Friday, 10 July 2026

Torquay Place Leadership Board
Meeting Agenda

Monday, 20 July 2026 at 10.45 am
to be held in Banking Hall, Castle Circus entrance on the left corner of the Town Hall, Castle Circus, Torquay, TQ1 3DR

Membership

Jim Parker	Peter Knight
Chris Balch	Councillor Cordelia Law
Anne-Marie Bond	Richard Marsh
Tracey Cabache	Rose Millard
Steve Darling	Steve Reynolds
Callum Elliott	Lynne Roberts
Emma Ellis	Councillor David Thomas
Vince Flower	Alan Tilley
Laurence Frewin	Lee Tozer
Peter Friend	Mike Westcott
Jess Gane	Alan Denby
Alison Hernandez	Caroline Cozens

6. Submitted projects (Pages 3 - 32)

to discuss the funding applications for the following projects:
1. Business-Led Town Centre Improvements
2. Children's Society Wellbeing Hub
3. South Devon Creative and Cultural Incubation Space (formerly Hidden High Street Creative Space)
4. Torbay Creative Exchange
5. Transforming play spaces

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Simon Bellamy, Town Hall, Castle Circus, Torquay, TQ1 3DR

Email: governance.support@torbay.gov.uk - www.torbay.gov.uk

Report to the Torquay Place Leadership Board on Pride in Place activities July 2026

1. Introduction

The Torquay Place Leadership Board is reconvening at an addition meeting in July to review 5 pending applications. This report provides a general update, an update on the funds allocated to date and additional information provided by the applicants of the following projects:

- 4. Business-Led Town Centre Improvements
- 29. Children's Society Wellbeing Hub
- 36. South Devon Creative and Cultural Incubation Space (formerly Hidden High Street Creative Space)
- 49. Torbay Creative Exchange
- 57. Transforming play spaces

2. Current funding situation

Seven projects have now been funded and the balance of 2026-27 funds are:

2026-27	**Capital**	**Revenue**	**Total**
Allocated	£265,927	£123,500	£389,427
Balance	**£94,073**	**£108,500**	**£202,573**

All of the projects funded meet the Pride in Place aims of **Thriving places, Stronger communities, Taking back control.** Many of the projects contribute to more than one local Pride in Place priority. The following table illustrates the break down by priority of the allocation of funding agreed to date:

Priority	**Funds allocated**	**% of funds allocated to date**	**% of overall 26/27 funds**
Improving the Town Centre	£85,055	22%	14%
Crime and Safety	£110,000	28%	18%
Improving our neighbourhoods	£137,800	35%	23%
Work and Skills	£56,617	15%	10%

Looking in more detail at the **Improving the Town Centre including crime and safety**
priority, which was the highest priority for the public, we identified at the workshops earlier this year that we needed in investment in 4 areas:

1. Long term regeneration
2. Improving the current appearance of the Town Centre
3. Providing alternatives for the street-attached community
4. Re-utilising spaces in the Town Centre for non-retail use asap to increase the footfall.

The Town Centre funding allocated to date broadly fall into these areas:

Investment areas	Funds allocated	% of 26/27 funds
Long term regeneration	0	0%
Improving the current appearance of the Town Centre	£19,240	4%
Providing alternatives for the street-attached community	£179,187	30%
Re-utilising spaces in the Town Centre for non-retail use asap to increase the footfall	0	0%

When considering the allocation of the remaining funds it is important to take into account:

- 2026/27 will be an important year to re-engage the community on the Pride in Place initiative and being able to demonstrate that funds have been invested in the areas they identified as priorities 10 months ago is crucial to this engagement.
- We need to show progress on the ground so what can effectively and visibly be delivered in the short to medium term with the remaining 2026-27 funds.

3.0 Updates on the Business Cases being considered at the July Board Meeting

Board members are encouraged to re-read the Business Case Templates submitted previously. These can be accessed via the link provided by Simon Bellamy of Torbay Council. We have asked these 5 applicants to provide an update on the planning for their projects and their responses follow. We have also provided below the scoring and comments for each project as presented at the June Board meeting for your convenience.

4. Business-Led Town Centre Improvements

The partners involved in this bid have reconfirmed their commitment to it and to working collectively together to reactivate the Town Centre, create a cleaner greener welcoming space for residents and tourists, create activities to bring people into the town centre and ultimately increase footfall. The Business Case was based on their 3 wish lists, but further prioritisation has taken place since June. The Torbay Independent Business Owners from around the Harbour, the Torquay Town Centre Partnership made up of businesses on Union Street, and the wider Torquay Town Centre Community Partnership made up mainly of residents will also explore the possibility of becoming a more combined group moving forward.

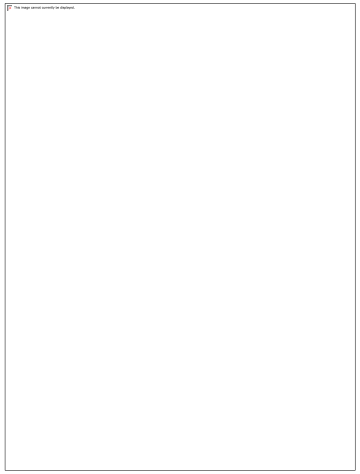
The strategic aim of this proposal is to keep the town alive while the longer term regeneration takes place, so in 5-6 years time there are still some vibrant businesses in place and an established footfall. We understand this was the number one priority from the community when they were consulted on their Pride in Place priorities last year. We know the retail offer is the weakest part of our tourism offer, and as the ‘shop front’ of the town it is the Town Centre undermines Torquay’s residents’ sense of pride.
As local businesses we are the eyes and ears of our Town Centre, we get daily feedback and know exactly what needs to be done to save the Town Centre, but we lack the capacity to implement this – whether it is lobbying SWISCo for payment cleaning, requesting event permissions from the Council, finding new uses for the empty shops, etc. This bid is for a facilitator to action these ideas with some funding to deliver an initial prioritised list of improvements and build a volunteer base. Where possible businesses will provide sponsorship and additional funding will be sought to grow a Town Centre reactivation fund.

