

Meeting: Cabinet

Date: 12 May 2026

Wards affected: All

Report Title: Levelling Up Funding Round 3 – Brixham Port (Oxen Cove) and Paignton (Tech Park)

When does the decision need to be implemented? May 2026

Cabinet Member Contact Details: Chris Lewis Cabinet Member for Place Development and Economic Growth

Director Contact Details: Alan Denby, Director Pride in Place, Davd Carter Director of Regeneration

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. This report sets out the project progress to date, future programme for delivery and the decisions required of Cabinet and Council to expedite delivery of development at Brixham Port (Oxen Cove) and Paignton (Tech Park), to comply with the grant funding conditions set by Government.
- 1.2. The projects have been developed to date using grant funding drawn down from the original Government grant award of £20m in 2024, which at the time was badged as the Levelling Up Fund (LUF), (Round 3 allocation), with the specific proposal submitted to Government in 2023 for Round 3 called 'Brixham High Tech Fish and Chips'.
- 1.3. The Government confirmed LUF3 funding in October 2024, but from the autumn of 2025 LUF3 funding was merged with Towns Deal funding in an overall fund called the Local Regeneration Fund (LRF) - [Local Regeneration Fund: delivery and technical FAQs - GOV.UK](#). Although the merging of the funds gave more flexibility in terms of moving monies between projects to achieve an overall outcome for a Local Area, and also permitted the introduction of new projects that delivered the overall objectives for place that were defined in the Town Deal and LUF prospectuses, they did require that existing projects should continue to be delivered as intended unless there was a compelling reason to stop or change. Our LUF3 projects had been significantly developed by the autumn of 2025 and were and are still on target to be delivered within the overall programme deadline of April 2028. At this stage we are not intending to introduce any new projects into the LRF programme and intend to use all of the £20m originally allocated by LUF3 on both Oxen Cove and Tech Park and associated infrastructure mitigation and reinforcement as was originally intended.

- 1.4. This report sets out the proposed timeline for delivery and the allocation of funding between the two projects subject to each project's business case meeting both the criteria originally submitted to Government and the minimum criteria of our Local Assurance Framework (business case process).

2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

- 2.1. The proposals in this report help us to deliver our vision of a healthy, happy, and prosperous Torbay by investing in existing local employment sectors to expand employment space and increase the number and quality of jobs.
- 2.2. Tech Park will provide much needed grow on space for the photonics industry from EPIC in this phase, and the Council has already used £2.3m of the grant funding to acquire land for a further phase, (Tech Park 2), which is currently being prepared for a future grant funding bid either directly to Government or through the County Combined Authority (CCA).
- 2.3. The creation of 2550m² of new employment space at Oxen Cove for the fishing industry will achieve the dual objectives; of allowing some businesses to decant from the main port site to free up space to expand the fish market and provide space for the expansion and attraction of new sustainable fisheries businesses e.g. shellfish and hatcheries to restock and maintain a sustainable supply to the market. The employment units are being designed to high external specification to provide a window into the industry for visitors and tourists traversing the South West Coastal park and in turn it is hoped this will further increase the cache of Brixham Fish market and further establish the Brixham and Torbay reputation for high quality seafood and aquaculture.
- 2.4. Each project may over time produce an excess income back to the Council (above holding, maintenance and sinking fund costs) to invest back into the wider regeneration programme.

3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

- 3.1. That Cabinet approve the outline proposals for schemes at Brixham Port (Oxen Cove) and Paignton Tech Park as set out in the Strategic Outline Cases attached at Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.
- 3.2. That Cabinet note that under delegated authority, the Director of Finance in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Finance, will allocate funding from grant monies to develop the schemes at Brixham Port (Oxen Cove) and Paignton Tech Park pursuant to the Capital Programme.
- 3.3. That Cabinet confirm the current programme cost estimates as set out in Section 8 of this report to enable them to be reported to Government at the end of May 2026 as is required by the new Local Regeneration Fund (LRF) quarterly monitoring return.

