Monday, 8 September 2025

CABINET

A meeting of Cabinet will be held on

Tuesday, 16 September 2025

commencing at 5.30 pm

The meeting will be held in the Banking Hall, Castle Circus entrance on the left corner of the Town Hall, Castle Circus, Torquay, TQ1 3DR

Members of the Committee

Councillor David Thomas (Chairman)

Councillor Billings
Councillor Bye
Councillor Chris Lewis

Councillor Jacqueline Thomas

Councillor Tranter

Councillor Tyerman

A Healthy, Happy and Prosperous Torbay

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Governance Support, Town Hall, Castle Circus, Torquay, TQ1 3DR

Email: governance.support@torbay.gov.uk - www.torbay.gov.uk

CABINET AGENDA (REVISED)

1. Apologies

To receive apologies for absence.

2. Minutes (Pages 5 - 26)

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 19 August 2025.

3. Disclosure of Interests

(a) To receive declarations of non pecuniary interests in respect of items on this agenda.

For reference: Having declared their non pecuniary interest members may remain in the meeting and speak and, vote on the matter in question. A completed disclosure of interests form should be returned to the Clerk before the conclusion of the meeting.

(b) To receive declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests in respect of items on this agenda.

For reference: Where a Member has a disclosable pecuniary interest he/she must leave the meeting during consideration of the item. However, the Member may remain in the meeting to make representations, answer questions or give evidence if the public have a right to do so, but having done so the Member must then immediately leave the meeting, may not vote and must not improperly seek to influence the outcome of the matter. A completed disclosure of interests form should be returned to the Clerk before the conclusion of the meeting.

(**Please Note:** If Members and Officers wish to seek advice on any potential interests they may have, they should contact Governance Support or Legal Services prior to the meeting.)

4. Urgent Items

To consider any other items the Chairman decides are urgent.

- 5. Matters for Consideration
- 6. Community Grant Fund 2025 Funding Awards Tranche 1
 To consider a report that makes recommendations for the first tranche of the awards from the Community Grant Fund 2025.

(Pages 41 - 66)

7. Corporate Parenting Strategy

People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board.

To consider a report that seeks delegated authority to launch for consultation the Corporate Parenting Strategy.

8. Youth Provision and Physical Activity - Report of the Children (Pages 67 - 72) and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board
To respond to the recommendations of the Children and Young

9. Re-procurement of Mental Health Helpline

(Pages 73 - 88)

To consider a report that sets out a proposal to procure the services so that a new contract can commence from April 2026.

Live Streaming and Hybrid Arrangements

To encourage more people to engage in our public meetings the Council is live streaming our Cabinet meetings on our YouTube channel in addition to recording the meetings and publishing the recording on our website. To watch the meeting live please visit https://www.youtube.com/user/torbaycouncil.

We are also using hybrid meeting arrangements to enable officers and Councillors who are not members of the Cabinet to either attend the meeting in person or to attend the meeting remotely via Zoom. Anyone attending the meeting remotely must use their raise hand function when they wish to speak and to declare any interests at the appropriate time. If anyone attending the meeting remotely loses connection the meeting will continue and they will have the option to follow the meeting via the YouTube live stream.



Minutes of the Cabinet

19 August 2025

-: Present :-

Councillor David Thomas (Chairman)

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

(Also in attendance: Councillors Carter (virtual), Cowell, Douglas-Dunbar, Johns (virtual), Barbara Lewis (virtual), Long and Tolchard (virtual))

19. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 14 July 2025 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

20. Matters for Consideration

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

- 21. Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Annual Report 2024 2025
- 22. Torbay Youth Justice Plan 2025-26
- 23. Adult Social Care Local Account Summary
- 24. Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Action Plan (2025 2030)
- 25. Acquisition of Land for the Delivery of Affordable Homes
- 26. Turnkey Acquisitions for Social Housing
- 27. Torquay Town Centre Place Vision
- 28. Budget Monitoring Revenue and Capital Outturn 2025/26 Quarter 1
- 29. Review of the Cabinet Capital Projects Working Party Terms of Reference

Chairman

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Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Annual Report 2024/2025

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 19 August 2025.

Decision

That the Local Authority Designated Officer Annual Report 2024-25 be endorsed and published in accordance with Council's requirements.

Reason for the Decision

Although not a statutory requirement, it was expected that an annual report be completed to inform the Local Authority and partner agencies about the number and nature of contacts with the LADO service.

Implementation

This decision will come into force and may be implemented on 2 September 2025 unless the call-in procedure is triggered (as set out in the Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny).

Information

The LADO Annual Report 2024/2025 provided a detailed account of the work undertaken by the LADO in Torbay between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025, focusing on safeguarding concerns involving individuals in positions of trust who work or volunteer with children.

