

Meeting: Cabinet

Date: 14 July 2025

Wards affected: All

Report Title: Council Business Plan 2023-2027 - Refresh 2025

When does the decision need to be implemented? Immediately following call-in period

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1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Following the Local Elections in May 2023, the Community and Corporate Plan was agreed by the Council. This set out the priorities of the Council for the next twenty years and the approach we are taking in delivering against the vision.
- 1.2 In order to provide focus for delivery over the administration period, the Cabinet developed a Council Business Plan. This provides details of the specific actions being taken to deliver the priorities within the Community and Corporate Plan together with milestones and/or targets.
- 1.3 The Council Business Plan is a living document, as such is reviewed and refreshed annually to take into account progress on delivery against the plan and make any changes required from factors arising since the last review. This is the first annual review, further details have been added to areas that were only broadly defined on initial publication. Updates on progress were included in the Corporate Performance Report which was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Board on 4 June 2025.

2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

- 2.1 The proposals in this report help us to deliver the Council's ambition by providing a clear set of priority actions which will be undertaken by Directorates across the organisation.
- 2.2 The reason for the decision is to ensure that direction is provided to the organisation on the priorities for the remainder of the administrative period.

3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

1. That the Council Business Plan 2023-2027 - Refresh 2025 be approved.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Council Business Plan 2023-2027 - Refresh 2025

Background Documents

None

Supporting Information

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Following the Local Elections in May 2023, a new Community and Corporate Plan was agreed by the Council. This sets out the priorities of the Council for the next twenty years and the approach we will take in delivering against the vision.
- 1.2 In order to provide focus for delivery over the next four years, the Cabinet has developed a Council Business Plan. This provides details of the specific actions, which will be taken to deliver the priorities within the Community and Corporate Plan together with milestones and/or targets.
- 1.3 The Business Plan sets out the priority actions that will be undertaken together with the milestones against which progress will be measured. It also provides a set of wider performance indicators that will assist the Council in measuring progress towards its overall ambitions set out in the Community and Corporate Plan. The refreshed version of the Council Business Plan is set out at Appendix 1.
- 1.4 The Business Plan forms part of the Council's performance framework with the regular performance reports being written to show progress against the milestones and the performance indicators.
- 1.5 In terms of target setting, the Best Value Duty requires local authorities to "make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness". In practice, this covers how authorities exercise their functions to deliver a balanced budget, provide statutory services, including adult social care and children's services, and secure value for money in all spending decisions.
- 1.6 Both the Community and Corporate Plan and Council Business Plan include a set of performance indicators that will be used to measure success on how we are performing against our themes and priorities. Annual targets have been set for the performance indicators where we have direct control over influencing the outcome and demonstrate our commitment to continuously improve.
- 1.7 The targets set for Children's Services' performance indicators are based on the average performance of our statistical neighbours. The targets set for our Adult Social Care indicators are locally agreed with our integrated service providers, Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust.
- 1.8 Both Plans also contain a set of performance indicators that do not have targets set. These indicators are in place to track contextual performance either to support other indicators or our longer-term ambitions (where the Council has no control over making an immediate

positive impact). In addition to this, where we have targets that have already been agreed as part of adopted policy framework documents or partnership plans with other agencies, these figures have been included.

- 1.9 Divisional Directors and Heads of Service (as appropriate) have also been preparing service plans. These include the relevant priority actions as well as operational priorities for each service. Subsequently actions will be included within each member of staffs' appraisals. (It is recognised that these service plans will need to be reviewed once the Business Plan is approved to ensure consistency.)
- 1.5 The Council Business Plan will be kept under regular review with additional milestones added, as appropriate, as options appraisals and action plans are prepared and considered. The quarterly performance report will provide a narrative of our progress against the themes and actions, with the annual performance figures in the year end report being used to review and revise targets for the coming years.

