

Meeting: Cabinet

Date: 20th October 2026

Wards affected: All Wards

Report Title: Destination Management Plan Review

When does the decision need to be implemented? 10th December 2026

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1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to ask Cabinet and Council to approve the refreshed Destination Management Plan, following the review and public consultation.
- 1.2. The DMP has been reviewed and refreshed so Torbay can remain competitive, respond to a changing visitor market and make the most of its tourism growth potential. It sets out a collaborative, place-based and business-led approach to improving the visitor experience, supporting sustainable and inclusive tourism, and strengthening Torbay's position as the UK's premier coastal destination.
- 1.3. The DMP provides a single strategic framework for developing and managing Torbay as both a visitor destination and a place. It sets out how businesses, communities and partners can work together to grow a vibrant visitor economy that benefits residents and visitors. While the English Riviera remains Torbay's visitor brand, the refreshed DMP takes a wider place-based approach, aligned with the Torbay Story and the Corporate and Community Plan. It recognises the visitor economy as part of wider place-shaping, supporting employment and skills, culture, investment, infrastructure, community pride and wellbeing.

2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

- 2.1. The DMP will support growth in Torbay's visitor economy by celebrating its unique heritage, culture and natural environment. It will help strengthen Torbay's position as the UK's premier coastal destination, improve the visitor experience and build pride in place.

- 2.2. The plan sets out a more collaborative, business-led and place-based approach, underpinned by a clear framework. It recognises the visitor economy as a key economic strength and growth sector, supporting jobs, businesses and inward investment.
- 2.3. The refreshed DMP supports a more sustainable, inclusive and year-round visitor economy. It will help strengthen Torbay's visitor offer, improve resilience for local businesses and communities, and support a destination that works well for residents and visitors.
- 2.4. The refreshed DMP delivery model strengthens leadership and governance through a place and business-led approach. This includes the creation of a Visitor Economy Cluster to align priorities, maximise resources and delivery, and give the visitor economy a stronger voice in decision-making.
- 2.5. The DMP supports the Council's vision of a healthy, happy and prosperous Torbay by helping to grow the visitor economy, support local businesses and jobs, and attract inward investment. It positions tourism as a key economic strength while keeping communities, place quality and the visitor experience at the centre of destination management.
- 2.6. Cabinet will be considering the proposal at its meeting on 20 October 2026 and are requested to make recommendations to Council as set out in paragraph 3 below. A copy of the Cabinet's decision will be published prior to the Council meeting.

3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

- 3.1. That Cabinet recommends to Council:

that the refreshed Destination Management Plan 2026-2036, as set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report, be approved and implemented through the proposed partnership-led delivery, governance and monitoring arrangements.

4. Appendices

Appendix 1: Torbay Destination Management Plan

Appendix 2: Torbay Destination Management Plan Baseline Report (evidence base)

5. Background Documents

- English Riviera Destination Management Plan (2022-30) - [English Riviera Destination Management Plan - Torbay Council](#)
- Torbay Economic Growth Strategy (2022-30) - [Economic Growth Strategy - Torbay Council](#)
- Economic Strategy Evidence Base - [Economic Strategy Evidence Base - Torbay Council](#)

Supporting Information

6. Introduction

- 6.1. The review, stakeholder engagement and public consultation for the DMP are now complete. This report brings forward the refreshed Plan for approval, so it remains relevant, responds to changing market conditions and supports a more resilient, productive and sustainable visitor economy.
- 6.2. The DMP is a strategic policy framework sitting beneath the Torbay Economic Growth Strategy and is currently led by the Destination Management Group (DMG). Delivered through a partnership approach, DMG members take collective responsibility for setting direction, co-ordinating activity and driving outcomes across the destination. As part of the DMP review the governance management structure has also been reviewed.
- 6.3. The current DMP has delivered tangible outcomes to strengthen Torbay's year-round visitor economy. This includes the development of Geopark Discovery Experiences, growth in business tourism through Meet English Riviera, the creation of the SUP Hub positioning Torbay as the UK home of paddleboarding and securing the 2026 SUP World Cup, revitalised events such as Seafood Feast, strengthened cruise tourism, improved event impact reporting, and effective partnership-led business support during the 2024 *Cryptosporidium* outbreak.
- 6.4. The DMP review comes at a pivotal time for stabilising and growing Torbay's visitor economy. With significant place development and investment, it's time to reflect on the current DMP and its approach to ensure the plan will support the destination to develop, unlock new opportunities and remain competitive in an evolving marketplace.
- 6.5. Torbay's future success will depend not only on its ability to showcase its unique assets, but also on the strength of its foundations. The Torbay Story provides a narrative that celebrates the area's rich cultural heritage, locally distinctive food and drink, the South West Coast Path and internationally recognised Agatha Christie and the English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark status offers powerful tools for storytelling and attracting new audiences to support year-round tourism.
- 6.6. The refreshed DMP proposes a shift towards a more business-led place-based approach, where businesses play a stronger role in shaping, leading and delivering activity within the priorities. This approach recognises that businesses are best placed to develop sector-specific initiatives, build and shape the destination narrative, and respond quickly to market opportunities. The DMP provides the strategic framework within which delivery can thrive, with Torbay Council playing a key enabling role by supporting, coordinating and feeding into delivery where appropriate, while also strengthening the collective voice of the sector at a strategic level.
- 6.7. Torbay Council plays an important enabling role in delivering the DMP by supporting public services and place-shaping activity that affect the visitor experience. This includes parking,

