

Meeting: Cabinet

Date: 17 March 2026

Wards affected: All

Report Title: Council Business Plan 2023-2027 – Refresh 2026

When does the decision need to be implemented? Immediately following call-in period

Cabinet Member Contact Details: [Cllr David Thomas, Leader of the Council,](#)
david.thomas@torbay.gov.uk

Director Contact Details: Matthew Fairclough-Kay, Director of Corporate Services,
matthew.fairclough-kay@torbay.gov.uk

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Following the Local Elections in May 2023, the Community and Corporate Plan was agreed by the Council. This set out the priorities of the Council for the next twenty years and the approach we are taking in delivering against the vision.
- 1.2 In order to provide focus for delivery over the administration period, the Cabinet developed a Council Business Plan. This provides details of the specific actions being taken to deliver the priorities within the Community and Corporate Plan together with milestones and/or targets.
- 1.3 The Council Business Plan is a living document, as such is reviewed and refreshed annually to take into account progress on delivery against the plan and make any changes required from factors arising since the last review. This is the second annual review and takes account of, amongst other things, changes in Government guidance.

2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

- 2.1 The proposals in this report help us to deliver the Council's ambition by providing a clear set of priority actions which will be undertaken by Directorates across the organisation.
- 2.2 The reason for the decision is to ensure that direction is provided to the organisation on the priorities for the remainder of the administrative period.

3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

- 3.1. That the Council Business Plan 2023-2027 – Refresh 2026 be approved.

4. Appendices

Appendix 1: Council Business Plan 2023-2027 – Refresh 2026

5. Background Documents

- None

Supporting Information

6. Introduction

- 6.1 Following the Local Elections in May 2023, a new Community and Corporate Plan was agreed by the Council. This sets out the priorities of the Council for the next twenty years and the approach we will take in delivering against the vision.
- 6.2 In order to provide focus for delivery over the administration period, the Cabinet has developed a Council Business Plan. This provides details of the specific actions, which will be taken to deliver the priorities within the Community and Corporate Plan together with milestones and/or targets.
- 6.3 The Business Plan sets out the priority actions that will be undertaken together with the milestones against which progress will be measured. The refreshed version of the Council Business Plan is set out at Appendix 1.
- 6.4 The Business Plan forms part of the Council's performance framework with the regular performance reports being written to show progress against the milestones and the performance indicators.
- 6.5 In terms of target setting, the Best Value Duty requires local authorities to "make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness". In practice, this covers how authorities exercise their functions to deliver a balanced budget, provide statutory services, including adult social care and children's services, and secure value for money in all spending decisions.
- 6.6 Both the Community and Corporate Plan and Council Business Plan include a set of performance indicators that will continue to be used to measure success on how we are performing against our themes and priorities. Following the end of the current financial year, annual targets will be set for the performance indicators where we have direct control over influencing the outcome and demonstrate our commitment to continuously improve.

The performance indicators within the Council Business Plan are currently being reviewed and updated to take account of the recently published Local Government Outcomes Framework. The full set of indicators and the targets agreed by the Chief Executive will be published with the Quarter 1 corporate performance report.

- 6.7 Alongside the preparation of the Council Business Plan, Divisional Directors and Heads of Service (as appropriate) have been preparing service plans. These include the relevant priority actions as well as operational priorities for each service. Subsequently actions will be included within each member of staffs' appraisals.
- 6.8 The quarterly performance report will provide a narrative of our progress against the themes and actions, with the annual performance figures in the year end report being used to review and revise targets for the coming years.
- 6.9 Once the Government determine the outcome of Local Government Reorganisation in Devon, it may be necessary to review the Council Business Plan to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and deliverable.

7 Options under consideration

- 7.1 There have been wide ranging discussions between members of the Cabinet and Directors about the priority actions that can be reasonably to meet the ambitions of the Community and Corporate Plan. Those discussions have included the milestones that need to be set and will include the performance indicators that will be used to measure progress.
- 7.2 It is felt that the proposed Council Business Plan now put forward for consideration is achievable whilst seeking to secure continuous improvement as an organisation.

8 Financial Opportunities and Implications

- 8.1 The priority actions and milestones have been put forward having regard to the Council's Medium Term Resource Plan. Where decisions are needed to be made in order to meet the milestones described, the financial implications of those decisions will be considered at that stage.

9 Legal Implications

- 9.1 There is no statutory requirement to have a Council Business Plan. However, being clear about how we will move towards our ambitions gives the Council, our staff, partners and the community a clear understanding of what we seek to achieve and how to prioritise our spending.
- 9.2 Where decisions are needed to be made in order to meet the milestones described, the legal implications of those decisions will be considered at that stage.

10 Engagement and Consultation

- 10.1 The Council Business Plan does not form part of the Policy Framework and therefore does not need to be subject to public consultation. However, the priority actions and milestones take account of the feedback received through the Residents Satisfaction Survey undertaken during 2025 and the engagement events that have subsequently been held.

11 Procurement Implications

- 11.1 Not applicable.

12 Protecting our naturally inspiring Bay and tackling Climate Change

- 12.1 As the Council makes progress against the priority actions within the Council Business Plan due regard will be given to how the work can assist the Council is tackling climate change.

13 Associated Risks

- 13.1 Without a Council Business Plan it becomes difficult to set a coherent direction of travel for the Council given the finite resources available. The Council Business Plan is a critical part of the Council's performance framework.
- 13.2 The actions and milestones within the Council Business Plan take account of the Council's Risk Registers and the mitigations which are identified within those Registers.