The priority focus will be:

- Activating Empty Shop Fronts
- Greening and helping to maintain a cleaner environment
- Activities and events
- Recruiting and coordinating a team of volunteers

Activating Empty Shop Fronts

There are currently 40 empty shops on Union Street, 8 in Union Square and 8 on the top level of Fleet Walk, making 56 empty units in total.
Union street shops follow:




Allied
Surveyors & Valuers
Irvine Nott
RICS


Brody's
Connells


TO LET


GAMES
MOVIES
ENTERTAINMENT
RETROGRADE Video

Page 6


MEXICAN CHIPOTLE CHICKEN


HOUSE


TO LET


VIRTUAL REALITY


TO LET
Bettesworths
DISABLED
TO LET
Bettesworths
Clarks
ENVY
COUTURE
TO LET
Second Hand
Heaven
Genie
The Corner Cafe
SAHRI CUTZ
BARBER
BARBER SHOP
HAIRCUT & SHAVE



Mare
and Foal
Sanctuary



POST OFFICE

WATCHES
STRAPS
BATTERIES
REPAIRS
Seconds Out

Santander
FISH &
CHIPS

TO LET



WE'VE
MOVED
WE'VE
MOVED



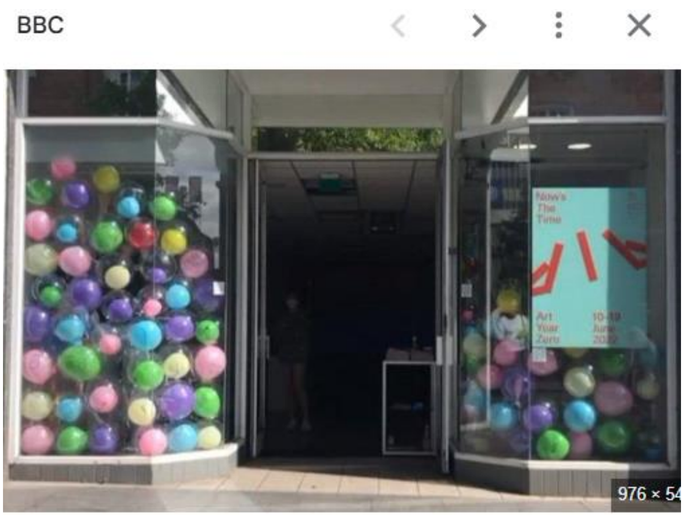

HOT
COFFEE
CREAM
TEAS

Three possibilities will be explored for each in conjunction with the owners and estate agents:

- Activating empty shops where possible by enabling CIC's and community groups to use them for service delivery, workshops and events.

  This has successfully been achieved previously both for short term periods and long term periods

- Where this cannot be achieved we will explore utilising these spaces as art installations that can form part of a trail – providing another attraction in the Town Centre. The art can move as the units are let.



- Where this cannot be achieved we will tidy up the shop front and vinyl wrap it with a good news story about Torquay.




Greening and helping to maintain a cleaner environment
To spend some funds greening the top part of the town which has been left behind visually.

GPO round about to bottom of town:


Top of town:

Activities and events
- To further develop the Lower Union Street Market – to extend the number of stalls and increase the quality of the offer.
- To run small scale events to attract the public to the town centre to see the transformation

Volunteers
To develop a team of volunteers who want to take care of the Town Centre similar to the Babbacombe Bay Bloomers and Pride in Brixham (we had one volunteer at the last Community Partnership meeting already.)

Role of the facilitator
At the June Board meeting it was suggested this role was not needed as the Council were recruiting a Town Centre Lead for across the 3 towns. At the Town Centre Pride in Place Workshop in February this was discussed, and it was unanimous amongst the community representatives and businesses present that this role alone could not bring about the required change in Torquay Town Centre at the pace that is needed. This role is also a more strategic one and across 3 town centres. We have compared the job roles of each:

Role of the Torquay Town Centre Facilitator (Full- time one year contract)
Act the key link between the businesses, community, SWISCo and Torbay Council to improve public spaces to boost footfall and make the high street a more attractive, safe, and prosperous place to visit. Tasked by a partnership of the Torquay

Independent Business Owners (TIBO), Torquay Town Centre Partnership and Torquay Town Centre Community Partnership.
Their core responsibilities include:

- **Coordination:** Bringing the above organisations together and delivering on their suggested small scale improvements to the Town Centre.
- **Cleaner, Greener:** Implement initiatives to 'clean up' the Town Centre so that it is a physically more welcoming location, working with property owners, businesses, SWISCo and the Council
- **Optimise the usage of the current empty shops in the Town Centre:** Building relationships with the relevant property owners and identifying resources to improve their frontages, including the Retail Unit Improvement grant if this reopens, working with groups to identify alternative uses.
- **Events and Marketing:** Organising or supporting small events in the Town Centre to increase footfall and increase consumer spend.
- **Place Management:** Being the eyes and the ears on the ground so that damage is reported, the relevant responsible body is notified and the information is acted on. To coordinate a team of volunteers working to make the town physically appealing.

The Torbay Council Town Centre Lead (permanent post 0.33 full time equivalent in Torquay) is being employed across the 3 Towns to[1]:

- Provide strategic leadership and support to the Divisional Director of Economy, Environment, and Infrastructure, elected members, and senior stakeholders on the curation and rejuvenation of our Town Centres.
- Manage the delivery of complex, transformative projects that bring significant benefits to Torbay's town centres raising additional investment through grants or commercial income and sponsorship in support of the outcomes the job will deliver.
- Scope and design the annual town centre work programme, and coordinate monitoring and reporting of performance against work programmes and Council priorities.
- Work with key partners, community groups, businesses, and volunteers to develop the Town Centres work programme and coordinate the delivery of activities and events which will rejuvenate the town centres across Torbay.

The facilitator role will be able to assist with the latter bullet point as they will bring the current groups and interested residents in Torquay together. The facilitator will be based in a Pride in Place shop at 75 Union Street (already leased by Torbay Communities to promote Pride in Place.)
In our previous application we had included some resources to work with a national partner with town centre experience. This will now be provided by Willmot Dixon and Milligans so the funding request is less.