public realm improvements, tackling antisocial behaviour, enabling events, cultural programming and business support. Working with partners, these services can help improve the quality of place, increase footfall and support local businesses.

- 6.8. Although Torbay Council is not solely responsible for delivering the DMP, the review recommends identifying dedicated resources within Torbay Council to support implementation of the DMP, facilitate collaboration among partners, oversee delivery of the priorities and actions, and support monitoring and reporting.

7. Options under consideration

- 7.1. Adopt the refreshed DMP as set out in Appendix 1. This is the recommended option because it provides an up-to-date strategic framework for Torbay's visitor economy, reflects consultation feedback and sets out a clearer approach to delivery, governance, monitoring and partnership working.
- 7.2. Do not adopt the refreshed plan and continue with the existing DMP. This option is not recommended because the current Plan no longer fully reflects the latest visitor economy evidence, market conditions, consultation feedback or proposed delivery and governance arrangements.

8. Financial Opportunities and Implications

- 8.1. The DMP is a partnership framework to support Torbay's visitor economy and wider place priorities. It is not intended to be delivered by the Council alone.
- 8.2. The recommendation for a dedicated resource to manage DMP implementation should be reviewed within existing Economic Development budgets and resources. This would support coordination, partner engagement, action planning, monitoring and reporting, following a similar approach to other growth sectors as set out in the Economic Growth Strategy.
- 8.3. The DMP priority most relevant to the Council is Priority 7: 'Destination Ready – Strengthening Infrastructure and Accessibility', which relates to public services, the public realm, town centres, and transport. The Plan proposes developing the action plan with relevant leads and key stakeholders, aligning it with existing service planning. This is likely to involve refining current plans or engaging tourism partners, rather than requiring additional resources or creating significant financial implications.

9. Legal Implications

- 9.1. There are no legal implications arising directly from this proposal.

10. Engagement and Consultation

- 10.1. Various engagement activities have been undertaken during the review and development of the DMP, including Destination Management Group and key stakeholder deep dives, an online business and stakeholder survey, one-to-one interviews and group sessions. These activities provided wide-ranging input, supported detailed discussion of the vision and priorities, and helped identify stakeholders interested in supporting delivery and the development of the action plan.
- 10.2. Engagement findings have informed the refreshed DMP, demonstrating strong support for changes to management and governance, and a more business-led approach. Feedback has shaped the Plan by strengthening its focus on sustainability, year-round tourism, and shared ownership. As a result, the DMP better reflects local priorities, has strong business and stakeholder buy-in, and provides a more robust foundation for effective delivery and long-term impact.
- 10.3. The six-week public consultation on the draft DMP is now complete. It ran from 22nd July to 2nd September and included the following activity to encourage residents and businesses to complete the online survey.
 - Local businesses – via Torbay Council’s monthly business newsletter, the English Riviera BID Co distribution list and presentation at the Torbay Business Forum.
 - Residents – via local press and Torbay Council channels, including social media, e-newsletter One Torbay and website.
- 10.4. The online survey ran from 22nd July to 2nd September on Torbay Council’s consultation page and received 261 responses. Respondents supported the overall direction of the DMP with 86% supporting the Vision Statement, 78% supporting the proposed key priorities and 65% supporting the proposed governance arrangements.
- 10.5. Top line analysis of consultation feedback shows:
 - 86% of respondents agree with the Plan's Vision Statement (55% strongly agree, 31% agree).
 - 78% agree with the Plan's key priorities (39% strongly agree, 39% agree).
 - 65% of respondents agree with the proposed governance arrangements (25% strongly agree, 40% agree).
 - The consultation was primarily resident-led, accounting for 83% of responses, alongside 10% from businesses and 2% from organisations. Responses were received from across Torbay, including Torquay, Paignton and Brixham, as well as a smaller number from outside the area. This gives strong community insight and should be considered alongside ongoing engagement with businesses, sector partners and delivery bodies.
- 10.6. The survey also included an open free-text question asking whether respondents had any other comments on the DMP and its approach to growing the visitor economy. This feedback has been analysed, and the following key themes were identified:

