

Meeting: Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board

Date: 19 March 2026

Wards affected: All

Report Title: Annual Public Health Report 2026 – Men’s Health

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1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The 2026 Annual Director of Public Health Report will be on the topic of Men’s Health. This report updates Members on the background to the Report and outlines the process for the development of the 2026 version.
- 1.2 Providing the wider context for this local work is the publication of the Government’s first ever dedicated national Men’s Health Strategy. This recognises the specific challenges relating to health outcomes as they relate to men. This report therefore also provides an overview of the Men’s Health Strategy.

2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

- 2.1 The publication of an Annual Public Health Report is a statutory function of the Director Public Health. It provides the opportunity to shine a spotlight on an important issue for our local population and make recommendations where we want to see action, either as a council, or amongst partner agencies. Recent reports have focussed on Women’s Health (2024) and Healthy Ageing (2025).
- 2.2 The report process will help us to deliver our vision of a healthy, happy, and prosperous Torbay by supporting the delivery of strategic themes including but not limited to Community and People, and Economic Growth. The Annual Report process will take an evidence-based approach to identify the key issues, trends and opportunities that exist to support the health of men in Torbay. It will also support consideration of how the national Men’s Health Strategy can be taken forward in Torbay.

3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

Members are invited to:

- 3.1 Note the update on the national Men's Health Strategy
- 3.2 Note the plan and timetable for the production of the 2026 Torbay Annual Public Health Report
- 3.3 Identify any themes you would like to see reflected in the recommendations/content for the 2026 Torbay Annual Public Health Report.

4. Appendices

- 4.1 None

5. Background Documents

- 5.1 Men's Health Strategy for England:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mens-health-strategy-for-england>

Supporting Information

6. Introduction

Men's Health

- 6.1 Nationally, men live on average 4 years fewer than women (life expectancy at birth is 79.8 years for men versus 83.6 years for women in England). Healthy life expectancy is an average of 61.5yrs.
- 6.2 Locally, we see a similar pattern to England but with some specific challenges. The National Strategy notes that '*men from [...] coastal areas across England (for example, Clacton, Torbay, Hastings and Morecambe), have lower life expectancy and lower healthy life expectancy*'.
 - a) Male life expectancy is 78.6 years across Torbay and for females it is 83.2 (2022-24). Over the last decade males have a life expectancy of approximately 4 years less than females in Torbay¹.

¹ Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID), Public health profiles, <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/>

- b) There is a 6.4 year life expectancy gap between males who live in the least and most deprived areas of Torbay (for the period 2020 to 2024 combined)².
 - c) Healthy Life Expectancy is approximately a year lower for males than females over the last decade (2013-15 to 2022-24). Male healthy life expectancy is 61.5 years in 2022-24 which implies males born in this time could expect to live 17 years whilst not in good health (based on a life expectancy of 78.6 years)³.
- 6.3 The explanations and longer-term reasons for the gaps in life expectancy are complex. Men and women experience some health outcomes, challenges and behaviours very differently, and many men of course live healthy and happy lives. However some conditions disproportionately affect men including some cancers, cardio-vascular disease and type 2 diabetes.
- 6.4 For example, in Torbay, preventable cancer and cardiovascular disease rates in those under 75 are significantly higher in males than females. Other conditions are specific to men including testicular and prostate cancer.
- 6.5 In general terms, men are more likely to take part in unhealthy behaviours including smoking, harmful gambling, drug use and alcohol consumption, and be less likely to undertake health seeking behaviours, such as seeking a GP review when unwell.
- 6.6 Men may experience barriers to accessing health care when they seek it, or do not have their needs recognised when they do.

National Men's Health Strategy

- 6.7 The Government has published the first ever dedicated national Men's Health Strategy. This recognises the specific challenges relating to health outcomes as they relate to men and also complements the national Women's Health Strategy (2022).
- 6.8 The published Strategy has three main aims:
- a) ensuring health services engage men and boys and are responsive to their needs;
 - b) building structures which empower men and boys to maximise their own health and wellbeing;
 - c) creating the conditions in which men and boys' health and wellbeing can thrive.
- 6.9 It has a focus on identifying and addressing health inequalities and commits to addressing evidence gaps, for example a greater understanding of 'what works' for interventions promoting men's mental health.
- 6.10 The associated Action Plan focusses on the role of national organisations. However implementation will require partnership with the wider public, business and voluntary and

² Primary Care Mortality Database, ONS mid-year population estimates, English Indices of Deprivation 2025. – nb. it should be noted that Torbay has a relatively small population in the least deprived quintile of England so numbers are volatile.

³ Healthy life expectancy measures health-related wellbeing and represents the average time an individual is expected to live in good or very good health, based on how they perceive their health (ONS)

community sector, and be informed by a new focus within research including the Men's Health Academic Network.