[1] Job Description circulated in Sept 2025

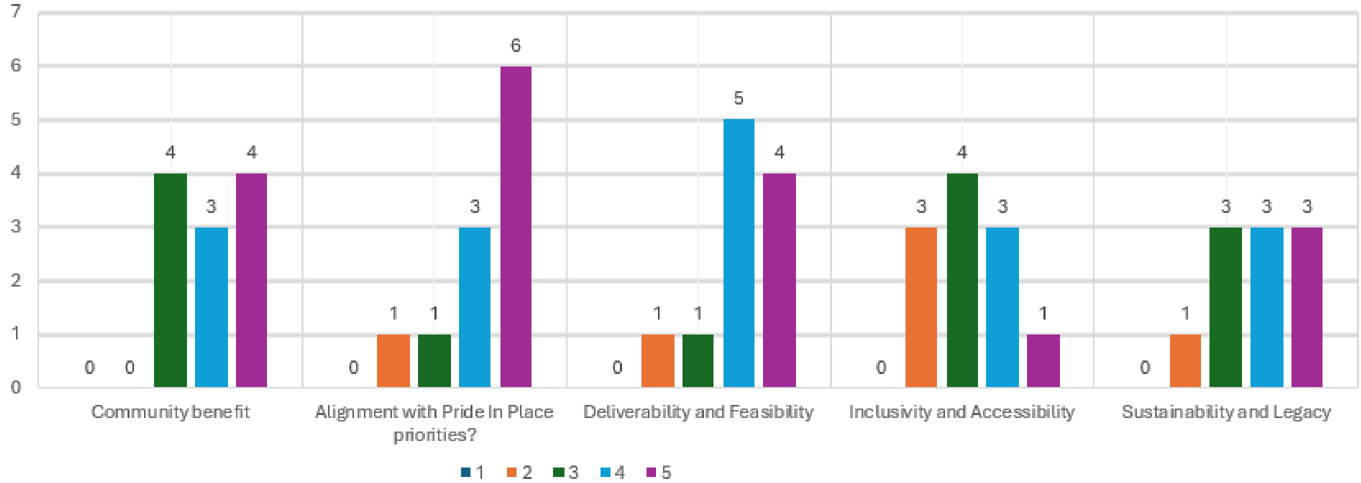
Revised funding ask:

Capital	
Empty Shop reactivation	70,000
Cleaner Greener capital costs	15,000
Contingency	8,500
	£93,500
Revenue	
Facilitator costs (salary of £33,312)	38,611
Cleaner Greener maintenance costs	10,000
Events	30,000
Admin	5,000
	£83,611
Total	**£177,111**

4. Business-Led Town Centre Improvements Ask: £201,211 (C:£90,000, R:£111,211)

ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK SCORES:
Project Delivery – 4
Finance – 3
Construction Project Management – N/A
Sustainability – 4
Health & Safety – 3
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion – 2

78.4/100
Weighted score



Average	4.00	4.27	4.09	3.18	3.80

Will the success of this be dependant on bigger projects within the Town Centre actually happening (union square, Debenhams, Pavillion) If so it could be seen as wasted money and just scratching the surface of what is actually needed to improve the Town Centre.

This proposal was not worked up with input from Torquay Town Centre Community Partnership and the chair only heard about it through my enquiries whether I had missed the meeting where it was brought to the board.

A good project with scope to catalyse other submissions looking to improve the town centre, acting as broker between vacant spaces and other projects submitted.

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29. Children's Society Wellbeing Hub

Please see below some additional information from The Children's Society (TCS) and Sound Communities in support of our bid.

Building:
Having ruled out the old Post Office as a possible option we have identified two further buildings that would be more suitable for our proposal:

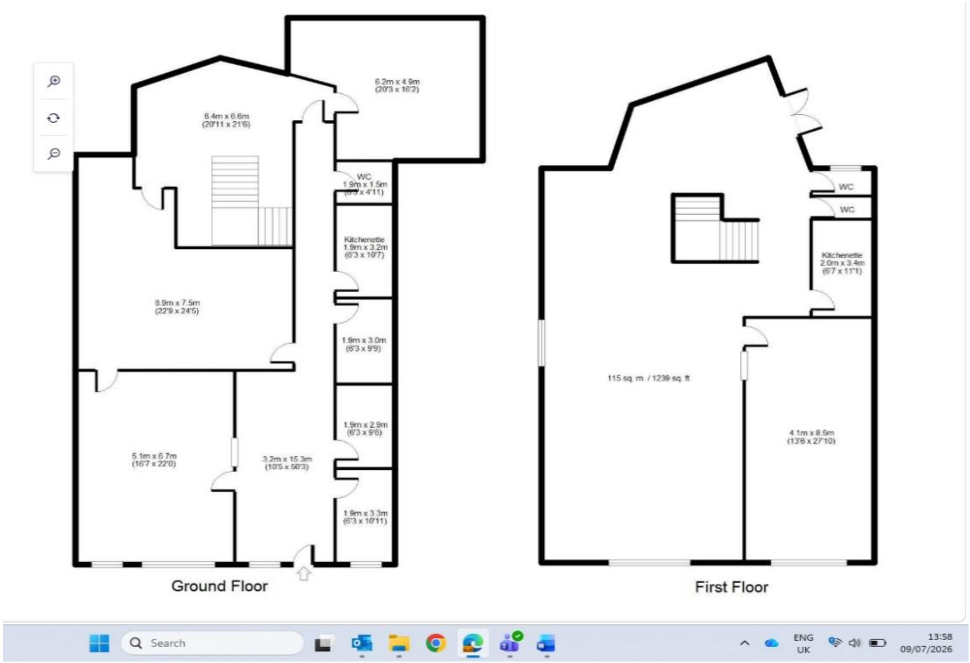
1. 38-40 Union Street

2. St. Georges Hall, Lower Union Lane (lane opposite Primark behind Lyceum Theatre) Mock Up

Mock Up

Mock Up

The second one is our preferred option, it is cheaper and needs less work than the first. It includes a mix of both large and small spaces that would be ideal for our proposal. Both properties are in high footfall areas and there is a lack of premises on the market that have the size required to offer the whole range of services, these 2 premises meet that brief and we will need to move quickly to secure one of them as there are other interested parties. We have included a mock image of how the spaces could look (above) and a floor plan below.



Sustainability and matched funding opportunities:
We were asked to provide additional information re possible sources for our revenue funding.
Sound Communities (SC) have recently secured 5 year's funding from the National Lottery to support their production arms to become sustainable. These arms are strengths-based communities of interest and places where YP can develop both transferable skills and work within the community.
SC are also applying for 5 year Arts Council National Portfolio core funding which will give us more stability and resource from April 2028. We believe that by joining forces with The Children's Society that we will be able to develop more projects and funding that support the Young People of Torquay to thrive. SC are also becoming a charity soon and developing their philanthropic income steadily and expect this shift to support their sustainability.

