

Record of Decisions

Corporate Parenting Strategy

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 02 December 2025.

Decision

1. that the Director of Corporate Services be requested to update the Council's Equality Impact Assessment Templates to include care experience under the list of protected characteristics in line with the Inclusion Strategy for Torbay for 2025-2030; and
2. that the amendment to the Terms of Reference for the Corporate Parenting Board, to include the Leader of the Council and the Senior Corporate Parenting Lead (as a contributing attendee) to its membership, be approved. This change demonstrates the Council's strengthened commitment to delivering the objectives of the Corporate Parenting Strategy.

That Cabinet recommends to Council:

3. that the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2026-2028 set out at Appendix 1 to the submitted report be approved.

Reason for the Decision

The current Corporate Parenting Strategy expires on the 31 December 2025. In its revised form the Strategy will:

- place cared for and care experienced children and young people at the heart of everything the Council does;
- emphasise the need for Torbay to be an efficient and enabling Council;
- strengthen the working together and partnership arrangements of the Council to the benefit of the Council's cared for and care experienced children and young people.

Furthermore, adding care experience as a protected characteristic within the Council's Equality Impact Assessments would ensure that the Council considered how it could support care experience young people as part of its decision making processes in the same way the Council treats other people with protected characteristics.

Implementation

The decision in respect of 1. and 2. above will come into force and may be implemented on 11 December 2025 unless the call-in procedure is triggered (as set out in the Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny). The decision in respect of 3. above will be considered at the Council meeting on 11 December 2025.

Information

The Corporate Parenting Strategy was a statutory requirement to ensure that our cared for and care experienced children, and young people were central to the responsibilities of the whole Council and where applicable, the Council's partners. The proposed Strategy built on previous

versions and represented the Council's unrelenting intention to fulfil its role to the highest standard thereby ensuring that our children and young people receive the best possible support.

The 2026-2028 Strategy strengthens considerably;

- the contributions and participation of children and young people in the processes that affect them;
- the status of the Corporate Parenting Function and its Board by the active inclusion of the Leader of the Council and a membership that is acutely focused upon the achievement of its strategic objectives;
- the accountability of the Council and the Corporate Parenting Board through the post of Corporate Parenting Lead (Cared For and Care Experienced Children and Young People), who will sit on the Corporate Parenting Board as a contributing participant to primarily inject the views and experiences of children and young people and support, monitor and challenge the progress of the strategy; and
- the role and function of the six key work strands, each led by a Councillor supported by a nominated officer, that were designed to ensure that the Strategy translates into effective practices that positively help our children and young people.

At the meeting Councillor Bye proposed and Councillor Chris Lewis seconded a motion that was agreed unanimously by the Cabinet, as set out above.

Alternative Options considered and rejected at the time of the decision

The option to undertake a straightforward update was immediately rejected in favour of significantly strengthening and improving the current strategy by:

- placing children and young people firmly at the heart of all that the Council does as Corporate Parents;
- seeking ways to enable the most effective contribution and participation of children and young people into every aspect of the strategy;
- learning from the best. To this end, all local authority areas judged through inspection to have outstanding services in this area were either contacted directly or involved in a literature review of their Ofsted reports and other publicly available information. The findings of these exploratory exercises were used to inform the consultation and the direct communication with children and young people, and
- strengthening governance arrangements.

The preparatory consultation left no doubt that while the previous Strategy was an improvement upon what had preceded it, significant further improvement was required to set plans to achieve outcomes for children and young people that were directly relevant to and improved their lived experiences. For these plans to be successful, trusting relationships between children and young people, the Council and its partners were required which were firmly located on a shared understanding of the plan's solid foundations which made explicit how needs would be met.

Is this a Key Decision?

Yes

Does the call-in procedure apply?

Yes

Declarations of interest (including details of any relevant dispensations issued by the Standards Committee)

None

Published

3 December 2025

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Leader of Torbay Council on behalf of the Cabinet