6.11 The LGA has highlighted the important role of local authorities and partnerships in the implementation of the Strategy:

“We know that men face unique barriers to care, including lower engagement with preventive services, cultural stigmas and distrust associated with seeking help. Tailored interventions such as mental health outreach and workplace health initiatives are essential to overcoming these issues. Local councils have been working in partnership with community groups and grassroots organisations to effectively address men's health in this way and they remain ideally placed to lead and foster this working.

The silent health crisis among men is a pressing issue for society, but with sustained attention and collective action, we can ensure that more men receive the support they need to lead longer, happier and healthier lives.⁴”

6.12 Both Council and NHS provided and commissioned services will need to incorporate learning and actions where appropriate.

Annual Director of Public Health Report 2026

6.13 The theme of the 2026 Annual Report will be Men's Health. This will bring a spotlight on topics of importance to men living in Torbay, including emerging issues. The Annual Report process will provide a timely opportunity to consider the local response to the Men's Health Strategy and identify mechanisms for delivery.

6.14 Early consideration has identified key areas of focus including improving access to healthcare and other support services, understanding how living and working conditions shape and enable individual behaviours, role of strong social, community and family networks, and tackling health challenges and conditions where these apply specifically to men.

6.15 The report will recognise and reflect on how men's life experiences take place in a wider social and cultural environment. This will include the impact of long term socialisation and expectations based around traditional masculine roles in society.

6.16 The report will aim to identify the local assets in our communities that need to be maximised and celebrated.

6.17 The broad structure of the report will include themes on:

- a) mental health and wellbeing;
- b) healthy living and working conditions;
- c) complex lives;

⁴ <https://www.local.gov.uk/about/news/englands-first-mens-health-strategy-lga-response>

d) access, uptake and experience of health care.

- 6.18 To ensure a clear focus and ensure appropriate weight can be given to key issues, the report will focus on males aged 16 and over (but reflect the influence of/impact on childhood).
- 6.19 Cross cutting themes will be included throughout report as appropriate. These will include differential experience and outcomes across the lifecourse; neurodivergence; the role of women/family in men's health; and the role of societal norms.
- 6.20 This work will be informed by reviews of the evidence base and available data, and insights gathered through the ongoing engagement work.
- 6.21 Recommendations contained in the Annual Report will need to have a clear focus and be aligned with the potential impact that can be achieved within our scope as a unitary Council and what we may wish to see from our partners.
- 6.22 The indicative development timetable for this year's report is outlined below.

Activity	Timeframe
Presentation and attendance at International Men's Health Event (hosted by Economy Team)	19 November 2025
Governance: DOM (Update on Men's Health Strategy and 2026 Report Topic)	17 February
Governance: Adult Social Care and Health O and S (Update on Men's Health Strategy and 2026 Report Topic)	19 March
Commissioning and completion of film content	Feb - June
Engagement with local partners and groups	Jan - April
Governance: DOM (Emerging content and draft recommendations)	May - June
Governance: CAD (Emerging content and draft recommendations)	May - June
Final draft of sections of report and recommendations	May - July
Review content, introduction and ensure consistent 'voice' throughout	July
Content upload to Torbay Health Partnerships website	July - Aug
Launch	September 2026

- 6.23 An important challenge for us is to ensure the report is accessible as possible for any reader whatever their background.

7. Options under consideration

7.1. Not applicable at this stage.

8. Financial Opportunities and Implications

8.1. No financial implications at this stage. Future opportunities to access national funding associated with the national Men's Health Strategy may be identified as and when made available.

9. Legal Implications

9.1. No legal implications identified at this stage.

10. Engagement and Consultation

10.1 In addition to engagement with Council Governance structures, there is an ongoing process of working with internal and external partners and community groups. This process started with presentation and engagement at the International Men's Day Event in November, hosted by the Economy Team, and will also continue to build on the legacy of the Baton of Hope.

10.2 In line with recent versions, the report will be hosted on the Torbay Health Partnerships website. Text content will be supplemented by a series of short video content to amplify the voices of men living in Torbay in 2026. Furthermore, a key focus is to ensure the report is accessible as possible for any reader whatever their background.

11. Procurement Implications

11.1. No current procurement implications.

12. Protecting our naturally inspiring Bay and tackling Climate Change

12.1. No negative impacts identified at this stage.

13. Associated Risks

13.1. If publication of an Annual Public Health Report was not achieved this would mean a statutory function of the Director of Public Health had not been met for 2026.

14. Equality Impact Assessment

14.1. No proposals are made at this stage for assessment. However, the Annual Public Health Report 2026 (and opportunities for local implementation of the national Men's Health Strategy) will focus on the health of men and may identify recommendations for the Council and partner organisation to address inequitable delivery, uptake, or experience of services. The report process will also include reference to cross-cutting issues and intersectionality

including for example but not limited to the experiences of men of different ages, ethnicity and sexuality. Future proposals may therefore require assessment at that time.