2. Options under consideration

- 2.1 There have been wide ranging discussions between members of the Cabinet and Directors about the priority actions that can be reasonably taken over the coming four years to meet the ambitions of the Community and Corporate Plan. Those discussions have included the milestones that need to be set and the performance indicators that will be used to measure progress.
- 2.2 It is felt that the proposed Council Business Plan now put forward for consideration is achievable whilst seeking to secure continuous improvement as an organisation.

3. Financial Opportunities and Implications

- 3.1 The priority actions have been put forward having regard to the Council's Medium Term Resource Plan. Where decisions are needed to be made in order to meet the milestones described, the financial implications of those decisions will be considered at that stage.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 There is no statutory requirement to have a Council Business Plan. However, being clear about how we will move towards our ambitions gives the Council, our staff, partners and the community a clear understanding of what we seek to achieve and how to prioritise our spending.
- 4.2 Where decisions are needed to be made in order to meet the milestones described, the legal implications of those decisions will be considered at that stage.

5. Engagement and Consultation

- 5.1 The Council Business Plan does not form part of the Policy Framework and therefore does not need to be subject to public consultation. However, the priority actions take account of the feedback received through the Residents Satisfaction Survey undertaken during Summer 2023 and the engagement events that have subsequently been held.

6. Purchasing or Hiring of Goods and/or Services

- 6.1 Not applicable

7. Tackling Climate Change

- 7.1 As the Council makes progress against the priority actions within the Council Business Plan due regard will be given to how the work can assist the Council is tackling climate change. The Council Business Plan will also include key milestones from the Carbon Neutral Council Action Plan and the Torbay Carbon Neutral Plan.

8. Associated Risks

- 8.1 Without a Council Business Plan it becomes difficult to set a coherent direction of travel for the Council given the finite resources available. The Council Business Plan is a critical part of the Council's performance framework.
- 8.2 The Council's Risk Registers need to be reviewed to ensure that any risks arising from the delivery of the Council's Business Plan are adequately reflected. This will take place as Directors and their teams prepare their service plans.

9. Equality Impact Assessment

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act and groups with increased vulnerability	Data and insight	Equality considerations (including any adverse impacts)	Mitigation activities	Responsible department and timeframe for implementing mitigation activities
Age	<p>18 per cent of Torbay residents are under 18 years old.</p> <p>55 per cent of Torbay residents are aged between 18 to 64 years old.</p> <p>27 per cent of Torbay residents are aged 65 and older.</p>	<p>The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of this business plan. However, due to the high-level nature of the plan it is not possible to be certain. Thus, relevant subsequent decisions will undergo their own equality impact assessments.</p>	Not applicable	Not applicable
Carers	At the time of the 2021 census there were 14,900	The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets	Not applicable	Not applicable

	<p>unpaid carers in Torbay. 5,185 of these provided 50 hours or more of care.</p>	<p>its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of this business plan. However, due to the high-level nature of the plan it is not possible to be certain. Thus, relevant subsequent decisions will undergo their own equality impact assessments.</p>		
Disability	<p>In the 2021 Census, 23.8% of Torbay residents answered that their day-to-day activities were limited a little or a lot by a physical or mental health condition or illness.</p>	<p>The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of this business plan. However, due to the high-level nature of the plan it is not possible to be certain. Thus, relevant subsequent decisions will undergo</p>	Not applicable	Not applicable

		their own equality impact assessments.		
Gender reassignment	In the 2021 Census, 0.4% of Torbay's community answered that their gender identity was not the same as their sex registered at birth. This proportion is similar to the Southwest and is lower than England.	<p>The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of this business plan. However, due to the high-level nature of the plan it is not possible to be certain. Thus, relevant subsequent decisions will undergo their own equality impact assessments.</p>	Not applicable	Not applicable
Marriage and civil partnership	Of those Torbay residents aged 16 and over at the time of 2021 Census, 44.2% of people were married or in a registered civil partnership.	<p>The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of this business plan.</p>	Not applicable	Not applicable