4. Appendices

Appendix 1: Strategic Outline Case for Oxen Cove (March 2026)

Appendix 2: Strategic Outline Case for Tech Park (July 2025)

5. Background Documents

- LUF 3 Bid Document from March 2024
- Block plan and elevations for Employment space on Oxen Cove

Supporting Information

6. Introduction

- 6.1. The projects have been developed since the Autumn of 2024 when the Government confirmed the LUF3 grant funding was secure in the October Budget.
- 6.2. Both projects have had to overcome a number of logistical hurdles in their development to get them to their current preferred option status for Cabinet Approval, before moving through the statutory delivery processes needed to allow a start on site in the autumn of 2026 for Tech Park and January 2027 for Oxen Cove (subject to planning consent).
- 6.3. Tech Park – The existing EPIC building has been a fantastic success and has achieved its intended outcomes but is now full and without high spec grow on space businesses are remaining at EPIC and to a degree are blocking the start-up and expansion of other photonics businesses preventing the natural circle of life of businesses from start up to SME and onto hopefully large local employers.
- 6.4. Tech Park is much needed to allow high value businesses with significant growth potential to remain in Torbay and grow within the facilitated management of the existing EPIC team.
- 6.5. Brixham Port is operating considerably beyond the designed capacity of its infrastructure and the creation of new spec employment buildings on Oxen Cove will allow the Port to continue to grow and diversify into the Council and Harbour Authorities vision for a truly sustainable fisheries industry.
- 6.6. At present although Brixham is the highest value port in England in terms of the premium it commands at the point of sale in the fish market, it does not have any processing or holding capacity that adds value to the catch beyond the existing retail businesses currently on the Port site. Indeed currently the only processing and packaging in Torbay of landed catch occurs in sub-standard temporary facilities in Paignton. The vast majority of the fish traded at the market is simply transported out to be processed elsewhere in the UK and continental Europe. A previous proposal for similar facilities that wasn't then delivered saw one local operator locate their processing facilities in Holland. The processing facilities will add value to the catch, employ local people and further increase the value of produce caught, sold and processed at Brixham adding an additional premium to the Brixham brand.

7. Options under consideration

- 7.1. The option to do nothing would result in the Government funding being handed back and the investment in the Local Economy not being realised.

7.2. Various options for the buildings and building footprints have been considered and the preferred options presented in Appendix 1 and 2.

8. Financial Opportunities and Implications

8.1. The original LUF3 bid in 2024 to Government set out a 50/50 split of the £20m of grant funding and a total of £5.415m of supported Council Borrowing to create a total capital investment of £25.415m for delivery.

8.2. The current proposal, now the schemes have been developed beyond Strategic Outline Business Case, is for a similar split of grant funding of £9.85m/£10.15m between Tech Park and Oxen Cove but with the supported borrowing solely being applied to Oxen Cove .

8.3. It is probable that there will be a slight variance in the costs of schemes delivered between now and achieving Full Business Case sign off for each project later in 2026.

8.4. The table below (Table 8.1) shows the current estimates of cost and budget from the Business Case documents attached at Appendix 1 and 2

	Total Project Costs	LRF Allocation	PWLB Supported Borrowing
Tech Park – Land acquisition at White Rock	£2.3m	£2.3m	£0
Tech Park – Westfield Unit D - Refit	£7.55m	£7.55m	£0
Oxen Cove	£14.1m	£10.15m	£3.95m
Total	£23.95m	£20m	£3.95m

9. Legal Implications

There are the usual legal implications in terms of the property assets and liabilities being created from new developments and the acquisition of buildings all associated legal issues are being dealt with by our internal legal team.

10. Engagement and Consultation

10.1. Tech Park – Engagement has been undertaken with potential occupiers and soft marketing undertaken regarding rent and lease arrangements. As the scheme will repurpose and existing building at Long Road Paignton no formal public consultation has been undertaken.

