

Meeting: Overview and Scrutiny

Date: 22 April 2026

Wards affected: All

Report Title: Social Mobility in Torbay

When does the decision need to be implemented? NA

Cabinet Member Contact Details: Councillor Hayley Tranter, Cabinet Member for Adult and Community Services, Public Health and Inequalities & Councillor Chris Lewis, Cabinet Member for Economic Growth, Planning & Place Development

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1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report focuses on the dynamics of poverty and social mobility in Torbay providing an overview of context and current initiatives, and exploring some of the potential local levers that can drive change.

2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

- 2.2 The proposals in this report help us to deliver our vision of a healthy, happy, and prosperous Torbay by exploring the local opportunities to promote positive social mobility for children and young people in Torbay.
- 2.3 Social mobility is a broad concept that occurs when a person experiences different life outcomes from their parents, for example in income, occupation, housing, education or wealth. The Social Mobility Commission is an independent advisory non-departmental public body and identified 3 key drivers of social mobility. These are:
- Conditions of childhood – poverty, parental education & parental occupation
 - Labour market opportunities for young people
 - Innovation and growth – broadband, R&D expenditure, postgraduate education.
- 2.4 As a coastal local authority, Torbay faces many challenges and is ranked as the most deprived upper-tier local authority in the South West with approximately 27% of population classified as living in areas that are amongst the 20% most deprived in England.

- 2.5 Torbay's Community and Corporate Plan and the local Economic Growth Strategy outline the approach to strengthening the economy and improving the conditions for social mobility. Since 2022, Torbay has received over £2.3 million of funding through the Government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) to invest in local priorities.

3 Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

- 3.1 Members are asked to consider, as Social Prosperity Funding comes to an end in March 2026, how we promote and sustain social mobility in Torbay through:
- securing the legacy of these projects; and
 - exploiting current and future initiatives and investment opportunities, including through the Turning the Tide, Connect to Work, Coastal Navigators and other related programmes.

4 Appendices

Appendix 1: Social Mobility Commission. State of the Nation 2025. [State of the Nation 2025 – The evolving story of social mobility in the UK](#)

Appendix 2: South-West Social Mobility Commission. Turning the Tide – SWSMC Annual Report 2024. [Turning-the-Tide-SWSMC-Annual-Report-2024-1.pdf](#)

Appendices 3 and 4: Shared Prosperity Fund evaluation reports:

Appendix 5: Shared Prosperity Fund evaluation video: [final ext edit ukspf.mp4](#)

Supporting Information

5 Introduction

- 5.1 As a coastal local authority, Torbay faces many challenges and is ranked as the most deprived upper-tier local authority in the South West with approximately 27% of population classified as living in areas that are amongst the 20% most deprived in England.
- 5.2 Torbay's Community and Corporate Plan and the local Economic Growth Strategy outline the approach to strengthening the economy and improving the conditions for social mobility.
- 5.3 Since 2022, Torbay has received over £2.3 million of funding through the Government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) to invest in local priorities. As this funding comes to an

end in March 2026, we need to consider how we secure the legacy of these projects and exploit current and future initiatives and investment opportunities.

- 5.4 Torbay has had a *Turning the Tide on Poverty* programme in place since before the pandemic. This paper describes how the programme has evolved and what are the current targets for tackling poverty and driving social mobility in the Bay.

6 Torbay's UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Background

- 6.1 Since 2022, Torbay has received over £2.3 million of UKSPF funding the Government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) to invest in local priorities. Government's overarching ambition of the fund was to build pride in place and increase life chances across all parts of the United Kingdom. As a central pillar of the previous government's Levelling Up agenda, it replaced EU structural funds with a more flexible, locally led approach.
- 6.2 In comparison with other Local Authority areas, and given the considerable level of need, Torbay's UKSPF allocation was modest (£11 per head 2022-2025).
- 6.3 Considering the breadth of challenges facing Torbay, an investment plan was created to develop a catalogue of 14 projects, focussing on Communities, Business and Skills. The investment plan was aligned to Torbay's Community and Corporate Plan and the local Economic Growth Strategy, which ensured all projects were responding to the Council's priorities and overarching strategy for Torbay.
- 6.4 The programme is coming to an end (March 2026) and there are no plans for government to replace this funding. As a result, this directly impacts upon delivery of Council's Business Plan.