TCS invest 180k unrestricted income into Torbay every financial year to support the infrastructure of our service provision. Our current base is owned by The Children's Society, if we are successful with our Pride of Place application, we would look to move some of our services across to the new premises, meaning we would be able to sublet our current property to bring in additional income, this would reduce our ask of the Pride in Place to cover some of the core revenue costs. We already

sublet rooms to the Youth Justice Service which has brought in additional income that goes towards the delivery of the Phoenix group and we can explore further opportunities using this model.
We have had an established presence in South West England for 140 years and are committed to continuing in both investing in the area and being commissioned to deliver core services.
Our current delivery consists of the following services commissioned by Torbay Council and Police & Crime Commissioner.
Education other than at School (EOTAS) contract value £462,000 until August 2027 (with a possible extension 1+1+1)
Advocacy and IV: £256,782 until April 2028 (possible +1 extension)
CSA Therapy for Torbay £104,059 until March 2031
Phoenix Group – group for disabled children & young people – we sublet to the Youth Justice system, space within our centre which offset the cost of the group
Time for Young People funded through national government for past 2 financial years (Torbay was our chosen site for this funding) and there is commitment from the organisation that Torbay remains a priority for funding through both external routes and through our major appeal.
Space to Grow -funded through TCS and Children in Need.
In addition we have a strong track record of successfully recruiting volunteers from our local community across a range of services. Currently, we have 15 active volunteers supporting our work. The Hub Service Manager will continue this effort by recruiting and training additional volunteers to support the drop-in provision.
Many of our past volunteers have gone on to secure employment or attend university, having gained valuable practical experience during their time with us. We have also welcomed former service users who are keen to give back to their community, further strengthening our volunteer network and increasing our social value.
Work Placements - TCS have supported a wide range of work placements for individuals seeking experience working with children and young people. This has included trainee police officers, who reported that the experience enhanced their understanding of the wider challenges young people may face and improved their ability to refer individuals to appropriate services.
This is an area we would be keen to develop further, particularly if open access provision is introduced. We have also hosted social work and youth and community work students, some of whom have since progressed into roles within the local authority and continue to work alongside our services.
Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) Students -Each year, The Children's Society in Torbay works in partnership with the University of Exeter to recruit and train students through the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) programme. This is a National Health Service initiative in England designed to increase access to evidence based psychological therapies for individuals experiencing anxiety and depression, including children and young people. Every student is fully funded and the student are paid to train.

Through this programme, students are trained to deliver a range of evidence based interventions. These include Children's Wellbeing Practitioners (CWPs), therapists providing cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), and practitioners with specialisms in supporting children with autism or learning difficulties.
Annually, we recruit between five and ten students who undertake their training at the University of Exeter while working directly within our services. Referrals can be made directly into this provision, and students are able to work with children and young people across a range of settings, including within the proposed Hub.
This scheme significantly enhances our capacity to reach more children and young people, while also supporting trainees to gain professional qualifications. Many graduates of the programme continue their careers within our team or progress into roles within CAMHS or local authority services.
Whilst we have only detailed costs over 5 years, our commitment would be for this to be a sustainable and embedded provision within Torbay with funding being secured through a range of funders over the lifetime of the work.
From Years 2–4, ongoing core revenue costs from Pride in Place would be required to support core delivery. Committed funding is a major driver for our organisation being able to secure additional income, enabling us to show the added value that investing in us can bring.
For example, our ongoing commitment to Torbay already generates significant income from commissioned provision (600k per annum), our own unrestricted income (187k per annum) and our ability to attract added value through grants, the IAPT students, major donors and The Children's Society's forthcoming Major Appeal, means we are confident that we will be able to offset income generated via these partnerships and additionally through sub-letting both our existing premises as well as potentially renting space within the new hub to ensure greater sustainability and reduce our overall revenue ask.
We also have strong relationships with key funders such as the Lottery, national government, Children in Need etc, we will continue to work in partnership with these funders to enhance provision.
Our Major Appeal is focused on raising income to open more early help hubs across the Country, Torbay is one of our priority areas, ensuring any income generated would be reinvested back into Torbay.

Other provision:
We would complement the offer from other provisions such as Eat That Frog that works with over 16 year olds who are on Universal Credit. With support for young people often age-restricted and time-bound, this proposal aims to provide a pathway from early-intervention to adulthood, where young people as young as 12 can access services all the way through to 24 years old. Over the 10 year course of the Pride in Place funding, a young person's journey could go from age 12 and struggling, to 22 and thriving as a result of sustainable and consistent wellbeing & employability support. This is complementary to and re-enforces existing employability & wellbeing provision for young people in Torquay which cannot meet the level of need due to the high rates of NEET classification (the number of NEET

young people aged 18-24 in Torquay sits at around 18%, data from Lee Tozer, DWP), whilst providing support earlier in the trajectory from EET to NEET by opening support to young people under the age of 16 in Torquay.
Addressing young people's wellbeing and mental health early can support them to stay in education and therefore the reduction in them becoming NEET.
Additional aims:
Aligning with public health strategy to support young people aged 12 and up to improve mental health outcomes as a pre-requisite to sustainable education or employment.
Reducing outward migration for young people as Torbay is viewed as a safer place with viable opportunities to lead healthy lives.

