

Minutes of the Cabinet

16 September 2025

-: Present :-

Councillor David Thomas (Chair)

Councillors Billings, Bye, Chris Lewis, Jacqueline Thomas, Tranter and Tyerman

(Also in attendance: Councillors Cowell, Johns (virtual), Law, Long and Spacagna (virtual))

30. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 19 August 2025 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

31. Disclosure of Interests

No interests were declared.

32. Matters for Consideration

The Cabinet considered the following matters, full details of which (including the Cabinet's decisions) are set out in the Record of Decisions appended to these Minutes.

33. Community Grant Fund 2025 - Funding Awards Tranche 1

34. Corporate Parenting Strategy

35. Youth Provision and Physical Activity - Report of the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board

36. Re-procurement of Mental Health Helpline

Chair

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Record of Decisions

Community Grant Fund 2025 – Funding Awards Tranche 1

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 16 September 2025.

Decision

1. that the Cabinet record their thanks to the many organisations and individuals who support the Communities of Torbay and also record their thanks for the significant response that has been received to the Community Grant Fund 2025; and
2. that the Community Grant Fund 2025 tranche 1 funding awards as set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report be approved and delegated authority be given to the Director of Finance, to enter into funding agreements with the relevant parties in accordance with the Community Grant Fund Policy 2025/26.

Reason for the Decision

To provide funding to the voluntary and community sector organisations in support of the Council's long-term objectives for the Bay.

Implementation

This decision will come into force and may be implemented on 29 September 2025 unless the call-in procedure is triggered (as set out in the Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny).

Information

Torbay Council introduced a Community Grant Fund for 2025 to further support the voluntary and community sector organisations. The Council received 69 applications for funding. All of the applications had been evaluated by the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance who made their recommendations for the first tranche of awards. There will follow a second tranche of awards, to be determined at the Cabinet meeting in November 2025, following clarification questions relating to a small number of applicants.

At the meeting Councillor Jackie Thomas proposed and Councillor Tyerman 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

This fund was considered in the approval of the budget for 25/26. The option to not spend this allocation has been discounted as it does not meet the aims and objectives of the Council.

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Does the call-in procedure apply?

Yes

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

None

Published

19 September 2025

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

Record of Decisions

Corporate Parenting Strategy

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 16 September 2025.

Decision

That authority be delegated to the Director of Children's Services to launch the 6 week public consultation when appropriate to inform the development of the new Corporate Parenting Strategy.

Reason for the Decision

Under the Children and Social Work Act 2017, the legislative responsibility for local authorities in respect of their corporate parenting duties was outlined. In February 2019, the Department for Education published Statutory Guidance for local authorities and outlined the key principles of Corporate Parenting. In addition, under the Children Act 2004, it was highlighted that local authorities have a duty to promote co-operation between their relevant partners and the Act also highlighted that corporate parenting was a task which should be shared Council-wide and across the partnership. To ensure that across the Council, including elected Members, senior officers and all staff, there was a shared vision, collective responsibility and commitment to our cared for children and care experienced young people, including the provision of quality services for them. The Corporate Parenting Strategy will be informed and updated following a consultation exercise.

Implementation

The decision will be implemented immediately.

Information

Torbay Council's existing 'Corporate Parenting Strategy 2022 – 2025' was due to expire this year and as such, a new strategy was being developed. The Corporate Parenting Strategy defines the Council's aspirations to become a supportive, responsive, considerate and sensitive corporate parent on behalf of Torbay Council. It sets out how the Council will work with cared for and care experienced children and young people and alongside its partners, including education, police and health services, and the community and voluntary sector, to achieve this ambition. To ensure the development of a comprehensive and inclusive Corporate Parenting Strategy, a thorough consultation process was required. The consultation must happen at the same time as the development of the Strategy itself, as the voice of cared for and care experienced children and young people must influence the creation of the draft Strategy. As such, the consultation needed to take place within the period of other planned activity to ensure that it informed and influenced the Strategy which would then be placed before Cabinet in November 2025 and subsequently Council in December 2025. Therefore, permission was sought from Cabinet to allow the Director of Children's Services delegated authority to initiate this consultation, in line with the strategy development.

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

Alternative options were not considered.

Is this a Key Decision?

Yes

Does the call-in procedure apply?

No

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

None

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Record of Decisions

Youth Provision and Physical Activity – Report of the Children and Young People’s Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 16 September 2025.

Decision

That the Cabinet’s response to the Youth Provision and Physical Activity - Report of the Children and Young People’s Overview and Scrutiny Sub Board be approved as published.

Reason for the Decision

The Cabinet was required to respond to the findings of the Children and Young People’s Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board.

Implementation

This decision will come into force and may be implemented on 29 September 2025 unless the call-in procedure is triggered (as set out in the Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny).

Information

The Cabinet received the report of the Children and Young People’s Overview and Scrutiny Board on youth provision and physical activity. In accordance with section D7 of Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny as set out in the Constitution, the Cabinet was required to respond to the recommendations of the Children and Young People’s Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board within two months. Subsequently the Cabinet prepared a response to the recommendations of the Children and Young and People’s Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board which was proposed by Councillor Bye and seconded by Councillor Billings and agreed unanimously by the Cabinet, as set out above.

Alternative Options considered and rejected at the time of the decision

None

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Does the call-in procedure apply?

Yes

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

None

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Record of Decisions

Re-procurement of Mental Health Helpline

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 16 September 2025.

Decision

That a procurement exercise for the provision of a mental health helpline be approved and any subsequent contract to be awarded in line with the officer scheme of delegation (Paragraph 1.3).

Reason for the Decision

The sustainability of the service for a mental health helpline had always been precarious; the service had been financially maintained through the use of grants, one off adult social care funding and public health grant funding. The proposal aimed to shore up the provision to give it longer-term viability and stability.

Implementation

This decision will come into force and may be implemented on 29 September 2025 unless the call-in procedure is triggered (as set out in the Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny).

Information

The Mental Health Helpline had been operating on short term contracts since its inception by the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector in 2021 as a response to the COVID pandemic and the increasing needs for low level mental health and emotional wellbeing support.

The proposal sought to procure the service so that a new contract could commence from April 2026 with a longer-term, more stable financial basis. The outcomes were to maintain access to signposting, advice and low-level interventions for those people who present with emotional or mental wellbeing needs who do not meet thresholds for statutory mental health services.

At the meeting Councillor Tranter proposed and Councillor Jackie Thomas 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 alternatives considered were:

Do not procure any service - this option would provide cost savings to both public health and the Local Authority General Fund. However, it would erode any good work brought about by the contract to date, eradicating low level support for residents of Torbay which would likely, in turn, increase demand for and pressure on already stretched mental health (and potentially social care) services. The likelihood was that this would decrease productivity in the communities affected due to time off or inability to work due to unsupported mental health issues. This option was discounted.

Procure a service with a reduced cost basis - this option would also provide cost savings to either or both public health and the Local Authority General Fund. It would however reduce the impact and effectiveness of the service. Cost saving was not the desired outcome in this process and funding had been secured and baselined in both the general fund and public health budgets. Depending on the value of the reduction in funding the impact on both effectiveness and outcomes, would be proportionate to the reduction. Therefore, this option was discounted.

Procure the service on a like for like basis - this option would not cost more money than was already agreed in the baseline spend for both the General Fund and the Public Health Grant. The gains made through supporting the service to date could be maintained, it would most likely allow the voluntary sector capacity to obtain sustained, longer term secure funding. This was the preferred option.

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Does the call-in procedure apply?

Yes

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

None

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Leader of Torbay Council on behalf of the Cabinet