

Meeting: Cabinet

Date: 9 June 2026

Wards affected: All wards

Report Title: Specialist Stop Smoking Service Procurement

When does the decision need to be implemented?

The procurement process will need to commence in July 2026.

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1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. Public Health receives core funding as part of the ring-fenced grant to deliver smoking services and tobacco control activities. From 2026-27 it will also receive as part of the core public health ring fenced grant, a separate allocation, also ring-fenced, from the Department for Health and Social Care to further increase support for smokers to quit.
- 1.2. This additional allocation requires Local Authorities to achieve a target of at least 5% of the adult smoking population setting a quit date per year. Local authorities must also not disinvest in smoking services funded through the core public health ring-fenced grant and will be monitored to ensure equity of spending across years
- 1.3. The current specialist stop smoking service is commissioned as part of the integrated Healthy Behaviours Service (Your Health Torbay) delivered by ABL Health. The current contract ends on 31st March 2027 with no further contract extensions available.
- 1.4. An open market procurement is required to select a provider who can deliver the updated requirements and to ensure value for money.
- 1.3 The decision required is two-fold:
 - That the Director for Public Health has delegated authority to award the contract the selected provider as a result of a compliant procurement process.
 - That this decision will be on the basis that through the procurement procedure none of the specification, the budget nor the procurement processes proposed are materially different from what is outlined in this report. If any of these do change materially, an

updated report will be submitted for reconsideration before the Director for Public Health awards the contract.

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 working to enable residents to have good access to high quality preventative smoking cessation services.
- 2.2. This proposal will support delivery of a range of options to assist behaviour change and meets the new and emerging trends in tobacco use.
- 2.3. The proposal will ensure residents have access to best practice, evidence-based support.
- 2.4. The proposal will support local progress towards the UK Government's Smokefree 2030 ambition (defined as less than 5% of the population smoking).
- 2.5. A reduction in tobacco products use will contribute to reducing cigarette and vape waste and litter across Torbay.
- 2.6. A reduction in the demand for tobacco products will also contribute to reducing illegal and illicit activity, promoting safer communities and reducing negative economic impacts.
- 2.7. The reason for the decision to delegate the authority to award the contract to the Director of Public Health is to facilitate a timely and efficient procurement process. The award will only be made on the provision that through the procurement procedure none of the specification, the budget nor the procurement processes proposed are materially different from what is outlined in this report. If any of these do change materially, an updated report will be submitted for reconsideration before the Director for Public Health awards the contract.

3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

- 3.1. That the Director of Public Health in consultation with the Cabinet Member for **Adult and Community Services, Public Health and Inequalities** be given delegated authority to award the contract to the selected provider as a result of a compliant procurement process.
- 3.2. That this decision will be on the basis that through the procurement procedure none of the specification, the budget nor the procurement processes proposed are materially different from what is outlined in this report. If any of these do change materially, an updated report will be submitted for reconsideration before the Director for Public Health awards the contract.

4. Appendices

None provided.

5. Background Documents

- Smoking in Torbay – a rapid health needs assessment
<https://www.southdevonandtorbay.info/media/pksnmmgv/smoking-rapid-hna-2024.pdf>

Supporting Information

6. Introduction

- 6.1. The current Specialist Stop Smoking Service is provided as part of the integrated Healthy Behaviours Service (Your Health Torbay) delivered by ABL Health Ltd. This offers support to those wishing to make changes to improve their health, including losing weight and stopping smoking.
- 6.2. Future support to promote a healthier weight is set out in the Torbay Healthier Weight Framework 2026 – 2036. Therefore, following the current contract term, an integrated healthy behaviours service will not be required.
- 6.3. A specialist stop smoking service will still be required. The changes proposed to the scope of the service will seek to respond to changes in tobacco use and offer a greater range of support options to better meet the needs and preferences of residents.
- 6.4. The current stop smoking service offers behavioural support delivered over the phone and in-person and direct supply of nicotine replacement therapies.
- 6.5. The proposed future service will support those who want to reduce and quit smoking and long-term vaping, through:
 - In-person and phone based behavioural support,
 - Direct supply of nicotine replacement therapies,
 - Delivery of campaigns to motivate people to quitting and to improve knowledge and recall of the support available,
 - Provision of a fully digital (app based) stop smoking service,
 - Provision of self-management tools to assist reduction and quit,

7. Options under consideration

- 7.1. There were three options considered:
- 7.2. Option 1: Commission the specialist stop smoking service using the current service specification and budget. Not being pursued as will not allow us to modernise the service or make use of the additional ringfenced funding for smoking services. Therefore, it will not support the increased level of activity required by the Department for Health and Social Care.
- 7.3. Option 2: Commission a joint children's and adult's specialist stop smoking service. Not being pursued due to lack of suitable providers in the market who can deliver equitably to both population groups, and differences in the type of support that would be required.

- 7.4. Option 3: Commission an adult only specialist stop smoking service with an updated service specification and budget. Recommended option to allow for expansion and modernisation.
- 7.5. It is option 3 which is recommended for decision making.

8. Financial Opportunities and Implications

- 8.1. There are no implications upon the revenue budget for Torbay Council. The proposed budget for this service has been planned for within the existing resource from the current Public Health Ring Fenced Grant and the additional smoking ringfenced grant.
- 8.2. To be compliant with the conditions of the smoking ringfenced grant, Local authorities must not disinvest in core public health ring-fence funded smoking services and will be monitored to ensure equity of spending across years.
- 8.3. The service is being redesigned with a budget of circa £1.4M over 3 years, and, if over the maximum contract term of 6 years will be circa £3M.