- 10.2. Oxen Cove – There have been a series of engagement events since December 2024 listed below and a formal pre-planning consultation carried out in March 2026.
- 10.3. Key public concerns raised by pre-planning consultation was regarding the loss of parking at Oxen Cove, the potential for additional HGV movements attracted by the proposed development.
- 10.4. We will add more narrative on mitigating the issues highlighted in 10.3 in the final version.

11. Procurement Implications

- 11.1. Procurement of Contractors to take on the construction and fit work is being managed as described in the appended SOC's and will be further developed for the OBC stage gateway.

12. Protecting our naturally inspiring Bay and tackling Climate Change

- 12.1. Oxen Cove building is being designed to incorporate solar PV on the roof of the building
- 12.2. Improving the building performance of the existing building at Westfield is being considered by the fit-out scope.

13. Associated Risks

- 13.1. Failure to make a decision will impact on programme and likely either increase delivery costs or create a revenue reversion risk if the projects do not progress.

14. 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18% of Torbay residents are aged under 18 years old. • 55% of Torbay residents are aged between 18 to 64 years old. • 27% of Torbay residents are aged 65 and older. 	<p>The proposals in this report help us to deliver our vision of a healthy, happy, and prosperous Torbay by investing in existing local employment sectors to expand employment space and increase the number and quality of jobs. This will benefit young people and those of working age. No adverse impacts are anticipated.</p>	<p>We will work with our partners to support people of different ages to access construction and employment opportunities linked to the developments where appropriate.</p>	Not applicable
Carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the time of the 2021 census there were 14,900 unpaid carers in Torbay. • 5,185 of these carers provided 50 hours or more of care. 	<p>The proposals in this report help us to deliver our vision of a healthy, happy, and prosperous Torbay by investing in existing local employment sectors to expand employment space and increase the number and quality of jobs. Accessibility of the buildings will be a key consideration - No adverse impacts for carers are anticipated.</p>	<p>We will work with our partners to ensure carers can access construction and employment opportunities linked to the developments where appropriate.</p>	Not applicable
Care experienced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As of January 2026, there were 277 former care experienced young people aged 18-24 in Torbay. 	<p>The proposals in this report help us to deliver our vision of a healthy, happy, and prosperous Torbay by investing in existing local employment sectors to expand employment space and increase</p>	<p>We will work with our partners to support care experienced individuals to access construction and employment</p>	Pride in Place

		the number and quality of jobs. We recognise the additional barriers care experienced individuals face when accessing the job market. No adverse impacts for carer experienced individuals are anticipated.	opportunities linked to the developments.	
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the 2021 Census, 23.9% 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>The proposals in this report help us to deliver our vision of a healthy, happy, and prosperous Torbay by investing in existing local employment sectors to expand employment space and increase the number and quality of jobs.</p> <p>We recognise the additional barriers that some people with disabilities face when accessing the job market.</p> <p>Ensuring that accessibility of buildings will be key to the project's successful development.</p> <p>No adverse impacts for people with disabilities are expected.</p>	We will work with our partners to people with disabilities to access construction and employment opportunities linked to the developments,	Pride in Place
Gender reassignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	Building design needs to include toilet provision which meets the needs of everyone who uses it including those who identify as trans and those who describe their gender identity by using a different term. No adverse impacts are anticipated from this decision.	Inclusive toilet provision needs to be included in any building design spec.	Pride In Place
Marriage and civil partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Of those Torbay residents aged 16 and over at the time of 2021 Census, 	No adverse impacts are anticipated.	No specific measures	Not applicable