Outcomes and Impact - Original programme (2022-2025)

- 6.5 In 2022, Torbay received a £1.76 million UKSPF allocation. 14 projects were commissioned across 10 partners to deliver across 12-24 months. Key deliverables included:
- 229 volunteering opportunities created
 - Over 400 households supported with energy efficiency and fuel poverty, resulting in savings over £400,000
 - Over 500 businesses support to start and grow
 - Over 50 grants administered to businesses to grow, innovate and decarbonise
 - Over 90 businesses supported to become more sustainable through decarbonisation plans
 - Created over 65 new jobs
 - Safeguarded over 100 jobs
 - Created 28 new businesses
 - Supported over 350 economically inactive people (16-64) move closer to employment, training or education
 - Supported over 180 people back into work, training or education
 - Supported 140 participants already employed in key sectors to upskill

- 6.6 Additional social value outcomes have been derived across all projects, although these are difficult to measure officially (due to a lack of an effective tool to calculate). However, social outcomes that have been achieved and that can be demonstrated through sentiment surveys include increased confidence, increased financial comfort, decreased stress and anxiety, improved mental and physical health, improved access to healthcare, increased life expectancy, reduced inequality, improved aspirations.
- 6.7 Furthermore, the UKSPF programme was over 99% spent in full, which is an excellent achievement across 14 projects.

Outcomes and Impact - 12 month extension programme (2025-2026)

- 6.8 UKSPF was extended nationally for an additional 12 months at a reduced rate. Torbay received just over £616,000 for this period, which supported seven of the original projects to continue at a reduced rate.
- 6.9 Whilst this phase of UKSPF is not yet complete, the programme is expected to achieve:
- Over 400 households supported with energy efficiency and fuel poverty
 - Over 250 tonnes of carbon emissions saved
 - Over 45 Jobs safeguarded
 - Over 30 jobs created
 - Over 10 new businesses created
 - Over 100 new volunteering opportunities created
 - Over 150 participants gaining a new skills or qualification

7 Torbay *Turning the Tide on Poverty* programme

- 7.1 Torbay Council's Turning the Tide programme was modelled on the Marmot principles first set out in Fair Society, Healthy Lives in 2008 Fair Society Healthy Lives (The Marmot Review) - IHE (instituteofhealthequity.org). The programme is chaired by Torbay Council's Director of Public Health and has input from cross-Council departments as well as partners across the health, care and voluntary sectors in Torbay. In 2022/23 the programme evolved to respond to the cost of living challenges facing local families and communities, placing a stronger focus on the drivers of poverty and ill-health including food, fuel, employment, skills and economic stability.
- 7.2 Additional members were coopted to the programme in 2024-25, and following a review, the aim of the programme was reconfirmed as **'breaking the cycle of poverty and promoting social mobility in Torbay'**.
- 7.3 The priority group for especial focus during 2025/26 was identified as **young people and families**, where interventions are both critical and timely in terms of influencing future life chances and having a positive impact on successive generations.

7.4 The table below is the Turning the Tide action planning framework. This covers the target populations, settings, activities, levers and measures, from which actions are built up.

Vision	Breaking the cycle - promoting social mobility in Torbay									
We want to...	Promote aspiration		Support young people out of benefits		Support people out of ill health into work			Build resilience		
We will work with...	Education		Businesses		Anchors			Communities & places		
Areas of activity	Training – indivs & employers	Coaching & mentoring	Role models & peer support	Explore non-traditional jobs & roles	Disability confident employer	Transport (home/ work/ educ/ health/ social)	Apprenticeships	Health support & coaching	Housing support pathways	
Target groups for extra help	Care experienced	Carers	Homeless single males	Health conditions & disabilities	Neurodiverse; PWLD; SMI	Neighbourhoods	People in Youth Justice pathways	NEETs		
Settings	Schools & Colleges	Family Hubs		Business forums & networks		Community groups & venues	NHS, GP practices			
Mechanisms, Enablers, Levers	Connect to Work	Shared Prosperity Fund		DfE 16-19 funding	Workwell		Make it an LCP priority		Combined Authority (Adult Skills & Educ Fund; Transport; Housing)	
Measures	Short term	Work & skills (NEETs, DWP stats re work & health)		Longer term	Deprivation, economic, health & disability			People & community	Wellbeing; resilience; connections	