- **Town centres and public realm:** Respondents highlighted the importance of clean, well maintained and welcoming town centres, seafronts, gateways and visitor routes. Feedback included litter, graffiti, vacant buildings, public toilets and the general appearance of key places.
- **Safety and visitor experience:** Concerns were raised about anti-social behaviour, perceptions of safety and the need for town centres, car parks and public spaces to feel safe and welcoming for residents and visitors.
- **Infrastructure, transport and accessibility:** Feedback referred to parking, public transport, signage, walking, and cycling routes, and the need for visitor facilities and experiences to be inclusive and accessible.
- **Regeneration and place management:** Respondents linked visitor economy growth with wider town centre regeneration, better place management, visible improvements to high streets and support for local businesses to trade throughout the year.
- **Heritage, culture and identity:** There was strong interest in making better use of Torbay's distinctive assets, including the English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark, Agatha Christie connections, cultural and historic assets, the marine environment and the individual identities of Torquay, Paignton and Brixham.
- **Residents and local benefit:** Respondents wanted tourism growth to benefit local communities, improve quality of life for residents and involve a wider range of voices, including residents and small businesses, in delivery.
- **Sustainability:** Feedback supported the Plan's sustainability objectives, but asked for clearer actions on environmental protection, biodiversity, climate resilience, the marine environment and sustainable transport.
- **Delivery, funding and governance:** Respondents asked for clearer responsibilities, decision making arrangements, delivery timescales, resources, baselines and measurable outcomes. Some also raised concerns about complex governance arrangements and duplication.
- **Clarity of the Plan:** Some respondents felt the document should use plainer English, shorter explanations and clearer descriptions of what will be delivered.
- **Future opportunities:** Suggestions included better digital visitor information, more events, water based activities, international promotion and improved town centre management. A small number of respondents suggested considering a visitor levy or tourism tax as a possible future funding option, and some referred to the potential implications of Local Government Reorganisation.

- 10.7. The draft DMP has been updated to respond to the consultation findings where changes are within the Plan's scope. Amendments have strengthened references to sustainability, accessibility, sustainable travel, heritage assets, destination identity, governance, delivery arrangements, monitoring and reporting. Wording has also been reviewed to make the final DMP clearer and easier to understand, including reducing jargon and explaining the role of partnership working, the Visitor Economy Cluster and annual progress reporting more plainly.
- 10.8. Some feedback raised through the consultation relates to issues that affect visitor perceptions but sit outside the direct scope of the DMP, such as anti-social behaviour,

homelessness, street cleanliness, public realm maintenance, transport and wider regeneration. These themes have been shared with the relevant Council services and partners so they can inform wider place-based activity, service planning and future delivery discussions.

- 10.9. Feedback from the Overview and Scrutiny Board on 12th August 2026 has also been considered. The Board supported the revised DMP and highlighted areas including sports tourism, visitor markets, performance data, resources, governance, cultural ambitions, Local Plan alignment and branding. These points have been reviewed as part of the final Plan and will inform action planning. The Board resolved unanimously that Cabinet be advised of its support and that marketing opportunities are monitored, with an ERBID update received in twelve months' time.
- 10.10. Overall, the public consultation does not indicate a need for a fundamental rewrite of the Plan. It demonstrates broad support for the vision, priorities and strategic direction, while showing a clear expectation that the final DMP should be more practical, measurable and delivery focused.

11. Procurement Implications

- 11.1. The procurement for the DMP review has been completed. A three-quote procurement process was undertaken, inviting local and regional suppliers to submit proposals in line with Torbay's commitment to Community Wealth Building. Following this process, the supplier was appointed.
- 11.2. The decision now being sought is to approve the refreshed DMP. No further procurement is required as part of this decision.

