

Record of Decisions

Local Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Reform Plan

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 09 June 2026.

Decision

1. that the SEND Reform Plan set out at Appendix 3 be approved and delegated authority be given to the Director of Children's Services to implement the Plan, including the high needs stability grant, once approval for the Plan is gained from the Department for Education;
2. that the requirements and expectations of the Local Area SEND Reform Plan guidance be noted;
3. that the development of a Local SEND Reform Plan in line with national guidance and system partnership expectations be endorsed;
4. that the submission of the Local SEND Reform Plan to the Department for Education (DfE) and NHS England by 19 June 2026 be approved; and
5. that the Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, be given delegated authority to finalise the Plan prior to submission to the DfE and the NHS.

Reason for the Decision

All Local Area Partnerships had been formally commissioned by Government to produce a Local SEND Reform Plan, setting out how they would deliver systemic improvement and respond to national SEND reform expectations.

Whilst delivering systemic improvements the Plan would also provide benefits for Torbay's residents such as earlier identification and support, reducing escalation of needs and crisis intervention, more inclusive mainstream provision, enabling more children to be supported locally, improved joined up working across education, health, and care services, greater clarity and consistency in support available to families; and strengthened accountability and oversight, ensuring ongoing improvement and transparency.

Implementation

The decision will come into force and may be implemented on 22 June 2026 unless the call-in procedure is triggered (as set out in the Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny).

Information

On 9 March 2026, the Government wrote to local authorities formally commissioning the development and implementation of Local SEND Reform Plan. The expectation was for the Plan to clearly set out the actions that Torbay would take to drive system reform locally.

The Local SEND Reform Plan was a nationally mandated requirement forming part of a wider programme to reform the SEND system across England. The guidance sets out how local area

partnerships, led by the local authority as system convener, must work collaboratively with Integrated Care Boards, schools, trusts, and other stakeholders to design and deliver a comprehensive improvement plan.

The Plan has been co-written by the SEND Local Area Partnership, including schools and settings, and influenced by the input of children, young people with SEND and their families through engagement and co-design sessions. The Plan also incorporates Torbay's Priority Impact Plan, which was the improvement plan in response to the Torbay's 2025 SEND Local Area Inspection.

At the meeting Councillor Bye 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

There were no alternative options were considered, as the development and submission of a Local SEND Reform Plan was a statutory requirement set by the Department for Education for all local authorities and their partners.

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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12 June 2026

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