7.5 Action areas identified so far cover:

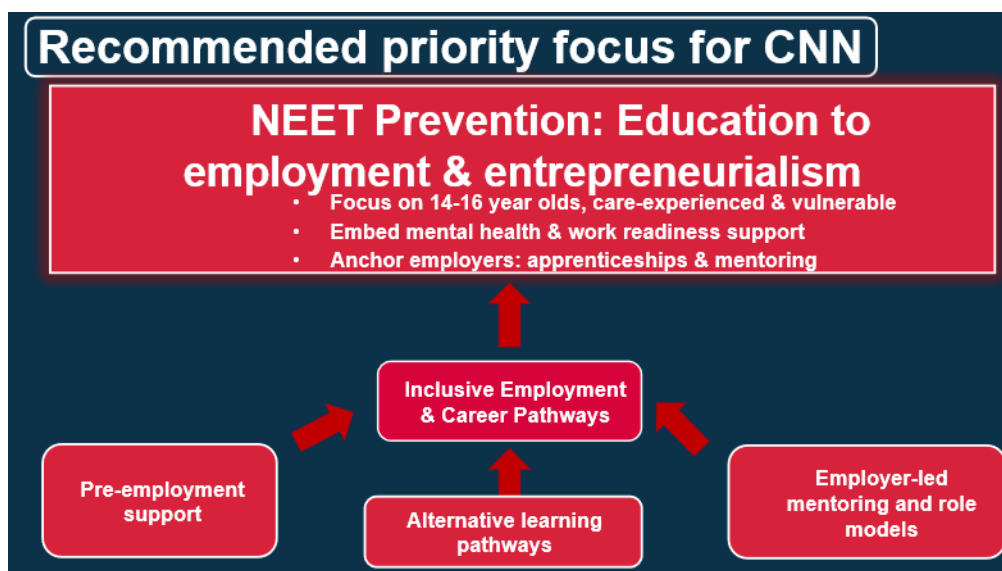
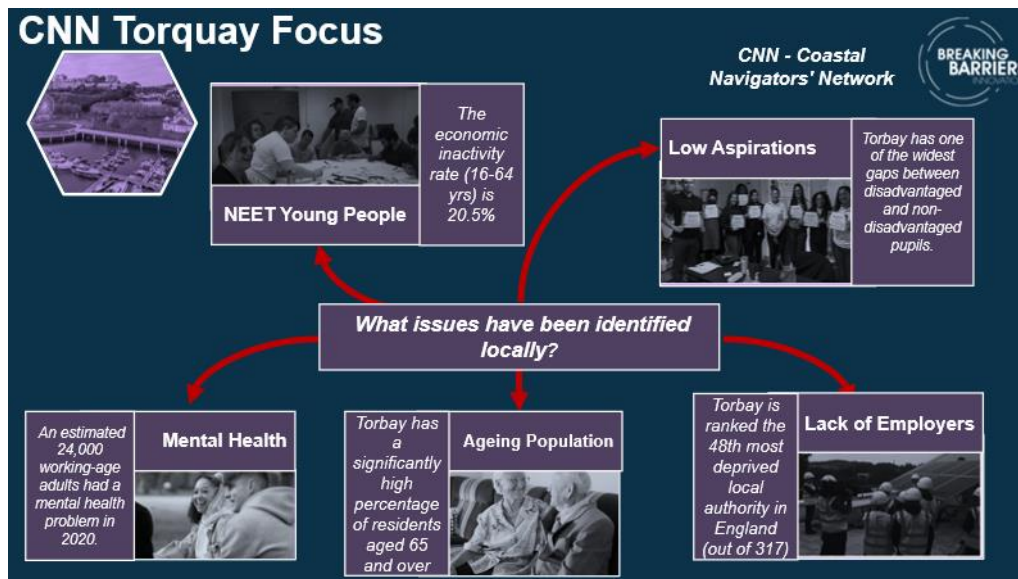
- Supporting people (back) into work, including from long term ill-health
- Reducing the risk of care experienced young people experiencing poverty, with budgeting advice and practical support
- Promoting disability confident employers
- Development and implementation of the Coastal Navigators' Network priority programme for children and young people pre NEET.

7.6 Actions are continually being refined and other action areas identified. It is important that the Turning the Tide programme focuses on those areas where action is not already happening elsewhere, and our combined efforts can have most impact.

8 Coastal Navigators' Network programme

8.1 The Coastal Navigators' Network (CNN) was co-founded by coastal ICBs and NHS England to tackle shared challenges, drive innovation, and ensure coastal communities are not left behind in national priorities. This was a direct response to the 2021 Chief Medical Officer's report, which highlighted the need for a national approach to coastal health, recognising that 19% of the population live in coastal areas, many of whom face the most entrenched health inequalities. There are now 55 coastal communities in the network. Torbay joined in July 2025. The Director of Public Health is the programme SRO.