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 |
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| Age | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18% of Torbay residents are aged under 18 years old. • 55% of Torbay residents are aged between 18 to 64 years old. • 27% of Torbay residents are aged 65 and older. | <p>The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of this business plan. However, due to the high-level nature of the plan it is not possible to be certain. Thus, relevant subsequent decisions will undergo their own equality impact assessments.</p> | Not applicable | Not applicable |
| Carers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the time of the 2021 census there were 14,900 unpaid carers in Torbay. • 5,185 of these carers provided 50 hours or more of care. | <p>The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.</p> | Not applicable | Not applicable |

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| Care experienced | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As of January 2026, there were 277 former care experienced young people aged 18-24 in Torbay. | <p>The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of this business plan. However, due to the high-level nature of the plan it is not possible to be certain. Thus, relevant subsequent decisions will undergo their own equality impact assessments.</p> | Not applicable | Not applicable |
| Disability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the 2021 Census, 23.9% 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. | <p>The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.</p> | Not applicable | Not applicable |

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| Gender reassignment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. | <p>The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of this business plan. However, due to the high-level nature of the plan it is not possible to be certain. Thus, relevant subsequent decisions will undergo their own equality impact assessments.</p> | Not applicable | Not applicable |
| Marriage and civil partnership | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. | <p>The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.</p> | Not applicable | Not applicable |

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| Pregnancy and maternity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Between 2013 and 2024, the rate of live births (as a proportion of females aged 15 to 44) has been slightly but significantly higher in Torbay (average of 56.0 per 1,000) than the Southwest (53.4) and broadly in line with England (56.3). For the period 2022 to 2024, rates in Torbay (44.6) have been significantly below England (50.0). | <p>The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of this business plan. However, due to the high-level nature of the plan it is not possible to be certain. Thus, relevant subsequent decisions will undergo their own equality impact assessments.</p> | Not applicable | Not applicable |
| Race | <p>In the 2021 Census, 96.1% of Torbay residents described their ethnicity as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.6% as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh | <p>The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.</p> | Not applicable | Not applicable |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0.3% as Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African • 1.5% as being of Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups • 96.1% as White • 0.4% described their ethnicity another way. • Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic communities are more likely to live in areas of Torbay classified as being amongst the 20% most deprived areas in England. | <p>It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of this business plan. However, due to the high-level nature of the plan it is not possible to be certain. Thus, relevant subsequent decisions will undergo their own equality impact assessments.</p> | | |
| Religion and belief | <p>The 2021 Census showed that the residents in Torbay identify their religion and/or belief as the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 48.5% are Christian • 0.4% are Buddhist • 0.2% are Hindu • 0.6% are Muslim • Less than 0.1% are Sikh • 0.1% are Jewish • 0.7% have another religion • 43.2% have no religion • 6.3% did not answer | <p>The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of this business plan. However, due to the high-level nature of the plan it is not possible to be certain. Thus, relevant subsequent decisions will undergo their own equality impact assessments.</p> | Not applicable | Not applicable |

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| Sex | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 51.3% of Torbay's population are female. • 48.7% of Torbay's population are male. | <p>The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of this business plan. However, due to the high-level nature of the plan it is not possible to be certain. Thus, relevant subsequent decisions will undergo their own equality impact assessments.</p> | Not applicable | Not applicable |
| Sexual orientation | <p>In the 2021 Census, residents described their sexuality as follows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 89% as Straight or Heterosexual • 1.7% as Gay or Lesbian • 1.1% as Bisexual • 0.1% as Pansexual • 0.1% described their sexuality another way • 7.4% of people didn't answer the question | <p>The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of this business plan. However, due to the high-level nature of the plan it is not possible to be certain. Thus, relevant subsequent decisions will undergo their own equality impact assessments.</p> | Not applicable | Not applicable |

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| <p>Armed Forces Community</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2021, 3.8% of residents in England reported that they had previously served in the UK armed forces. • In Torbay, 5.9% of the population have previously served in the UK armed forces. | <p>The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of this business plan. However, due to the high-level nature of the plan it is not possible to be certain. Thus, relevant subsequent decisions will undergo their own equality impact assessments.</p> | <p>Not applicable</p> | <p>Not applicable</p> |
| <p>Additional considerations</p> | | | | |
| <p>Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child poverty and deprivation)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Torbay is ranked as the 39th most deprived upper tier local authority in England in the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025. | <p>The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of this business plan. However, due to the high-level nature of the plan it is not possible to be certain. Thus, relevant subsequent decisions will undergo their own equality impact assessments.</p> | <p>Not applicable</p> | <p>Not applicable</p> |

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| <p>Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the five-year period 2020 to 2024, data shows there is a 6-year life expectancy gap between males who live in Torbay's least and most deprived areas and, a 3-year gap for females. | <p>The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of this business plan. However, due to the high-level nature of the plan it is not possible to be certain. Thus, relevant subsequent decisions will undergo their own equality impact assessments.</p> | <p>Not applicable</p> | <p>Not applicable</p> |
| <p>Human Rights impacts</p> | | <p>The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of this business plan. However, due to the high-level nature of the plan it is not possible to be certain. Thus, relevant subsequent decisions will undergo their own equality impact assessments.</p> | <p>Not applicable</p> | <p>Not applicable</p> |

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| Child Friendly | | <p>The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of this business plan. However, due to the high-level nature of the plan it is not possible to be certain. Thus, relevant subsequent decisions will undergo their own equality impact assessments.</p> | Not applicable | Not applicable |
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15 Cumulative Council Impact

- 15.1 In developing the Council Business Plan the Members of the Cabinet and the Directors have been aware of the cumulative council impact. Overall, the Council Business Plan should have a positive cumulative impact.

16 Cumulative Community Impacts

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