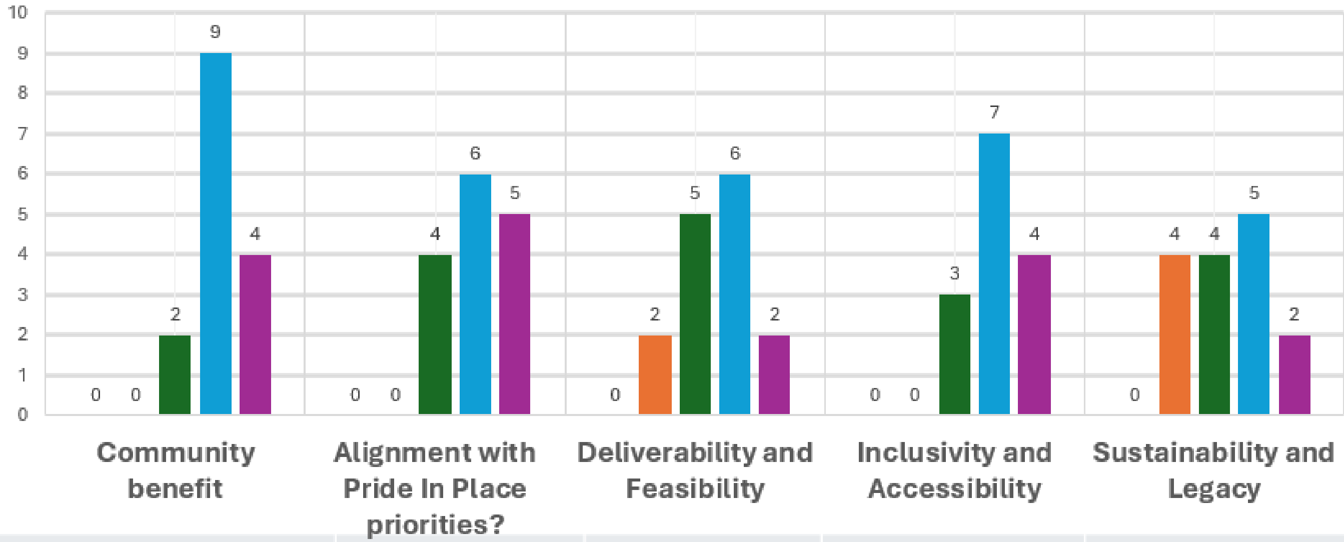
Safe spaces:
We understand the importance of trusted adults and safe spaces for child and young people to feel safe enough to engage, we feel strongly that this proposal meets both these requirements and that we both have an excellent track record in engagement.
Phase 1
We can reduce phase 1 timescales and costs if we take on our preferred property due to the condition of the building. This works well with the award now being further into the first financial year.
Partnership
SC & TCS have a proven track record of partnership work, having delivered the National Citizenship Service offer together in Torbay in 2023.
Both organisations have strong relationship with many agencies across Torbay.

Revised funding ask:
Update to be provided verbally at the Board Meeting.

29. Children's Society Wellbeing Hub Yr 1 Ask: £139,234 (C:£45,833, R:£93,401)

ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK SCORES:

Project Delivery – 4
Finance – 2
Construction Project Management – 4
Sustainability – 4
Health & Safety – 5
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion – 4



77.4/100
Weighted score

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Average	4.13	4.07	3.53	4.07	3.33

This is a good project for many with unmet need. However, it is high cost and requires high levels of revenue funding.

A safe space for children and YP is a much needed resource. We already have a Care Experienced YP's hub in Paignton and a DWP funded Youth Hub across Torbay. I am unable to see the projections for outcomes and how VFM can be shown

This is a very revenue high project which will always require high levels of revenue funding (staff costs). It is undoubtedly an essential service for young people but is there a more suitable funding stream for this project, given that PiP is capital funding driven. Could this be delivered collaboratively from Royal Lyceum building which is in very close proximity to their preferred venue of the old post office.

There is a lack of ambition amongst certain members of our under-25 community. This scheme would help drive a positive future for these young people. Under-25s are four times more likely to be unemployed than older people.

The proposal as it stands is a statement of intent, without firm commitments to specific building and an intention to establish a feasible space in which to continue to deliver much needed intervention for young people and families. Revenue delivery is likely to be sourced elsewhere by both Sound Communities & The Children's Society, making this bid more of a capital ask than revenue.

36. South Devon Creative and Cultural Incubation Space (formerly Hidden High Street Creative Space)

Critical information

The Health and Safety score (currently a 1) could be mitigated once a Fire Safety Consultant confirms the best approach to the fire safety and access arrangements. Initial engineering advice, as included within the supporting documentation, indicates that there is likely to be a compliant and practical route forward; however, this requires validation by a fire specialist. This assessment would form the first stage of the project and would be completed before any further expenditure is incurred.

Torbay Council has confirmed if approved we could be contracted on a stepped basis where we draw down required funds only to confirm the viability of the project. For example, the board could approve a maximum of £50k. We might then draw down £3k to appoint a Fire Engineering Consultant (contract fee + project management overhead). If the outcome of that was successful, the council technical team would then approve drawdown for the next step. This would continue until we hit a negative outcome or the project had completed phase 1 viability ready for our full capital application.

FAQs:

Speaking to board members and various council officers who have read our application, these have been some of the frequently ask questions, most of which are already answered in our Business Case Template (BCT) but we're happy to offer clarity on:

- *Will the space be accessible?* Yes the space will be fully accessible. Access will be from Fleet Walk shopping centre utilising the newly replaced lifts. A DDA compliant entrance (previously approved by planning) will then welcome people to the space.
- *Do fire risk requirements limit the audience capacity to 60 people?* No. At this stage we've confirmed multiple options which would allow for a secondary point of egress and safe refuge points, mitigating the risk of this limitation undermining the project's viability.
- *Have the Council's redevelopment partner (Milligans) been engaged on the project?* Yes. Milligans have endorsed the proposal and believe it strongly contributes to Fleet Walk's future viability and town centre regeneration as a whole.
- *Have Fleet Walk Management been engaged on the project?* Yes. Fleet Walk Management is positive about the project's opportunity and have been constructively providing information to support understanding around the space's impact on the wider centre.
- *Is the space hidden?* No. Our early stage project narrative used this language to capture the idea that this space has been invisible and simultaneously right in front of us for nearly two decades. However, the space will have a public-facing front door

within the main Fleet Walk shopping centre, providing a prominent, central face for creative opportunities in Torbay.
- *Are we collaborating with the Creative Industries group?* We have approached this group at several stages as have others involved with Pride in Place on our behalf. At this point they have declined the opportunity to collaborate but we remain open to the option. Our project delivers many of the shared priorities across the two applications.

In addition the below project changes have occurred since we submitted our BCT:
- SDC have endorsed the project and we're about to start working with their creative departments to confirm integration with their courses.
- We've begun engagement with other core stakeholders who we anticipate will be end users/critical friends. We expect to have a number of endorsements/commitments from these partners by the July meeting.

Revised funding ask:
Regarding our actual current funding ask is, the board could consider that Option 1 Phase 1 on our BCT (£22k) would achieve all the Phase 1 technical requirements for the project. This won't allow for any engagement at this stage but that doesn't mean it would be scrapped, it just means it would be deferred to a future phase when we have full confidence in project viability. If a middle ground was achieved (£40-50k), we'd be able to progress further with architectural designs and start community engagement, increasing the delivery pace. The Option 3 Phase 1 ask would increase the immediate visibility of our project but is not essential for confirming the next phases of viability.

