

## TORBAY COUNCIL

Report No: **284/2005**

Title: **South West Regional Spatial Strategy - Torbay Council's First Detailed Proposals**

To: Executive on 13th September 2005

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### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 To seek Members' endorsement in relation to the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) process and the Torbay and South Devon Sub-Regional Study.
- 1.2 To seek Members' endorsement of the Council's First Detailed Proposals to the RSS, which is a legal requirement under Section 4(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as a former Structure Plan Authority).

### **2. Relationship to Corporate Priorities**

- 2.1 The Regional Spatial Strategy will have a major effect, in the longer term, on the following Corporate Priorities:
  - Improving access to good quality affordable homes.
  - Improving Torbay's economy.
  - Valuing our environment.
  - Creating sustainable communities.

### **3. Recommendation**

- 3.1 That the First Detailed Proposals, set out at Appendix 1 to this Report, be endorsed as the Council's submission to the Regional Spatial Strategy.
- 3.2 That the need for economic regeneration be emphasised to the Regional Assembly by way of the technical information set out in Appendix 2 to this Report.

### **4. Reason for Recommendation(s)**

- 4.1 To ensure that the Council participates fully in the Regional and Sub-Regional Planning Process and meets the requirements set out by Section 4(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 4.2 To ensure that Torbay's spatial planning requirements, eg for economic regeneration, affordable housing and appropriate infrastructure, are properly taken into account in drawing up the statutory development plan for the future of the South West.
- 4.3 In addition to the Council's corporate priorities, the RSS will set the region's transportation priorities within a restricted budget. This will be critical in relation to the A380 South Devon Link Road/ Kingskerswell Bypass.
- 4.4 It is therefore critical that the Council takes an active role in ensuring that its needs are addressed in RSS.

## 5. Key Risks associated with the Recommendation(s)

- 5.1 The following risk matrix has been determined on the basis that if the Council does not respond to RSS, there is a medium risk of the RSS not fully recognising Torbay's needs. This could have very serious impacts for Torbay, although these will be felt over the long term (to 2026).

Likelihood	6	6	12	18	24
	5	5	10	15	20
	4	4	8	12	16
	3	3	6	9	12X
	2	2	4	6	8
	1	1	2	3	4
		1	2	3	4
		Impact			

Low risk
  Intermediate risk
  High risk

The "x" in the above matrix denotes where the author has assessed the level of final risk to fall

## 6. Alternative Options (if any)

- 6.1 If the Council does not submit a report it will fail to meet its duty in respect of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 under Sections 4(4) and 5(5).
- 6.2 The alternative is for the Council not to be involved in its own strategic destiny, and probably be less successful in competing for scarce regional resources to meet its strategic planning needs.

## 7. Background

- 7.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 replaced seven county structure plans in the South West with one Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). The RSS will form part of the legally binding development plan. It will set broad brush statutory strategic planning policies for the region as well as setting the level of development (including housing numbers) that local authorities must accommodate. It will be a major influence on the future of Torbay in general, and on the content of the emerging Torbay Local Development Framework in particular. It will also determine, through the Regional Transportation Strategy, the content of the emerging Torbay Local Transport Plan.
- 7.2 Torbay and South Devon is a sub-regional joint study area, and the study report was submitted to the Regional Assembly in May 2005. The sub-regional study has arisen from joint working by Torbay, Devon County, Teignbridge District and South Hams District Councils, with additional input from the Regional Assembly, GOSW and the RDA. It was also the subject of extensive consultation with the public and key stakeholders.
- 7.3 Torbay's 4(4) First Detailed Proposal submission to the Regional Assembly (the attached report set out in Appendix 1) must be submitted by 13<sup>th</sup> September 2005. This sets out what the Council would like to see included in the draft RSS. The draft RSS is due for publication in Spring 2006 for public consultation, when there will be a further chance for the Council to comment on it. The Secretary of State (Deputy Prime Minister) has responsibility for finally approving RSS.