		<p>However, due to the high-level nature of the plan it is not possible to be certain. Thus, relevant subsequent decisions will undergo their own equality impact assessments.</p>		
Pregnancy and maternity	<p>Over the period 2010 to 2021, the rate of live births (as a proportion of females aged 15 to 44) has been slightly but significantly higher in Torbay (average of 63.7 per 1,000) than England (60.2) and the South West (58.4). There has been a notable fall in the numbers of live births since the middle of the last decade across all geographical areas.</p>	<p>The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of this business plan.</p> <p>However, due to the high-level nature of the plan it is not possible to be certain. Thus, relevant subsequent decisions will undergo their own equality impact assessments.</p>	Not applicable	Not applicable
Race	<p>In the 2021 Census, 96.1% of Torbay residents described their ethnicity as white. This is a higher proportion than the South West and England. Black,</p>	<p>The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.</p>	Not applicable	Not applicable

	Asian and minority ethnic individuals are more likely to live in areas of Torbay classified as being amongst the 20% most deprived areas in England.	It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of this business plan. However, due to the high-level nature of the plan it is not possible to be certain. Thus, relevant subsequent decisions will undergo their own equality impact assessments.		
Religion and belief	64.8% of Torbay residents who stated that they have a religion in the 2021 census.	<p>The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of this business plan. However, due to the high-level nature of the plan it is not possible to be certain. Thus, relevant subsequent decisions will undergo their own equality impact assessments.</p>	Not applicable	Not applicable
Sex	51.3% of Torbay's population are female and 48.7% are male	The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which	Not applicable	Not applicable

		<p>includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of this business plan. However, due to the high-level nature of the plan it is not possible to be certain. Thus, relevant subsequent decisions will undergo their own equality impact assessments.</p>		
Sexual orientation	<p>In the 2021 Census, 3.4% of those in Torbay aged over 16 identified their sexuality as either Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or, used another term to describe their sexual orientation.</p>	<p>The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of this business plan. However, due to the high-level nature of the plan it is not possible to be certain. Thus, relevant subsequent decisions will undergo their own equality impact assessments.</p>	Not applicable	Not applicable

Veterans	In 2021, 3.8% of residents in England reported that they had previously served in the UK armed forces. In Torbay, 5.9 per cent of the population have previously serviced in the UK armed forces.	The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents. It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of this business plan. However, due to the high-level nature of the plan it is not possible to be certain. Thus, relevant subsequent decisions will undergo their own equality impact assessments.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Additional considerations				
Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child poverty and deprivation)		The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents. It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of this business plan. However, due to the high-level nature of the plan it is not possible to be certain. Thus, relevant	Not applicable	Not applicable

		subsequent decisions will undergo their own equality impact assessments.		
Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay)		<p>The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of this business plan. However, due to the high-level nature of the plan it is not possible to be certain. Thus, relevant subsequent decisions will undergo their own equality impact assessments.</p>	Not applicable	Not applicable
Human Rights impacts		<p>The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of this business plan. However, due to the high-level</p>	Not applicable	Not applicable

		nature of the plan it is not possible to be certain. Thus, relevant subsequent decisions will undergo their own equality impact assessments.		
Child Friendly	Torbay Council is a Child Friendly Council and all staff and Councillors are Corporate Parents and have a responsibility towards cared for and care experienced children and young people.	<p>The Council's business plan will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.</p> <p>It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of this business plan. However, due to the high-level nature of the plan it is not possible to be certain. Thus, relevant subsequent decisions will undergo their own equality impact assessments.</p>	Not applicable	Not applicable

10. Cumulative Council Impact

- 10.1 In developing the Council Business Plan the Members of the Cabinet and the Directors have been aware of the cumulative council impact. Overall, the Council Business Plan should have a positive cumulative impact.

11. Cumulative Community Impacts

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