

Record of Officer Decision

Disposal - Monastery Chapel, Berry Drive, Paignton, TQ3 3RD

Decision Taker and Date Decision Taken:

Director of Finance on 02 April 2026.

Summary of Matter or Issue Requiring Decision:

The Monastery Chapel in Paignton is a historic building located in a residential area. Built in 1872, it is not listed and has been deemed surplus to requirements as it has not been in use since 2017, being currently unoccupied.

The Monastery is in very poor condition and as a large historic building will require significant investment to reach the necessary standards to facilitate any future use and satisfy safety requirements. Estimates currently range c. £300,000. The site requires frequent periodic inspection to maintain and secure the building and to check for vandalism and anti-social behaviour.

The Cabinet gave a commitment to offer the opportunity to the community to purchase Paignton Monastery for £1. To this end, Paignton Monastery CIC has been formed and have submitted a bid of £1 for the freehold possession of the Property. This newly formed company are a community led initiative looking to reintegrate the Monastery into community use, principally as a community centre and hub, offering various uses to the public. A Community Use restriction will apply which will be documented in a restrictive covenant in the Title. Paignton Monastery CIC will raise funding in order to repair the property to allow the future use.

An overage provision will apply which will see any uplift in value from a future sale by Paignton Monastery CIC, or any subsequent owner, of over £1 being payable to Torbay Council, in perpetuity.

Decision Taken:

- 1) Torbay Council agrees to the sale of the Freehold of Monastery Chapel, Berry Drive, Paignton, TQ3 3RD to Paignton Monastery CIC for the sum of £1; and
- 2) This transfer will occur no later than 1st June 2026. Should the transfer not occur in this time, or the purchaser withdraw, Torbay Council will likely look to dispose of the property by auction.

Summary of Reason(s) for Decision Taken:

To secure long-term future use for this historic building which has stood vacant for many years. This sale provides a community led group the opportunity to provide various initiatives and support to the local community from a well-located site with excellent dimensions and potential uses.

The removal of the reliance on Torbay Council to maintain and monitor the property freeing up time and resources. This is a sensitive site and so this provides an excellent solution for both the public and Torbay Council, without a third party looking to implement unwelcome changes to the property.

Summary of Alternatives or Options considered and rejected and Background Papers:

Disposal by auction was considered but given the nature of the investment needed to repair and refurbish the building any income from sale would be low. The chance to offer the project to the community, for the good of the public, was deemed more favourable.

Repairing the Property and retaining as a Torbay Council asset was deemed unsuitable as the financial outlay would not see any significant return in the future.

Details of any conflict of interest and dispensation granted to the Officer taking the decision or by any Member of the Council in delegating responsibility for any specific express delegation:

None

Implementation:

This decision will be implemented immediately.

A copy of this decision and any supporting documentation considered by the Officer taking this decision may also be available for inspection by the public at the Council's offices or posted upon payment of any copying and postage charges. Any member of the public wishing to take up either of these options is asked to please ring (01803) 207087 or email governance.support@torbay.gov.uk

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Director of Finance)