- 7.4 The Council's 4(4) submission reflects detailed work carried out by the Torbay and South Devon Joint Study Area and sets out a proposed response to the Regional Assembly and the reasons for it. This is summarised as follows:
- The (Sub-Regional Study Working Group's) vision for Torbay and South Devon to 2026 recognises the need for sustainable urban and rural regeneration; providing a mix of new jobs and housing, together with the services and facilities to support them. Improved infrastructure and communications are essential in order to attract high-quality business and improve accessibility. The local needs for development in all parts of the sub-region should be carefully balanced with the protection and enhancement of our unique environment, including our estuaries and coastline, and maintenance of the separate identities of our towns and villages.*
  - Torbay should remain a Principal Urban Area and be designated as a Regionally Significant Medium Growth Area. It is capable of continuing to grow by RPG+50% over the full RSS period, equal to around 500 dwellings per year. Torbay has an exceptional need for affordable housing, and for regeneration which should underpin this strategy for sustainable growth. In addition, Torbay should retain and improve on its status as a premier tourist resort. Relatively high demand for housing is likely to continue, in spite of the recent slowdown in the (national) housing market.*
- 7.5 The proposed rate in Torbay's submission is broadly a continuation of the trend from 1995, and is considered to be sustainable, having regard to the likely availability of previously developed land, and the minimisation of development on greenfield sites. Completions of dwellings over the period 1995-2004 average 491 per year, which is nearly at the RPG10+50% rate of 500 per year. The proposed growth rate is therefore only in effect a continuation of the recent trend for growth. This rate is more likely to retain the current level of young people and those of working age, and lead to a sustainable balance between housing and employment provision, and hence, relative self-containment and minimal out-commuting.
- 7.6 If the Council adopted a higher rate of growth, there would be a need for more greenfield housing development. There would be a danger that jobs would not be created to match new housing. This could lead to a substantial and unsustainable increase in daily out-commuting by Torbay residents for work elsewhere.
- 7.7 A reduced rate of growth would lead to worsening affordability and would exacerbate the ageing population, as in-migration (principally of older people) could not be prevented. It is possible that market forces would push growth at a similar rate to RPG+50% (500 dwellings per year). Failure to plan for this level of growth could result in the loss of funding for infrastructure or affordable housing, but still getting the housing. Seeking to reduce housing growth could also lead to planning by appeal, with less control by the Council on their location, type and securing development contributions.
- 7.8 The Appendices of the Detailed Proposals (available in the Members Room) set out more fully the need for economic regeneration and funding for infrastructure such as the Kingskerswell Bypass/ South Devon link road. In addition it is important to demonstrate that jobs can be created to match the level of housing development. The importance of demonstrating the need for economic regeneration is emphasised by the Regional Assembly. The technical information set out in Appendix 2 seeks to address this issue.

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## IMPLICATIONS, CONSULTATION AND OTHER INFORMATION

### Part 1

These sections may have been completed by the Report author but must have been agreed by the named officers in the Legal, Finance, Human Resources and Property Divisions.

Does the proposal have implications for the following issues? If "Yes" - give details. <i>delete as appropriate</i>		Name of Responsible officer
Legal	Yes. - The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires former structure plan authorities to have an input into emerging RSS	Janine Bond
Financial – Revenue	No	Janet Wheeler
Financial – Capital Plan	No	Janet Wheeler
Human resources	No	Geoff Williams
Property	Yes. - The RSS will set a spatial planning framework that affects Torbay's land holdings.	Sam Partridge
Procurement and Efficiency	No	Steve Parrock

### Part 2

The author of the report must complete these sections.

Could this proposal realistically be achieved in a manner that would more effectively: <i>Delete as appropriate</i>		
(i)	Promote environmental sustainability?	No
(ii)	Reduce crime and disorder?	No
(iii)	Promote good community relations?	No
(iv)	Promote equality of opportunity on grounds of race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief?	No
(v)	Reduce (or eliminate) unlawful discrimination (including indirect discrimination)?	No

If the answer to any of the above questions is "Yes" the author must have addressed the relevant issue/s in the main report and have included a full justification and, where appropriate, an impact assessment.

### Part 3

The author of the report must complete this section.

<i>Delete as appropriate</i>		If "Yes", give details Sustainable communities
Does the proposal have implications for any other Directorates?	Yes	There should be a close link between the development plan and the community plan. The local development framework is intended to be the "spatial expression" of the community plan.

#### Part 4

Is this proposal in accordance with (i.e. not contrary to) the Council's budget or its Policy Framework?		<i>Delete as appropriate</i>
		Yes
1.	If "No" - give details of the nature and extent of consultation with stakeholders and the relevant overview and scrutiny body.	
2.	If "Yes" - details and outcome of consultation, if appropriate.	

#### Part 5

Is the proposal a Key Decision in relation to an Executive function?	<i>delete as appropriate</i>	If "Yes" - give Reference Number
	No	

#### Part 6

##### **Wards**

All Wards

##### **Appendices**

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|------------|---|
| Appendix 1 | South West Regional Spatial Strategy: Torbay Council Draft First Detailed Proposals.  |
| Appendix 2 | First Detailed Proposal: Outline of technical appendices on housing, economic and related indicators. (full appendices in Members' Room). |

##### **Documents available in Members' Room**

None

##### **Background Papers:**

The following documents/files were used to compile this report:

Torbay and South Devon Sub Regional Study (May 2005).  
 Adopted Torbay Local Plan 1995-2011.  
 Guidance notes from South West Regional Assembly on 4 (4) on Authorities' first detailed proposals.  
 Torbay Urban Capacity Study 2005.