At the meeting Councillor Bye proposed and Councillor David 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

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

Published

22 August	2025
Signed:	Date:
J	Deputy Leader of Torbay Council on behalf of the Cabinet

Torbay Youth Justice Service Plan 2025-26

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 19 August 2025.

Decision

That the Torbay Youth Justice Plan 2025-26 be approved and forwarded to the Youth Justice Board.

Reason for the Decision

The Council had a legal duty to produce and approve the Youth Justice Plan under Section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Furthermore, approval of the plan was necessary to secure funding from the Youth Justice Board and other statutory partners.

Implementation

This decision will come into force and may be implemented on 2 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 was required under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to approve and submit an annual Youth Justice Plan to the Youth Justice Board. The plan had been developed in consultation with partner agencies, staff, service users, and the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board.

The plan outlined how youth justice services were to be delivered and funded in Torbay, with a focus on:

- · preventing children from offending
- reducing reoffending
- preventing children from entering custody

The plan followed national guidance from the Youth Justice Board and reflected the Child First approach, which emphasised strengths-based, non-labelling support for children.

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

No alternative options were considered.

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Does the	can-in procedure appry:
Yes	
	ons of interest (including details of any relevant dispensations issued by the committee)
None	
Published	d
22 August	2025
Signed:	Date: Deputy Leader of Torbay Council on behalf of the Cabinet

Adult Social Care Local Account Summary

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 19 August 2025.

Decision

That the Adult Social Care Local Account Summary as set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report be approved to enable the Adult Social Care Local Account Summary to be published in accordance with Government requirements.

Reason for the Decision

Although not a statutory requirement, local authorities were encouraged to publish a Local Account Summary to demonstrate service performance and responsiveness.

Implementation

This decision will come into force and may be implemented on 2 September 2025 unless the call-in procedure is triggered (as set out in the Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny).

Information

The Adult Social Care (ASC) Local Account Summary for Torbay provided an overview of the service's performance, achievements, and challenges during the 2024–25 financial year and outlined priorities for 2025–26, including expanding reablement and direct payments, strengthening support for unpaid carers, developing extra care housing, and preparing for CQC inspection.

The Local Account Summary aimed to promote transparency and accountability to residents, service users, carers, and stakeholders, while supporting continuous improvement and collaborative working.

At the meeting Councillor Tranter proposed and Councillor David 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

No alternative options were considered. The presentation of the Local Account Summary was part of routine transparency and performance reporting, aligned with best practice and government expectations.

Is this a Key Decision?

Nο

Does the call-in procedure apply?

Yes

	Committee)
None	
Published	i
22 August	2025
Signed:	Date:
	Deputy Leader of Torbay Council on behalf of the Cabinet

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Action Plan (2025-2030)

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 19 August 2025.

Decision

- 1. that the Torbay Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Action Plan, as set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report be approved;
- 2. that Adult and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board be requested to track delivery against the action plan on a quarterly basis; and
- that any subsequent changes or additions to the Action Plan be approved by the Director of Adult and Community Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult and Community Services, Public Health and Inequalities.

Reason for the Decision

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy was a statutory requirement under the Homelessness Act 2002, and the subsequent Action Plan supported good governance and delivery.

Implementation

This decision will come into force and may be implemented on 2 September 2025 unless the call-in procedure is triggered (as set out in the Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny).

Information

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Action Plan was developed collaboratively by 45 organisations and individuals, following a relational engagement session in February 2025.

The action plan aimed to:

- strengthen cohesion and shared understanding across the homelessness sector.
- improve communication, data sharing, and connectivity.
- establish clear accommodation pathways and consistent support offers.
- align homelessness efforts with other Council strategies (e.g. Housing, Domestic Abuse, Economic Development).
- track progress through a performance framework and dashboards.

The priorities reflected the broad range of work that was undertaken to meet local housing need, including developing affordable housing, maintaining housing standards, and helping people to stay independent in their own homes, whilst preventing homelessness.

At the meeting Councillor Tranter proposed and Councillor Billings 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

No alternative options were considered. The adoption of the Action Plan was the logical next step following the approval of the overarching strategy and was essential for co-ordinated delivery.

s this a Key Decision?
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oes the call-in procedure apply?
es
eclarations of interest (including details of any relevant dispensations issued by the tandards Committee)
one
ublished
2 August 2025
igned: Date:
Deputy Leader of Torbay Council on behalf of the Cabinet

Acquisition of Land for the Delivery of Affordable Homes

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 19 August 2025

Decision

- 1. that the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Finance, and the Director of Pride in Place be granted delegated authority, to acquire on appropriate terms the site identified in Exempt Appendix 1, from the £1.2m revenue reserve allocated to support affordable housing delivery by Cabinet and Council in May 2025.
- 2. that the Director of Pride in Place bring forward proposals for how the site will be developed at the earliest opportunity.