36. South Devon Creative & Cultural Incubation Space Ask: Up to £337,288 C, £68,420 R

ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK SCORES:

Project Delivery – 3

Finance – 3

Construction Project Management – 4

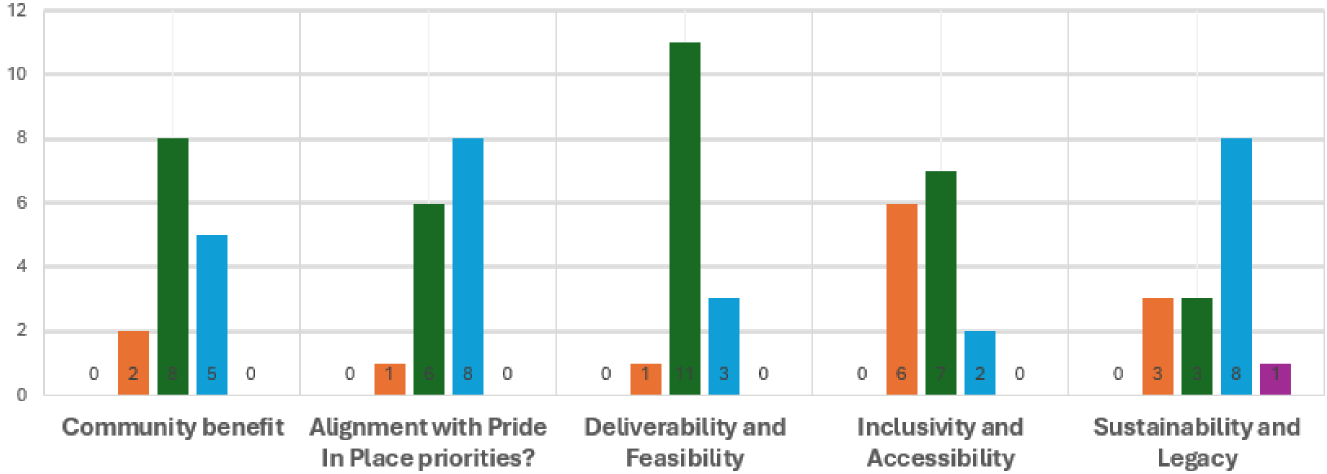
Sustainability – 5

Health & Safety – 1

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion – 2

64.2/100

Weighted score



Average	3.20	3.47	3.13	2.73	3.47

Good alternative use for vacant property. Future funding uncertain but a worthwhile effort to explore an option for use.

There are concerns over the suitability of the space proposed for this project, which would need to be resolved, but I am broadly supportive of this project and what it aims to deliver.

could this be considered for funding in future phases, it seems like a lot of money for year 1

This project, in my mind, whilst exciting in concept has some serious deliverability challenges around the space they are planning to use.

I love the idea, and it is an ambitious project. Its reassuring to see that Atrizan are actively looking for additional funding, and are seeking to not be reliant on the Pride in Place funding. I am concerned that the 'hidden' aspect of this will ultimately continue to gatekeep access to creative careers, so this will need to be directly addressed.

49. Torbay Creative Exchange

Summary
The Torbay Creative Industries Steering Group welcomes the opportunity to provide additional information in support of the Torbay Creative Exchange Feasibility Study. The feedback received from the Assurance Panel and the Torquay Place Leadership Board has reinforced the importance of ensuring that any future investment in creative infrastructure is supported by robust evidence, commercial viability and a clear understanding of market demand. This application is not seeking approval to develop a Creative Exchange. It is seeking approval to undertake the work necessary to determine whether a Creative Exchange is commercially viable, where it should be located, how it should operate, and how it can deliver the greatest economic, social and regeneration benefits for Torbay. A feasibility study represents a proportionate investment that reduces uncertainty before any future capital investment is considered. It provides an evidence based foundation for future decision making and ensures that any subsequent investment is directed towards a model that is financially sustainable, strategically located and capable of delivering long term value.

Why a Feasibility Study is Required
Torbay is home to more than 1,000 creative businesses, representing approximately 20% of all businesses in the Bay. The sector has been identified within both national and local economic strategies as a significant opportunity for growth, innovation and employment. Despite this, Torbay currently lacks a comprehensive understanding of what type of creative workspace is required, where it should be located, what operating model would be commercially sustainable and how existing organisations could work together as part of a wider creative ecosystem. These are significant investment decisions that should not be based on assumptions. The purpose of the feasibility study is to establish the evidence required before any future capital investment is considered. The study will determine:

- the level of demand across Torbay’s creative sector
- the types of workspace and facilities most needed by creative businesses
- the locations capable of delivering the greatest regeneration impact
- whether a single hub or a network of complementary locations offers the strongest solution
- the commercial operating model most likely to achieve long term financial sustainability
- the governance and partnership arrangements required to support long term delivery
- the scale and nature of any future capital investment.

This work will enable future decisions to be based upon evidence, consultation and commercial analysis rather than aspiration alone.

Delivering Value for Money
The proposed £30,000 investment will deliver significantly more than a traditional feasibility report. It will produce an investment ready evidence base capable of

supporting future funding applications, investment decisions and delivery planning. The principal outputs will include:

- Creative Economy Demand Assessment
- Creative Workspace Needs Assessment
- Sector Consultation Report
- Options Appraisal of Potential Sites
- Commercial Operating Model
- Five Year Financial Forecast
- Governance and Partnership Framework
- Skills and Employment Strategy
- Heritage and Regeneration Assessment
- Funding and Investment Strategy
- Phased Delivery Roadmap

Comparable feasibility studies involving market research, stakeholder engagement, commercial modelling and options appraisal typically require multidisciplinary expertise across regeneration, finance and property. The proposed budget represents a proportionate investment to reduce the risks associated with significantly larger future capital decisions.