12. Protecting our naturally inspiring Bay and tackling Climate Change

- 12.1. The refreshed DMP is aligned to strategy and activity including the Torbay Climate Partnership, A Greener Way for Our Bay, the English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark and the assets of our blue and green space within Torbay.
- 12.2. The refreshed DMP supports Torbay's sustainability ambitions by making sustainability one of its core priorities. It provides a framework for partners to develop actions that support a more sustainable, environmentally responsible and economically resilient visitor economy, including sustainable travel, protection of natural assets, climate resilience and responsible visitor behaviour.

13. Associated Risks

- 13.1. If the refreshed DMP is not approved, Torbay risks continuing with an outdated framework that does not fully reflect current visitor economy evidence, consultation feedback, market conditions or the need for stronger delivery arrangements. This could weaken partnership confidence, reduce the ability to coordinate activity and limit progress on destination quality, sustainability, accessibility and year-round visitor economy growth.

- 13.2. The updated Plan focuses on maximising Torbay's tourism potential through a more business-led approach and a new governance structure, strengthening the visitor economy and Torbay's wider place offer. This supports Torbay's attractiveness as a place to live, work, visit, and invest, contributing to broader economic growth.

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	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.	The visitor economy supports employment opportunities for people of all ages, including younger people entering the workforce and older residents seeking flexible employment, volunteering or social opportunities. The DMP's focus on skills development, destination improvements, culture, events and placemaking has the potential to enhance quality of life for children, young people, working-age adults and older residents. Improved accessibility, public spaces and visitor facilities may particularly benefit older residents and families with children.	Not applicable	
Carers	At the time of the 2021 census there were 14,900 unpaid carers in Torbay.	The refreshed DMP takes an inclusive, place-based approach that supports the visitor economy and Torbay's wider social and economic wellbeing. Accessibility is a core theme within the	Not applicable	

	5,185 of these carers provided 50 hours or more of care.	Plan, including improved movement around Torbay, accessible visitor routes, public transport, walking, wheeling and inclusive public spaces. This supports residents and visitors with disabilities by recognising accessibility as part of destination quality and visitor experience.		
Care experienced	As of January 2026, there were 277 former care experienced young people aged 18-24 in Torbay.	he visitor economy provides employment, apprenticeships, training and volunteering opportunities that can support positive outcomes for care experienced young people and care leavers. The refreshed DMP places a strong emphasis on workforce development, skills and business collaboration, which may help increase pathways into employment and training across the visitor economy. The Plan is not expected to have adverse impacts on care experienced young people. Through delivery planning, partners will be encouraged to consider how opportunities within the visitor economy can be promoted to care experienced young people and care leavers, supporting the Council's wider Corporate Parenting responsibilities	Not applicable	
Disability	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	The refreshed DMP takes an inclusive, place-based approach that supports the visitor economy and Torbay's wider social and economic wellbeing. Accessibility is a core theme within the	Not applicable	

	or mental health condition or illness.	Plan, including improved movement around Torbay, accessible visitor routes, public transport, walking, wheeling and inclusive public spaces. This supports residents and visitors with disabilities by recognising accessibility as part of destination quality and visitor experience.		
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.	The refreshed DMP takes an inclusive, place-based approach that supports the visitor economy and Torbay's wider social and economic wellbeing. The DMP focuses on a variety of priorities including workforce and skills development, business collaboration, accessibility, and sustainability to support inclusive economic growth for all.	Not applicable	
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.	The refreshed DMP takes an inclusive, place-based approach that supports the visitor economy and Torbay's wider social and economic wellbeing. The DMP focuses on a variety of priorities including workforce and skills development, business collaboration, accessibility, and sustainability to support inclusive economic growth for all.	Not applicable	
Pregnancy and maternity	Between 2013 and 2024, the rate of live births (as a proportion of females aged 15 to 44) has been slightly	The refreshed DMP takes an inclusive, place-based approach that supports the	Not applicable	

	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).	visitor economy and Torbay's wider social and economic wellbeing. The DMP focuses on a variety of priorities including workforce and skills development, business collaboration, accessibility, and sustainability to support inclusive economic growth for all.		
Race	In the 2021 Census, 96.1% of Torbay residents described their ethnicity as the following: 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. - 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.	A thriving visitor economy can support employment and business opportunities for people from all ethnic backgrounds. The DMP promotes an inclusive approach to destination management and seeks to ensure Torbay is welcoming to residents, businesses, employees and visitors from diverse communities. No adverse impacts have been identified. Delivery of the Plan should promote inclusive marketing, engagement and participation opportunities that reflect the diversity of communities and visitors.	Not applicable	