Reason for the Decision

The site offered a timely opportunity to address the significant shortfall in affordable housing and reduce reliance on costly temporary accommodation. In doing so, the acquisition of the site supported Torbay's Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan, contributing to the goal of delivering more and better affordable homes.

Implementation

This decision will come into force and may be implemented on 2 September 2025 unless the call-in procedure is triggered (as set out in the Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny).

Information

A site in Brixham has become available for acquisition by the Council for the future development of approximately 14 affordable homes. The site was identified as a well-located, sustainable infill plot, suitable for social rent housing. The acquisition was to be funded from the £1.2 million ringfenced housing revenue reserve, with no additional borrowing required, unlocking new housing supply, reducing pressure on temporary accommodation, and support inclusive growth and community wellbeing.

At the meeting Councillor Tyerman proposed and Councillor Bye 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 alternative option would be to not proceed with the acquisition, thereby avoiding capital risk but missing the opportunity to address housing need, potentially damaging the Council's reputation and delaying progress toward Local Plan targets. This option was discounted.

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Does the t	
Yes	
	ons of interest (including details of any relevant dispensations issued by the Committee)
None	
Published	
22 August	2025
Signed:	Date: Deputy Leader of Torbay Council on behalf of the Cabinet
	Deputy Leader of Torbay Council on behalf of the Cabinet

Turnkey Acquisitions for Social Housing

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 19 August 2025.

Decision

- that delegated authority be granted to the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Finance, and the Director of Pride in Place, to acquire 14 homes at Site A and 4 homes at Site B, as located in Exempt Appendices 2 and 3 for affordable housing, subject to the satisfactory completion of all due diligence and securing an acceptable allocation of grant funding from Homes England;
- 2. that the required long-term borrowing be funded from the £20m prudential borrowing headroom agreed by Full Council in May 2025, and utilise an allocation of internal affordable housing capital funding for each site as proposed in Exempt Appendix 1 to reduce prudential borrowing and deliver a viable scheme overall, with delegation granted to the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Finance to agree the precise mix of internal funding sources from relevant existing approved budgets;
- 3. that delegated authority be given to the Head of Strategic Housing and Delivery to seek the maximum amount of grant funding that is considered reasonable and likely from Homes England;
- 4. that delegated authority be given to the Head of Strategic Housing and Delivery, in consultation with the Director of Finance, to finalise terms to acquire the developments; and
- 5. that delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to make the final decision as to the split of the properties between those in temporary accommodation and care experienced young people.

Reason for the Decision

Torbay faced acute housing challenges, with 1,600 households registered for social housing and around 160 in temporary accommodation at any time. Furthermore, the proposal represents a cost-effective and timely opportunity to deliver against multiple strategic objectives demonstrating the Council's willingness to strengthen its response to local housing pressures.

Implementation

This decision will come into force and may be implemented on 2 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 had the opportunity to acquire 14 newly built, well located homes in Torquay (Site A) and 4 homes in Paignton (Site B) through turnkey arrangements, including the associated freeholds. These acquisitions were intended to deliver affordable housing for social

rent, primarily for households in temporary accommodation and care experienced young people.

The Council had applied for Homes England grant funding to subsidise the purchases and enable tenure conversion to social rent. The acquisitions were to be funded through a mix of internal capital and prudential borrowing from the £20 million headroom approved by Council in May 2025.

At the meeting Councillor Tyerman 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

Option 1 the preferred option - was to proceed with the acquisition of the Sites A and B, to deliver 18 new homes and enable their conversion for social rent, to be let to households currently living in Temporary Accommodation, other forms of emergency/supported housing or care experienced young people. As both schemes were below Torbay's threshold of 15 homes, neither scheme would otherwise provide affordable housing tenures – the Council's intervention therefore significantly enhances the benefit of the projects to the community in Torbay.

Option 2 - not to proceed with the purchases. Whilst this option would avoid capital risk; it would not improve the housing situation and would be less likely to secure delivery of the site to meet Local Plan targets in the short-medium term. It would also mean Torbay misses an opportunity to increase its social housing stock.

ls this a	Key Decision?
No	
Does the	e call-in procedure apply?
Yes	
	cions of interest (including details of any relevant dispensations issued by the dis Committee)
None	
Publishe	ed
22 Augus	st 2025
Signed:	Date:
oigi ieu.	Deputy Leader of Torbay Council on behalf of the Cabinet

Torquay Town Centre Place Vision

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 19 August 2025

Decision

- 1. that, subject to including Cary Green as a green space for public realm improvements, the use of the Torquay Vision document (as set out at Appendix 1) to steer both the delivery of current regeneration sites and the development of future proposals for the sites and areas of public realm identified by the vision as suggested priorities be approved;
- 2. that delegated authority be given to the Director of Pride in Place to make minor amendments to the vision in consultation with the Leader of the Council, noting that any proposed substantial amendments will be presented to Cabinet for approval.