9. Legal Implications

- 9.1. If the grant conditions are not met, Torbay Council may be liable for some or all of the ring-fenced grant for smoking services being recalled by the Department for Health and Social Care
- 9.2. There are no known legal implications other than a failure to award the contract without due justification which could result in a challenge to the procurement process by the successful bidder.

10. Engagement and Consultation

- 10.1. Community engagement has focussed on groups underrepresented in the current service and where smoking rates remain higher. Insights have been gathered through a specialist behavioural insights organisation. The feedback and findings have been taken into account when developing the proposed service model.
- 10.2. Specifically, insights have highlighted challenges around lack of knowledge of services and support available, the desire for individuals to maintain autonomy around when and how they quit, the need for convenience, and for more clarity and consistency around health messaging and support around both smoking and vaping.
- 10.3. On 21 May 2026, the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board considered the Specialist Stop Smoking Service Procurement and supported the recommendation as set out above, subject to the inclusion of consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member.

11. Procurement Implications

- 11.1. An open market procurement will be undertaken, led by Torbay's Commercial and Procurement team.

- 11.2. Social value will be built into the invitation to tender for which the supplier is required to submit proposals on their social value commitments to Torbay.
- 11.3. The tender submission will be assessed by Torbay Council officers and social value will form an essential and proportionate element of the award criteria.
- 11.4. The monitoring of Social Value commitments will be undertaken as part of the contract monitoring processes at Torbay.

12. Protecting our naturally inspiring Bay and tackling Climate Change

- 12.1. Addressing climate change will be assessed within this proposed procurement through the social value framework and bidder submission.
- 12.2. By improving digital and self-support access, it is anticipated that this will have a positive impact in terms of reducing the need to travel as far within Torbay to access services.

13. Associated Risks

- 13.1. Failure to agree to award the contract will result in insufficient and ineffective support for those who want to stop smoking or vaping. This will cause a risk to reducing local smoking rates amongst adults in Torbay.
- 13.2. There is a risk that Torbay Council comes under scrutiny from the Department for Health and Social Care should we not achieve the minimum number of quit dates set (5% of the smoking population) that is a requirement of the Smoking ringfenced grant, should the proposal in this paper not be agreed.

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 impact of this proposal will support improved access to services that offer support in keeping with emerging trends in tobacco use which affect all age groups.</p> <p>Digital services are anticipated to have a positive impact on the working age population. Retaining the in-person and over the phone support options will ensure the older population are not disadvantaged.</p>	Not applicable	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 impact of this proposal will support improved access to services. Incorporating digital services and self-management support are anticipated to have a positive impact on carers by offering 24/7 support which can be more easily accessed around caring responsibilities.</p>	Not applicable	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 impact of this proposal will support improved access to services that offer support in keeping with emerging trends in tobacco use.</p> <p>Digital services are anticipated to have a positive impact on care experienced young people.</p>	Not applicable	Not applicable
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 neither have a specific positive or negative impact based on this characteristic.</p>	Not applicable	Not applicable
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. 	<p>The proposals neither have a specific positive or negative impact based on this characteristic.</p>	Not applicable	Not applicable
Marriage and civil partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 proposals neither have a specific positive or negative impact based on this characteristic.</p>	Not applicable	Not applicable
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 	<p>The proposals are anticipated to have a positive based on this characteristic.</p> <p>By improving access to support to women of reproductive age, we might</p>	Not applicable	Not applicable

	<p>Torbay (average of 56.0 per 1,000) than the Southwest (53.4) and broadly in line with England (56.3).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the period 2022 to 2024, rates in Torbay (44.6) have been significantly below England (50.0). 	<p>reduce smoking rates before pregnancy. Smoking negatively impacts maternal and foetal health including increasing the risk of miscarriage.</p>		
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 communities are more likely to live in areas of Torbay classified as being amongst the 20% most deprived areas in England. 	<p>The proposals neither have a specific positive or negative impact based on this characteristic.</p>	Not applicable	Not applicable
Religion and belief	<p>The 2021 Census showed that the residents in Torbay</p>	<p>The proposals neither have a specific positive or negative impact based on this characteristic.</p>	Not applicable	Not applicable

	<p>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 			
Sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 51.3% of Torbay's population are female. • 48.7% of Torbay's population are male. 	The proposals neither have a specific positive or negative impact based on this characteristic.	Not applicable	Not applicable
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 	<p>The proposals are anticipated to have a positive impact on this group.</p> <p>Emerging data from digital services indicate higher rates of engagement amongst gay, lesbian, bisexual and pan sexual people. This is potentially due to greater ability to access tailored support, and lower anticipated stigma from healthcare professionals.</p>	Not applicable	Not applicable
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. 	The proposals neither have a specific positive or negative impact based on this characteristic.	Not applicable	Not applicable

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Torbay, 5.9% of the population have previously served in the UK armed forces. 			
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. 	<p>Higher rates of smoking tend to be observed amongst those living in deprived areas, working in lower wage occupations and amongst those who are long term unemployed.</p> <p>By supporting a more timely and accessible smoking service, it is anticipated that this will support both health and social inequalities.</p>	Not applicable	Not applicable
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. 	<p>Reducing the prevalence of smoking will have positive impacts on reduction of hospital care to manage long-term illnesses including respiratory conditions, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and some cancers.</p>	Not applicable	Not applicable
Human Rights impacts		<p>Reducing smoking rates within the population supports the human right to breathe clean air.</p>	Not applicable	Not applicable
Child Friendly		<p>By reducing rates of smoking, the proposal will support an improvement for children growing up in smokefree homes</p>	Not applicable	Not applicable

15. Cumulative Council Impact

15.1. None

16. Cumulative Community Impacts

16.1. None