Religion and belief	The 2021 Census showed that the residents in Torbay identify their religion and/or belief as the following; • 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	The refreshed DMP takes an inclusive, place-based approach that supports the visitor economy and Torbay's wider social and economic wellbeing. The DMP focuses on a variety of priorities including workforce and skills development, business collaboration, accessibility, and sustainability to support inclusive economic growth for all. No specific adverse impacts are anticipated. The DMP seeks to support an inclusive visitor economy and destination experience that is welcoming to people of different faiths and beliefs. Future destination promotion, events and visitor information should seek to reflect and respect the diversity of residents and visitors	Not applicable	
Sex	• 51.3% of Torbay's population are female. • 48.7% of Torbay's population are male.	The refreshed DMP takes an inclusive, place-based approach that supports the visitor economy and Torbay's wider social and economic wellbeing. The Plan focuses on workforce and skills development, business collaboration, accessibility and sustainability to support inclusive economic growth for all. The visitor economy provides significant employment opportunities across a range of sectors. The DMP's focus on skills,	Not applicable	

		employment, business growth and destination management may create benefits for both women and men. Consultation feedback highlighted the importance of creating safe and welcoming public spaces, which may positively affect people's confidence to participate in the visitor economy as residents, workers and visitors.		
Sexual orientation	In the 2021 Census, residents described their sexuality as follows; • 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	The refreshed DMP takes an inclusive, place-based approach that supports the visitor economy and Torbay's wider social and economic wellbeing. The DMP focuses on a variety of priorities including workforce and skills development, business collaboration, accessibility, and sustainability to support inclusive economic growth for all. The DMP promotes an inclusive and welcoming destination for residents, employees, businesses and visitors. No evidence has been identified to suggest that people sharing this protected characteristic would be adversely affected by the Plan. Through delivery arrangements, partners should continue to promote an environment that is welcoming, respectful and inclusive for all communities.	Not applicable	

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% of the population have previously served in the UK armed forces.	The refreshed DMP takes an inclusive, place-based approach that supports the visitor economy and Torbay's wider social and economic wellbeing. The DMP focuses on a variety of priorities including workforce and skills development, business collaboration, accessibility, and sustainability to support inclusive economic growth for all.	Not applicable	
Additional considerations				
Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child poverty and deprivation)	Torbay is ranked as the 39th most deprived upper tier local authority in England in the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025.	The refreshed DMP takes an inclusive, place-based approach that supports both the visitor economy and Torbay's wider social and economic wellbeing. By focusing on workforce development, business collaboration and improved accessibility, the Plan helps create fairer access to employment, skills, services and opportunities, supporting people across different ages, abilities, backgrounds and socio-economic circumstances, while positively contributing to long-term economic resilience.	Not applicable	
Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay)	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	Providing increased employment opportunities can take households from 'workless' to working. This can provide additional income for families to support a healthier lifestyle.	Not applicable	

	least and most deprived areas and, a 3-year gap for females.	The plan also looks to support the wider place area, improving Torbay's attractiveness as a place to live, work and invest, which could increase civic pride and wellbeing.		
Human Rights impacts		The refreshed DMP takes an inclusive, place-based approach that supports both the visitor economy and Torbay's wider social and economic wellbeing. By focusing on workforce development, business collaboration and improved accessibility, the Plan helps create fairer access to employment, skills, services and opportunities, supporting people across different ages, abilities, backgrounds and socio-economic circumstances, while contributing to improved health, inclusion and long-term economic resilience. No adverse impacts on human rights have been identified. The Plan supports an inclusive and accessible approach to destination development which is consistent with the principles of equality, participation and non-discrimination.	Not applicable	
Child Friendly		The refreshed DMP takes an inclusive, place-based approach that supports both the visitor economy and Torbay's wider social and economic wellbeing. By improving infrastructure, inclusive place-making and the quality of visitor	Not applicable	

		experiences, the DMP supports Torbay as a destination that is welcoming and accessible for children and families. The DMP has the potential to create positive outcomes for children and young people through improvements to public spaces, accessibility, culture, events, active travel opportunities and the wider visitor economy. A stronger and more sustainable visitor economy may also create future employment, skills and apprenticeship opportunities for young people. The Plan supports a destination that is welcoming to children, young people and families and no adverse impacts on children's rights have been identified. Consideration should be given during delivery to ensuring that the voices of children and young people are reflected in future visitor experience and placemaking initiatives		
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15. Cumulative Council Impact

- 15.1. None identified. The priorities and recommendations within the DMP are expected to support a more joined-up approach across Council services.

16. Cumulative Community Impacts

- 16.1. None identified. The community impacts are expected to be positive.