<u>Commercial Sustainability</u>

Commercial sustainability has rightly been identified as a key consideration. The objective of the feasibility study is not simply to identify a suitable building, but to determine whether a Creative Exchange can operate successfully without long term reliance on public subsidy. The study will evaluate a range of potential operating models, revenue streams and partnership structures before recommending the option that provides the strongest balance between affordability for creative businesses and long term financial resilience. This includes consideration of managed workspace, flexible studios, co-working, digital production facilities, training provision, event space, commercial partnerships and other sustainable income opportunities. The outcome will be a commercially informed business model that supports economic growth while reducing future financial risk.

<u>Partnership and the Wider Creative Economy</u>

The Creative Exchange has been conceived as strategic infrastructure for Torbay's creative economy rather than a project centred around a single building or organisation. Its purpose is to strengthen collaboration across the sector by connecting creative businesses, cultural organisations, education providers, employers and community partners through a shared vision for future growth. The feasibility study will therefore consider a range of partnership opportunities and delivery models to ensure that future investment complements and strengthens existing initiatives while maximising benefit across the wider creative economy.

<u>Equality, Inclusion and Skills</u>

The feasibility study will examine the barriers currently limiting access to creative careers, business support and workspace across Torbay. Consultation will actively engage freelancers, creative start-ups, education providers, community organisations, disabled creatives, young people, under represented groups and established creative businesses to ensure recommendations reflect the needs of the sector as a whole. The study will identify practical measures that improve accessibility, strengthen participation and create clearer pathways into employment, enterprise and skills development, supporting the ambitions of the Pride in Place programme.

Environmental Sustainability

Environmental sustainability will continue to form an important component of the feasibility study. Alongside the commitments already outlined within the Business Case, the study will evaluate sustainable procurement, responsible supply chains, building reuse, retrofit opportunities and long term environmental performance as part of future site selection. The feasibility study will also assess how existing heritage assets may contribute to sustainable regeneration while supporting the revitalisation of Torquay town centre.

Reducing Future Investment Risk

One of the principal purposes of the feasibility study is to reduce the risks associated with future investment. Without this work there is a significant risk that future decisions relating to location, operating model, affordability, market demand and partnership arrangements are made without sufficient evidence. By establishing an independent and evidence based assessment at an early stage, the study will ensure that any future capital investment is directed towards the option most likely to deliver sustainable economic growth and long term value for Torbay.

Why Invest £30,000 in a Feasibility Study?

Reducing risk before committing future investment

The proposed feasibility study will provide the evidence required to determine whether a Torbay Creative Exchange is commercially viable, where it should be located, how it should operate, and how it can deliver long-term economic benefit. Rather than committing future capital investment based on assumptions, the study will provide an independent, evidence-based assessment that reduces financial risk and supports informed decision making. What will the study deliver?

Deliverable	**Strategic Benefit**
Creative sector consultation	Confirms demand across Torbay's creative industries
Workspace needs assessment	Identifies the types of space businesses actually require
Assessment of potential locations	Determines the locations capable of delivering the greatest economic and regeneration impact
Commercial operating model	Identifies a financially sustainable model with minimal reliance on ongoing public subsidy

Financial modelling	Tests affordability, income generation and long-term viability
Governance and partnership framework	Recommends the most effective delivery model and partnership structure
Heritage and regeneration assessment	Identifies opportunities to support town centre regeneration through the reuse of existing assets
Skills and employment strategy	Strengthens pathways into employment, training and enterprise
Funding and investment strategy	Creates an investment-ready foundation for future capital funding applications
Phased delivery roadmap	Provides a clear implementation plan with reduced delivery risk

Why this represents value for money

The proposed budget represents a relatively small investment when compared with the scale of any future capital project. The feasibility study will ensure that future decisions are based on evidence, commercial analysis and stakeholder consultation rather than assumption, reducing the risk of investing in the wrong location, an unsustainable operating model or facilities that do not meet the needs of Torbay's creative sector. The outputs will also provide a robust evidence base to support future grant applications, investment proposals and business planning. The outcome The study will produce an investment-ready blueprint that enables future decisions to be made with confidence.

Why has this project not been combined with the Artizan Collective CIC application for a South Devon Creative and Cultural Incubation Space?

At this stage, the Torbay Creative Cluster Steering Group is not in a position to commit to a combined approach. Members require sufficient time and robust evidence to make informed decisions regarding the commercial viability of a proposed Torbay Creative Exchange and to assess the potential for future collaboration between partners and stakeholders. A feasibility study is therefore required to evaluate the available options and reduce risk. The study will explore the most effective governance and management arrangements for a creative space, including its optimal size, location in Torquay, and operating model. It will also assess the potential economic benefits, such as increased footfall, business growth, job creation, business support, and wider economic impact.

In addition, the feasibility study will consider potential business models, including approaches similar to EPIC, alongside governance requirements and the level of commitment needed from partners to ensure the long-term sustainability and economic success of the project. The findings will provide the evidence base needed to determine whether a combined approach would be appropriate and viable in the future.

49. Torbay Creative Exchange Ask: £30,000 Feasibility

ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK SCORES:

Project Delivery – 3

Finance – 3

Construction Project Management – N/A

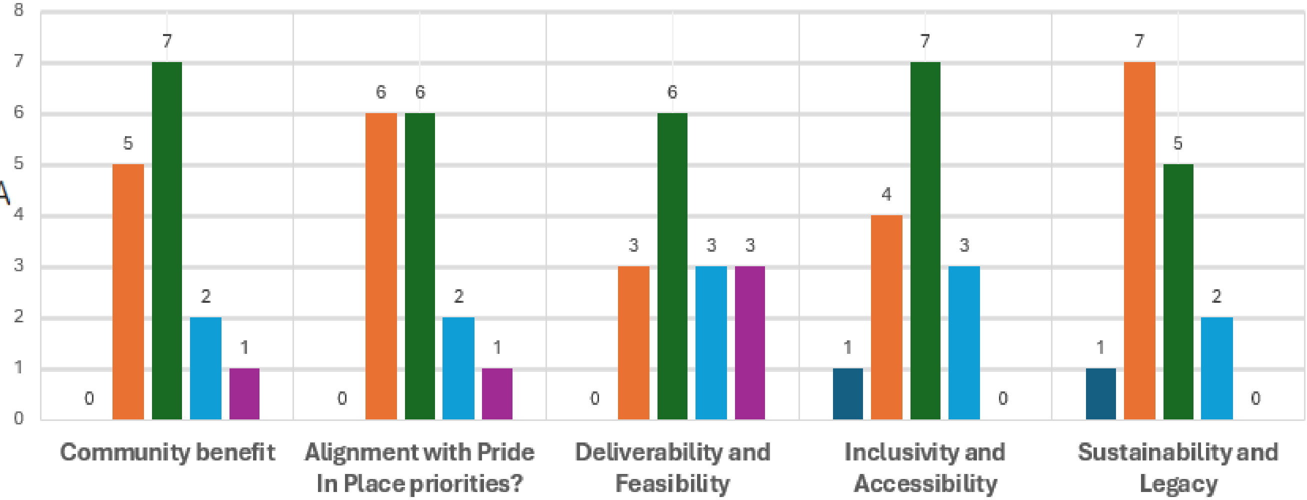
Sustainability – 4

Health & Safety – N/A

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion – 2

58.7/100

Weighted score



Average	2.93	2.87	3.40	2.80	2.53

I don't understand why this hasn't been linked in somehow with 036 South Devon Creative bid - surely there is significant overlap.

