, hospitality and accommodation sector. Any curtailment to the events strategy puts all of the above at risk.

## 14. Equality Impact Assessment

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	<p>18 per cent of Torbay residents are under 18 years old.</p> <p>55 per cent of Torbay residents are aged between 18 to 64 years old.</p> <p>27 per cent of Torbay residents are aged 65 and older.</p>	The teams works to ensure that there is a broad range of events in a year-round programme that appeals to a wide range of ages.	An analysis of events and their appeal.	Current
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.	A good number of events in the area are free of charge and therefore accessible to all. The team also encourages event and activity promoters to allow reduced price or free access for carers. There was a specialist ice-skating session for cared for children.	Continued encouragement of events that involve carers and special events	current
Disability	In the 2021 Census, 23.8% of Torbay residents answered that their day-to-day activities	Key events will have an element of support for those with Disabilities. i.e. Airshow has disabled viewing areas with	Continue to review and advise new events	current



	were limited a little or a lot by a physical or mental health condition or illness.	appropriate seating, Electric Bay has a disability viewing area, Bay of lights is designed to be as accessible as possible with flat pathways between features.		
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.	Key events are welcoming to all regardless of gender. Work closely with Pride event	Continue to review and advise new events	current
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.	Key events are welcoming to all.	Continue to review and advise new events	current
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.	Private spaces for breast feeding are available on request at key events – airshow and Electric Bay.	Continue to review and advise new events	current

Race	In the 2021 Census, 96.1% of Torbay residents described their ethnicity as white. This is a higher proportion than the 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.	Key events are welcoming to all regardless of race.	Continue to review and advise new events	current
Religion and belief	64.8% of Torbay residents who stated that they have a religion in the 2021 census.	Key events are welcoming to all regardless of religion or beliefs.	Continue to review and advise new events	current
Sex	51.3% of Torbay's population are female and 48.7% are male	Key events are welcoming to all regardless of their sex. The events team is 50% female. Events activities are programmed with a mixed sex audience in mind.	Continue to review and advise new events	current
Sexual orientation	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.	Key events are welcoming to all regardless of their sexual orientation. The events team supports the annual Pride event.	Continue to review and advise new events	current
Armed Forces Community	In 2021, 3.8% of residents in England reported that they	The team works with the armed forces community to private Remembrance	Continue to review and advise new events	current

	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.	Sunday events as well as other activities such as the recent opening of Rifles Garden and affirmation of the freedom of the borough event. The team works closely with organisers on Armed Forces Day		
<b>Additional considerations</b>				
Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child poverty and deprivation)	The team acknowledges that significant numbers of local residents are in the 10% most deprived in the UK (according to the 2019 indices of multiple deprivation.	The team ensures there is a good mix of free entry events in the area and also encourages promoters of paid for events to provide discounted or free access to certain sectors of the community.	Review for all key events within our control. Advise new events	current
Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay)	The team work closely with public health due to events pulling large crowds together.	The team worked with Public Health following the pandemic to ensure safeguards against the covid virus were in place at events. Also at the recent airshow significant additional measures were put in place to safeguard against secondary spread of the covid virus by visitors to the event from Brixham.	Regular communication with the Public Health team.	current
Human Rights impacts				
Child Friendly	Torbay Council is a Child Friendly Council, and all staff and Councillors are Corporate Parents and have a responsibility towards cared	The events team works with the CYP teams to support looked after children at key events, and offers some form of unique opportunity.	Continue to review and advise new events	current

	for and care experienced children and young people.			
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## 15. Cumulative Council Impact

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15.1. None.

## 16. Cumulative Community Impacts

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16.1. None.

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**Meeting:** Overview & Scrutiny Meeting

**Date:** 14<sup>th</sup> January 2026

**Wards affected:** All

**Report Title:** Torbay Economic Development Company – Closure and re-integration into Torbay Council

**When does the decision need to be implemented?**

**Cabinet Member Contact Details:** [Councillor Chris Lewis, Cabinet Member for Economic Growth, Planning & Place Development](#)

**Director Contact Details:** Alan Denby, Director of Pride in Place, [alan.denby@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:alan.denby@torbay.gov.uk)

## 1. Purpose of Report

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- 1.1. To provide an update for the Overview & Scrutiny Committee of the process, outcomes, benefits and lessons learned from the implementation of the decision to dissolve Torbay Economic Development Company (TDA).