	44.2% of people were married or in a registered civil partnership.			
Pregnancy and maternity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Between 2013 and 2024, the rate of live births (as a proportion of females aged 15 to 44) has been slightly but significantly higher in Torbay (average of 56.0 per 1,000) than the Southwest (53.4) and broadly in line with England (56.3). For the period 2022 to 2024, rates in Torbay (44.6) have been significantly below England (50.0). 	No adverse impacts	No specific measures	Not applicable
Race	<p>In the 2021 Census, 96.1% of Torbay residents described their ethnicity as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.6% as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh 0.3% as Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African 1.5% as being of Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups 96.1% as White 0.4% described their ethnicity another way. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic 	The proposals in this report help us to deliver our vision of a healthy, happy, and prosperous Torbay by investing in existing local employment sectors to expand employment space and increase the number and quality of jobs. We recognise the additional barriers that some people from minoritised backgrounds may face when accessing the job market.	We will work with our partners to support people from minoritised backgrounds to access construction and employment opportunities linked to the developments where appropriate.	Pride In Place

	<p>communities are more likely to live in areas of Torbay classified as being amongst the 20% most deprived areas in England.</p>			
Religion and belief	<p>The 2021 Census showed that the residents in Torbay identify their religion and/or belief as the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 48.5% are Christian • 0.4% are Buddhist • 0.2% are Hindu • 0.6% are Muslim • Less than 0.1% are Sikh • 0.1% are Jewish • 0.7% have another religion • 43.2% have no religion • 6.3% did not answer 	<p>No adverse impacts are expected from this decision. However, the design/ use of any space should be informed by community safety considerations such as appropriate levels of lighting for example to ensure everyone feels as safe as possible.</p>	<p>We will work with our partners where appropriate.</p>	<p>Pride In Place</p>
Sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 51.3% of Torbay's population are female. • 48.7% of Torbay's population are male. 	<p>The proposals in this report help us to deliver our vision of a healthy, happy, and prosperous Torbay by investing in existing local employment sectors to expand employment space and increase the number and quality of jobs.</p> <p>Consistent with national labour market trends, we recognise that women can face disproportionate barriers to accessing employment, especially when balancing caring and family responsibilities.</p>	<p>We will work with our partners to support people to access construction and employment opportunities linked to the developments where appropriate.</p>	<p>Pride In Place</p>

Sexual orientation	<p>In the 2021 Census, residents described their sexuality as follows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 89% as Straight or Heterosexual • 1.7% as Gay or Lesbian • 1.1% as Bisexual • 0.1% as Pansexual • 0.1% described their sexuality another way • 7.4% of people didn't answer the question 	No adverse impacts	No specific measures	
Armed Forces Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2021, 3.8% of residents in England reported that they had previously served in the UK armed forces. • In Torbay, 5.9% of the population have previously served in the UK armed forces. 	The proposals in this report help us to deliver our vision of a healthy, happy, and prosperous Torbay by investing in existing local employment sectors to expand employment space and increase the number and quality of jobs. We recognise the additional barriers that the armed forces community including veterans and their families face when accessing the job market.	We will work with our partners to support the armed forces community to access construction and employment opportunities linked to the developments where appropriate.	
Additional considerations				
Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child poverty and deprivation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Torbay is ranked as the 39th most deprived upper tier local authority in England in the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025. 	The proposals in this report help us to deliver our vision of a healthy, happy, and prosperous Torbay by investing in existing local employment sectors to expand employment space and increase the number and quality of jobs.	We will work with our partners to ensure that people from a range of socio-economic backgrounds have are supported in accessing the benefits of the development.	Pride in Place Children and Adult Services

Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the five-year period 2020 to 2024, data shows there is a 6-year life expectancy gap between males who live in Torbay's least and most deprived areas and, a 3-year gap for females. 	The proposals in this report help us to deliver our vision of a healthy, happy, and prosperous Torbay by investing in existing local employment sectors to expand employment space and increase the number and quality of jobs.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Human Rights impacts		No adverse impacts on human rights are expected. The Council remains committed to upholding human rights.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Child Friendly		The proposals in this report help us to deliver our vision of a healthy, happy, and prosperous Torbay by investing in existing local employment sectors to expand employment space and increase the number and quality of jobs.	We will work with our partners to ensure that people from a range of socio-economic backgrounds are supported in realising the benefits of the development.	

15. Cumulative Council Impact

15.1. None

16. Cumulative Community Impacts

16.1. None