

Torbay Strategic Partnership

UPDATE

August 2010



Torbay Together - facing up to the Funding Challenge

Torbay Council and its partners have agreed an approach to tackling the challenges of setting a budget for 2011/12.

The partners are considering the approach in the face of some significant unknowns that will impact on some of the decisions made in finalising the future budgets of individual partners.

Last year was the final year of the Government's three year spending round which meant the council broadly knew what amount of government financial support it was getting. The Government 'Comprehensive Spending Review' for the next four years will not be published until 20 October and it is unlikely that Torbay's allocation will be known until November.

The coalition government's priority is to reduce the government's financial deficit. In order to achieve this, the Chancellor has indicated that most government departments will have to make at least 25% savings over four years. Some departments have their budgets protected and some departments have been asked to model 40% reductions. What is not yet clear is how the savings will be spread over the four years or the impact of changes government has already announced e.g. Public Health returning to be a local authority function.

The approach is as follows:

Asset management – continuing the programme of asset rationalisation and streamlining of business processes that has already begun. It also means ensuring we are maximising the income from our assets.

Budgetary control – to ensure there is no overspend in the 2010/11 budget.

Cost reduction – this is the critical area and there are a number of approaches:

Zero base the council's budget (ZBB) - this means working out what the council has to do as a minimum to deliver statutory services. There will then be further discussions with councillors, partners and communities around what their priorities are and the potential to build services back in.

Workforce management – Some of the work has already been done in this area; introducing streamlined business processes and the greater use of technology has reduced the number of posts. The council is already looking at vacancy control and will continue to monitor this closely.

Contract review - to see if renegotiation would bring any benefits either in cost reduction or change to service delivery.

Grant review - Some bodies receive grants via contracts or receive grants from other organisations who may also be seeking to make savings in their budgets. The partners recognise how dependent some organisations are on grant funding and the need to be sensitive to this.

Sharing and joining – Partnering with other parts of the public sector as soon as possible. We already have a joint Internal Audit function with Plymouth and Devon and share services in other areas.

Transformation 2 (T2) – we will be looking to ensure that we realise the savings from our re-shaping programme.

Developing the Commissioning Model – The partnership will also be looking at how we can work with communities and volunteers to help us deliver services in different and innovative ways. This will not only help us deliver and maintain services but also enable the focus of the second government priority of building neighbourhoods through what the Prime Minister calls the 'Big Society'.

“Facing up to the Funding Challenge” timeline

- **September** - Partner finance teams will be meeting informally to share information and ideas.
- **Mid September** - Zero-based budgets produced. This will then be challenged by the council’s senior management team who will then work with Cabinet to consider priorities and the adding back in.
- **November** - The TSP Forum “Facing up to the Funding Challenge” will take place (Further details to follow) This will allow partners to discuss issues and plan once the outcomes of the spending review are known.
- **November** - A series of Star Chambers to challenge worked up and draft Council budget proposals.
- **December** - Council draft budget produced
- **January** - Overview and Scrutiny Review of the Council’s priorities and budget
- **March** - Budget finalised by Full Council

There will be a series of dialogues with communities and the involvement of Overview and Scrutiny in the late summer and again through Overview and Scrutiny in the New Year.

To help in this process we are keeping an updated record of new spending announcements
www.torbay.gov.uk/newcoalitionpolicychanges

Torbay Together Update

Torbay Together was launched in October 2009 to promote the good work already being undertaken by the Torbay Strategic Partnership (TSP).

Torbay Together aims to communicate clearly with residents to inform them about different services, and to show that we have a strong commitment to listening and acting upon their views. Interim Place Survey results have shown that the Torbay Together is working. Results show a positive swing in resident perception:

- satisfaction with council (up 5.8%)
- feeling well informed about local public services (up 10.3%)
- feeling they can influence decisions (up 3.5%)
- regarding value for money (up 3.6%)

The Torbay Together campaign has just won a national award at the 2010 Local Government Communication Awards which recognises local authorities that communicate well with residents.

The campaign is running throughout the year and will culminate with the Torbay Together Community Awards ceremony in September. Driven by Torbay Together, in association with the Herald Express, the Torbay Together Community Awards recognise, reward and celebrate those residents who have made a significant contribution to the community and help bring Torbay Together.



New approach to tackling community safety

From September 2010 Safer Communities Torbay will be deploying a new approach to tackling community safety known as ‘Partnership Tasking’.

The tasking process will involve a fortnightly multi- agency meeting which will share the challenges of improving quality of life in the community between all responsible partners. The aim is to solve the issues in a structured way using partnership resources and to communicate the outcomes of the process to the relevant communities.

It will be supported by two multi agency Locality Management Teams with support from Safer Communities Torbay covering Torquay and Paignton and Brixham.

The aim of locality based working is to raise the standards of delivery of front line services to communities and ensure a joined up approach to dealing with issues that may involve several departments (or indeed several agencies).

The main priority for the locality teams will be to resolve local issues and priorities as directed by the community from ‘You Said We Did’ events and other forms of engagement.