## 2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

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- 2.1. The outcomes anticipated in the report that supported the decision made in respect of TDA included streamlining the operational delivery of activities delivered through TDA. In particular ensuring that the resources and expertise of the staff are focused on the work needed to deliver for the communities of Torbay. It was envisaged that in bringing these services in house will remove levels of governance that the Council already provides directly through its established processes. In removing these processes, the resource commitment of servicing these Company committees and board will release this capacity to support other work.
- 2.2. The primary objective of dissolving Torbay Economic Development Limited (TDA) and reintegrating its activities into Torbay Council has been achieved. Key successes included the TUPE transfer of staff, the novation of the vast majority of contracts, and the integration of core support services such as Finance, HR, Communications, and Health & Safety into the Council's structures. Most critical success factors were met, including the maintenance of service delivery throughout the transition and the minimization of one-off costs, which were closely monitored and managed. The project also benefited from effective project governance, with milestones largely achieved on schedule, and any delays such as in asset transfers managed transparently and with clear rationale.

- 2.3. Lessons learned for commissioning and managing LA trading companies are evident in the challenges and adaptations faced during the project. The complexity of novating contracts and transferring assets highlighted the need for early and thorough due diligence, especially regarding legal and financial arrangements and higher levels of client side engagement should similar structures be considered by this Council in the future. The project underscored the importance of clear communication and stakeholder engagement, particularly with staff, to ensure smooth cultural integration and avoid employment disputes. The need for flexibility in timelines, or a contingency period, especially when external advice or unforeseen circumstances arise is a key takeaway.
- 2.4. The integration of TDA is a significant step for the Council's capability to deliver its corporate plan. This has been strengthened through increased control over resources, streamlined governance, and the alignment of TDA leadership within the Council's structure bringing about streamlined services and focusing resources.
- 2.5. The direct employment of former TDA staff allows for more agile deployment of expertise to priority projects, particularly in the capital programme. The integration of support services and the reduction of internal recharging and duplicated processes are expected to yield efficiency gains over time, and it is recognised that some financial benefits will take time to fully materialize. The project has positioned the Council to be more responsive and effective in meeting community needs and delivering on its strategic objectives.
- 2.6. In particular it enhances our ability to deliver, directly supporting objectives to deliver more efficient and joined up services and focusing resources on economic growth and Torbay as a place better meeting the needs of Torbay's residents and communities.

### 3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

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1. That the Chief Executive be recommended to ensure any trading companies or arms length structures are supported by robust governance mechanisms to minimise risks and maintaining both effective delivery and a focus on the Council's vision.

### 4. Background Documents

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- September 2023 report to Cabinet & Council "Future options for the structure and operation of Torbay Economic Development Company Limited"



## Supporting Information

### 5. Introduction

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- 5.1. Torbay Economic Development Company Limited (trading as TDA) was established as a company in 2011. It was set up as a wholly owned and controlled subsidiary of the local authority so that work could be commissioned to it, in line with procurement regulations. The intention was to control the company by way of membership and strategic influence by the Council through a commissioning process, the appointment of Council directors to its board and through agreed reserved matters. The essential activities were for this Council. It was agreed the essential activities were complemented by trading activities which delivered income in support of the Council's objectives.
- 5.2. At the Council meeting on 20 September 2023 it was agreed Torbay Economic Development Company be dissolved and the services brought in house to allow for an increase in the resource and focus on the Council's core strategic objectives.
- 5.3. The main objective of the project was to dissolve TEDC and bring activities back into the Council in their entirety, with potential exceptions for subsidiary companies. This is still in progress due to the timeframe required to dissolve a company. Key activities which have been completed include;
- TUPE transfer of staff on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024;
  - Novating TEDC and TorVista Homes (TVH) contracts of suppliers to Torbay Council (TC).
  - Transfer of TEDC properties/sites to TC.
  - Transfer of TEDC land/sites to TC.
  - Transferred TVH properties/sites to TC.

Ref	Critical Success Factor	Status
a)	TUPE transfer is successful	Achieved
b)	TDA are paid correctly following TUPE	Achieved
c)	No employment tribunal challenges from staff	None to date
d)	Staff are integrated within existing Council structures operating to standardised systems and processes	Achieved.  Finance, HR, Comms & Social Media, and H&S have been integrated into existing Council structure.

Ref	Critical Success Factor	Status
		Other TDA services continue to operate as is, within the Pride in Place Directorate.
e)	Existing core services and project delivery are effectively maintained throughout the transition	Achieved
f)	Any one-off costs for the transition back into the Council are minimised and, where possible, offset by other savings	Ongoing.  A Transition Costs Summary has been updated throughout the life of the project, and monitored by the TDA Review Board and Finance Project Delivery Group.  Spend approval has been sought to ensure costs are minimised.
g)	Streamlining operational delivery of activities currently delivered through TDA, ensuring resources and expertise are focused on activities/projects needed for the communities of Torbay.	Ongoing. The Place restructure has also been linked to this as part of business as usual service reviewing.