8.2 Torbay hosted an inception work on 5 November where the vision for our programme was developed. Our target is NEET prevention, with a main focus on young people 14-16. The slides below give a high level summary.



9 Options under consideration

9.1 Options for securing the legacy of existing programmes and ensuring a continued focus on promoting social mobility in Torbay will be discussed during the session.

10 Financial Opportunities and Implications

10.1 Financial opportunities and implications are described in relation to each of the programmes above. An area for consideration is how we consolidate and sustain the benefits of programmes, such as the Shared Prosperity Fund, where national funding is coming to an end.

11 Legal Implications

11.1 None identified.

12 Engagement and Consultation

12.1 Engagement is taken forward separately for each individual project or programme.

13 Procurement Implications

13.1 None identified.

14 Protecting our naturally inspiring Bay and tackling Climate Change

14.1 Many of the projects involve working with the assets of our blue and green space within Torbay.

15 Associated Risks

15.1 Risks are outlined in the paper, including the need to look at opportunities to secure the legacy of the Shared Prosperity Fund projects and build sustainable routes to social mobility for local young people and our wider communities.

16 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	<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>Shared Prosperity and Turning the Tide programmes are designed to support groups who experience greater disadvantage.</p> <p>Young people are an especial area of focus.</p>	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. 	Shared Prosperity and Turning the Tide programmes are designed to support groups who experience greater disadvantage, including carers.	Not applicable	
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. 	Shared Prosperity and Turning the Tide programmes are designed to support groups who experience greater disadvantage.	Not applicable	

		Care experienced young people are an especial area of focus.		
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>Shared Prosperity and Turning the Tide programmes are designed to support groups who experience greater disadvantage.</p> <p>The support into work programmes include a focus on people unable to work through illness or disability.</p>	Not applicable	
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>Shared Prosperity and Turning the Tide programmes are designed to support groups who experience greater disadvantage.</p> <p>No differential impact anticipated.</p>	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>Shared Prosperity and Turning the Tide programmes are designed to support groups who experience greater disadvantage.</p> <p>No differential impact anticipated.</p>	Not applicable	
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). 	<p>Shared Prosperity and Turning the Tide programmes are designed to support groups who experience greater disadvantage.</p> <p>No differential impact anticipated.</p>	Not applicable	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the period 2022 to 2024, rates in Torbay (44.6) have been significantly below England (50.0). 			
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 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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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>Shared Prosperity and Turning the Tide programmes are designed to support groups who experience greater disadvantage.</p> <p>No differential impact anticipated.</p>	Not applicable	
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 	<p>Shared Prosperity and Turning the Tide programmes are designed to support groups who experience greater disadvantage.</p> <p>No differential impact anticipated.</p>	Not applicable	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 			
Sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 51.3% of Torbay's population are female. • 48.7% of Torbay's population are male. 	<p>Shared Prosperity and Turning the Tide programmes are designed to support groups who experience greater disadvantage.</p> <p>No differential impact anticipated.</p>	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>Shared Prosperity and Turning the Tide programmes are designed to support groups who experience greater disadvantage.</p> <p>No differential impact anticipated.</p>	Not applicable	
Armed Forces Community	<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>Shared Prosperity and Turning the Tide programmes are designed to support groups who experience greater disadvantage.</p> <p>No differential impact anticipated.</p>	Not applicable	
Additional considerations				

Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child poverty and deprivation)	<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>Shared Prosperity and Turning the Tide programmes are designed to support groups who experience greater disadvantage.</p> <p>These are target areas for the programme.</p>	Not applicable	
Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay)	<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>Shared Prosperity and Turning the Tide programmes are designed to support groups who experience greater disadvantage.</p> <p>These are anticipated benefits of the programme.</p>	Not applicable	
Human Rights impacts		<p>Shared Prosperity and Turning the Tide programmes are designed to support groups who experience greater disadvantage.</p>	Not applicable	
Child Friendly		<p>Shared Prosperity and Turning the Tide programmes are designed to support groups who experience greater disadvantage.</p> <p>Young people are an area of focus.</p>	Not applicable	

17 Cumulative Council Impact

17.1 None identified. Activities described within these programmes should have positive cross Council impact.

18 Cumulative Community Impacts

18.1 None identified, impacts should be positive.