TSP Total Approach to Asset Management

The TSP aim to achieve a joint approach to asset management between the partners bearing in mind the principles of 'Total Place'.

Nationally, 13 Total Place pilot schemes were set up. Their aim was to take a fresh look at what money is coming into their area, explore what obstacles there are to making funding go further, examine the complexities within the system and how best to strip out the inefficiencies and wastage they discovered. The pilots have considered a wide range of issues that have a direct effect on people's lives, including children's services, drugs and alcohol misuse, housing, worklessness, asset management, services for older people and offender management.

The new Government is committed to a whole area approach to improving public services. While it is thought that the name may be changed it is thought that the principles will remain.

In terms of the 'total' approach to asset management, the Government has now started to run 11 Total Capital & Asset Pathfinder' schemes in each region to increase the effectiveness of investment across local partners.

In Torbay partners have been working on a number of initiatives;

The creation of plans showing the location of all public sector assets within Torbay. These will help identify surplus and inefficient space usage, especially where collaboration between agencies could lead to greater efficiency.

The creation of a list of assets within the ownership of the Fire & Police Authorities and Torbay Care Trust / NHS.

Representatives of the Fire & Police Authorities and Torbay Care Trust now attend meetings of the Council's Corporate Asset Management Team.

The setting up of the 'Hele Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder' scheme – This has involved the Council taking a lease of a property in Hele Road to be used by a number of agencies to provide a focal point for the community, thus improving service delivery.

Setting up a Local Asset Backed Vehicle (LABV) – a public / private sector initiative to help regenerate Torbay. The Council is to transfer parcels of land into the LABV and other agencies have been asked about whether it is appropriate for some of their assets to be included.

The strategic outline case for shared asset management service delivery is currently being examined, commencing with the Estates Management Service. If a successful delivery model is established there would be scope to extend it to partners and across LSP boundaries focussing delivery on South Devon.

Improving recycling

A new company, TOR2, has recently taken over operational delivery of the following local services in Torbay:

- waste and recycling collections
- management of the Household Waste and Recycling Centre (HWRC) and
- waste transfer station
- maintenance of Torbay's highways, grounds, parks, car parks, public toilets,
- other buildings and the council's vehicle fleet
- street and beach cleansing
- out of hours call centre support.



TOR2 is an innovative Joint Venture Company owned by May Gurney (80%) and Torbay Council (20%) that will deliver service improvements and value for money. Torbay Council has chosen to partner May Gurney because they offer an innovative and integrated service with significant benefits to Torbay and its residents. These include savings of £10 million over 10 years, new employment opportunities and a sustainable business approach which will lead to a 30,000 tonne annual reduction in carbon, the equivalent of taking 10,000 cars off the road.

Major improvements to the recycling and waste services are coming into operation from 6 September 2010. These improvements will help Torbay increase recycling and cut down on the amount of waste ending up in landfill sites and will enable residents to recycle up to 85% of their waste, with all residents able to recycle the same materials.

For more information on TOR2 services visit www.tor2.co.uk

Voluntary Sector Improvement Plan

Over the past months the work to develop the Civil Society (formally the Third Sector - Community and Voluntary sector) in Torbay has increased in pace.

Torbay Strategic Partnership adopted the Combined Partnership Improvement Action Plan in May and Torbay's consortium Torcom consisting of representatives from Voluntary and Community infrastructure organisations has a key role to play, with Community and Voluntary Action Torbay (CVA) as the lead.

Voluntary and community organisations are an essential part of the fabric of society in this region and provide critically important services and support for people and communities in need. There are about 70,000 voluntary groups in the South West and their work is vital especially at a time of economic uncertainty. A piece of work is due to commence that will map out and demonstrate the value of the sector for Torbay.

It is vital in times of major legislative changes that we support and strengthen partnership working between the voluntary and public sectors and make it easier for small front-line groups to collaborate in providing services.

The Refreshed Local Torbay Compact, the agreement between statutory bodies and the voluntary and community sector in Torbay is being updated and the draft compact is currently out for consultation.

The document sets out the terms for a working relationship between local government, NHS organisations, the police, fire service etc and the third sector. You can read and comment on the draft document at www.torcom.org.uk/content/refreshed-local-torbay-compact-consultation Your initial feedback would be very welcome.



Torbay Strategic Partnership future meeting dates

23rd September 3-5pm, Meadfoot Room, Torquay Town Hall

11th November 3-5pm, Meadfoot Room, Torquay Town Hall

Save the Date – TSP Community Forum

The next TSP Stakeholder Community Forum will take place on **Wednesday 10th November 2010** this will be a morning session at the Riviera Centre, Torquay.

This is an important forum that will focus on the Funding Challenge and allow partners to discuss issues and plan once the outcomes of the spending review are known.

Formal invitations will be sent shortly with further details and we hope to see you there!

Would you like more information?

Visit our website at www.torbay.gov.uk/torbaystrategicpartnership or
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This newsletter can be made available in other formats. Please telephone 01803 207056.