5.4. Ceasing TDA external activities, TUPE, asset and contract reviews and where required novation, amendment or cancellation were largely completed by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. The complexity of some of the issues for instance in respect of the related TVH assets and the ongoing need for some form of commercial structure meant some of the originally set deadlines were not achieved.

5.5. The project team set out that benefits of the project are grouped into three categories: financial, non-financial and efficiency. Performance against these categories is set out below;

Ref	Benefit	Status
<b>Financial</b>		
a)	Control of resources	Main operating cost is staffing.

Ref	Benefit	Status
		Previous Commissioning arrangement is no longer required as staff are now employed directly by the Council. Therefore, resources can be directed accordingly to meet the priorities of the Council.
b)	Reduced service delivery costs	At this current time it is not possible to quantify (too early).  However, there will be efficiencies from reducing internal invoicing (re-charging) between the Council and TDA. Plus month end closure accounts procedures will not be required by TDA (non-cashable saving).
c)	Cost-neutral	Some one off costs have been incurred in making the transition, the integration is cost neutral on an operational basis.
<b>Non-financial</b>		
d)	Blending of two cultures into 'Torbay Way'	In progress.
<b>Efficiency</b>		
e)	Increase the Council's leadership, focussing resource on the Council's core strategic objectives, particularly in respect of the Capital Programme and Economic Growth	TDA Managing Director and Senior Leadership Team have all been transferred into the Council's leadership, under the Pride in Place Directorate
f)	Streamlining the operational delivery of activities currently delivered through TDA	Ongoing.
g)	Reducing level of governance that the Council can provide directly through its established internal processes	Completed  TDA sub committees stood down. Director of Pride in Place and

Ref	Benefit	Status
		relevant TDA Officers have been added to additional Boards, where necessary.
h)	Additional capacity to support other Council work	TDA resources within Finance, HR, Comms & Social Media, and H&S have been integrated into existing Council structure. Other TDA services continue to operate as is, within the Place Directorate.

## 6. Options under consideration

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6.1. Alternative options were set out in the September 2023 report.

## 7. Financial Opportunities and Implications

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7.1. The review of TDA is primarily concerned with ensuring the most effective approach to support Torbay and the Council in delivery of its corporate/community plan objectives. While any income potentially reduces these resources it is the Council's view some one-off costs of the transition back into the authority will see the foregone income will be offset by other savings and benefits. There have been reductions in staffing costs with vacancies left unfilled or deleted and savings for instance in areas relating to housing management.

7.2. The estimated and known/approved totals are;

One off	Ongoing	Total
£504,833	£219,609	£724,442

7.3. The financial impact of the project will continue to be monitored and progress reported.

## 8. Legal Implications

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8.1. As set out in September 2023 report.

## 9. Engagement and Consultation

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9.1. As set out in September 2023 report.

## 10. Procurement Implications

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10.1. As set out in September 2023 report.

## 11. Protecting our naturally inspiring Bay and tackling Climate Change

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11.1. As set out in September 2023 report.

## 12. Associated Risks

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12.1. As set out in September 2023 report.

## 13. Equality Impact Assessment

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 Page 30	<p>18 per cent of Torbay residents are under 18 years old.</p> <p>55 per cent of Torbay residents are aged between 18 to 64 years old.</p> <p>27 per cent of Torbay residents are aged 65 and older.</p>		<p>Ensure that communications and support are accessible to all age groups.</p> <p>Monitor for any unintended consequences, such as changes in service delivery that might disproportionately affect older or younger residents.</p>	
Carers	<p>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.</p>		<p>Maintain flexible working arrangements for staff who are carers and provide support for</p>	

			carers during organisational changes	
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.		Ensure reasonable adjustments are maintained or enhanced during the transition.	
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.			
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.			
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)		Ensure that staff on maternity leave or who are pregnant are kept informed and supported throughout the transition. Maintain	

	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.		statutory rights and protections	
Race	In the 2021 Census, 96.1% of Torbay residents described their ethnicity as white. This is a higher proportion than the 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.		Monitor for any disproportionate impacts on ethnic minority staff or residents. Ensure equality of opportunity in employment and service delivery. Engage with community groups to understand and address concerns	
Religion and belief	64.8% of Torbay residents who stated that they have a religion in the 2021 census.			
Sex	51.3% of Torbay's population are female and 48.7% are male			
Sexual orientation	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.			
Armed Forces Community	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.			
<b>Additional considerations</b>				
Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child poverty and deprivation)				
Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay)				
Human Rights impacts				
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.			
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## 14. Cumulative Council Impact

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14.1. As set out in the September 2023 report and above.

## 15. Cumulative Community Impacts

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15.1. None

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