Happy to support this project as it is a relatively small sum of money that could open up significant opportunities.

It is difficult to score a feasibility project as the whole point is to understand what is achievable and how. I think of all the creative projects this is the most suitable for year 1 funding. Would this be classed as capacity funding and is there still a separate budget for this.

An easily deliverable and simple feasibility study. As a criticism, it may not amount to tangible benefit to torquay's residents. It promises to improve economic prospects for creative industries, which would be great, but to assume that this will 'trickle down' into the wider community should be scrutinised. The feasibility study would need to be attentive to how people can benefit from the project should it be successful. Whilst I see the benefit to creative and community sectors, I ask myself, is this a priority use of Pride in Place funding?

57. Transforming play spaces
Update to be provided verbally at the Board Meeting.

57. Transforming play spaces Ask: Capital £599,500

ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK SCORES:

Project Delivery – 4

Finance – 4

Construction Project Management – N/A

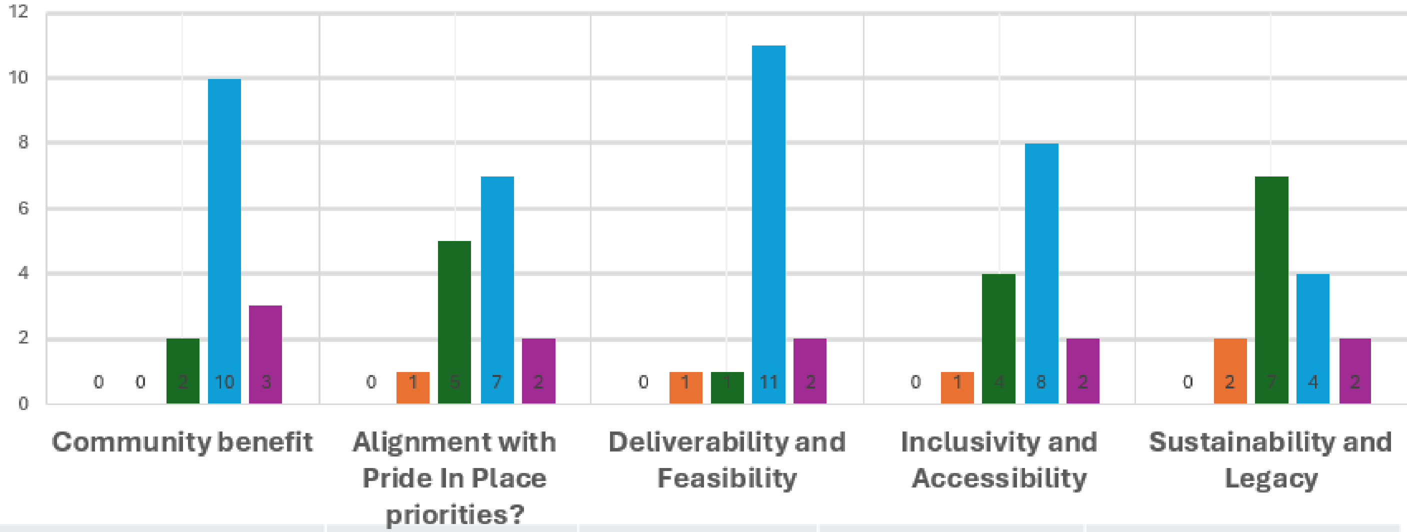
Sustainability – 3

Health & Safety – 5

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion – 3

76.2/100

Weighted score



Average	4.07	3.67	3.93	3.73	3.40

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It would gain greater scoring if they considered setting up Friends of Parks group run by residents to encourage greater local ownership, and/or connected with the local community partnership. But it is a quick delivery option. As the costs are high they could be phased over longer period of time.

I do not support the full funding for all parks, Broadpark Road is a long way from deprived areas, as is Kitson and Lindisfarne. I am surprised not to see anything for Brewery Park in Ellacombe, one of the highest areas of deprivation and the park is very dilapidated and in need of replacement safety matting as well as equipment. I would support an application for improvements at Brewery Park. In addition, I do not believe that £20,000 is sufficient for the repairs needed to the Skatebowl at Windmill Hill, as it requires remedial drainage works as well as complete resurfacing. However I would very much support funds being allocated to carry out these works.

I would ask the project organisers to reflect on whether these parks serve communities that face high levels of deprivation: Kitson Park & Lindisfarne & Shiphay Park & Broadpark. I am also confused as to why Haytor & Brewery Park are not included on the list and perhaps some swapping of parks could be considered.

4.0 Decisions for the July meeting

Board members are asked to:
- Further review the above Business Cases
- Consider if they want to fund any of these projects in their current form
- Consider whether there are projects that they would like to see revised business plans for in September

5.0 Update on actions from the June meeting

At the June Board meeting the Barton Recreation Ground funding was increased from £35,000 to £60,000 to reach Planning Consent Stage (please note in the meeting this was referred to as RIBA Stage 4, but it is RIBA Stage 3). There has been a thorough review of the costings and Torbay Council are confident this allocation will take the project to RIBA 3.
The Board asked for a report detailing the Quality Assurance process and lessons learned from variances be bought back to the Board in September. We have initiated this review and early outcomes indicate that more information is needed at the first stage of an application when a capital build is planned. There has also been a recommendation that for all capital build projects the Board initially fund to RIBA 1 which is the feasibility stage, before committing any additional funds. A full report and revision of the Quality Assurance process will come to the September Board as planned.