Reason for the Decision

To respond to the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Board and to provide a guiding document to:

- increase investment in our three towns to enable them to develop their own distinct identities and role:
- attract, retain, and grow our economic specialisms so we have growth which builds on our reputation;
- create a future pipeline of investment priorities derived from the evidence used to produce the Visions and from our emerging Economic Plan.

Implementation

This decision will come into force and may be implemented on 2 September 2025 unless the call-in procedure is triggered (as set out in the Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny).

Information

The successful bids for Future High Streets Funding, Town Deal, Levelling Up Partnership, Levelling Up Round 3 (LUF3), and the recent direct award through the Plans for Neighbourhoods, in addition to the development sites acquired by the Council since 2019, had created the need for a place vision that links the funding and assets (development sites) together. This would create a clear vision of how development sites work together to regenerate Torbay as whole, and at local level to address both the needs and exploit the opportunities of the economies of Brixham Port and Town Centre, Paignton Town Centre and Harbour and Torquay Town Centre and Harbour. Change will come through using the overall vision across Torbay to shape existing and future proposals in line with the vision for Torbay and at a local level in more detailed the visions for Brixham, Paignton and Torquay.

As the development proposals for the sites in Torquay were the most advanced, the Torquay vision had been produced iteratively with the delivery of Harbour Public Realm and its positive

outcomes, the development of the site proposals for Union Square, The Strand and the restoration of the Pavilion and emerging ideas for Lower Union Lane and Fleet Street/Fleet Walk.

The Overview and Scrutiny Board considered the Torquay Town Centre Place Vision report on 13 August 2025 and made recommendations to Cabinet. At the meeting Councillor Chris Lewis proposed and Councillor David 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

Option 1 – Do Nothing – This would have resulted in handing back the OPE 8 funding allocated for the purpose of producing a strategy of for Transforming Torbay.

Option 2 – Take a statutory Masterplanning approach by updating the current adopted Masterplans for Paignton and Torquay Town Centres. This would have taken a longer period of time and not covered the wider Torbay area and been subject to a length statutory consultation period. With the current Government requiring that all Local Plans were to be updated by the end of the current parliament the visions along with the new Local Plan can inform the need to update or supersede the current town centre Masterplans.

Option 3 – The preferred option - produce vision documents for; Torbay, Brixham Port and Town Centre, Paignton Town Centre and Harbour and Torquay Town Centre and Harbour.

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Budget Monitoring - Revenue and Capital Outturn 2025/26 Quarter 1

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 19 August 2025.

Decision

- 1. that the forecasted revenue outturn position and amendments made to the published 2025/26 Capital Investment Plan be noted.
- 2. that, subject to Council approving the additional capital as set out in paragraph 2.6 of the submitted report, the Director of Finance be given delegated authority to agree appropriate terms and grant a capital loan up to £2.5m to SWISCo for fleet modernisation; and

Recommends to Council:

- 3. that Council approves the revisions to the Capital Investment Plan, as per Appendix 1;
- 4. that Council approve the additional borrowing of up to £2.5m to facilitate a capital loan to SWISCo to enable them to modernise their fleet; and
- 5. that Council approves an update to the Capital Programme of up to £3m allocated from Levelling Up Round 3 (LUF3) grant to acquire the required land for the delivery of the Torbay Tech Park.

Reason for the Decision

To ensure the Council operates in a prudent manner and works to maintain a balanced budget.

Implementation

The decision in respect of 1. and 2. will come into force and may be implemented on 2 September 2025 unless the call-in procedure is triggered (as set out in the Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny). The decisions in respect of 3. to 5. will be considered at the Council meeting on 11 September 2025.

Information

The Budget Monitoring 2025/26 report set out a high-level budget summary of the Council's revenue and capital position based on the levels of spend and financial information at the end of quarter 1 (Q1), up to 30 June 2025.

The Overview and Scrutiny Board considered the Budget Monitoring 2025/26 report on 13 August 2025 and did not make any recommendations. At the Cabinet meeting, Councillor Tyerman proposed and Councillor Jackie Thomas seconded a motion that was agreed unanimously, as set out above.

Alternative Options considered and rejected at the time of the decision

None

Is this a K	(ey Decision?
No	
Does the	call-in procedure apply?
Yes	
	ons of interest (including details of any relevant dispensations issued by the Committee)
None	
Published	1
22 August	2025
Signed:	Date:
J	Deputy Leader of Torbay Council on behalf of the Cabinet

Review of the Cabinet Capital Projects Working Party Terms of Reference

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 19 August 2025.

Decision

That the Terms of Reference of the Cabinet Capital Projects Working Party be amended as follows (additions shown in **bold**):

Cabinet **Regeneration** and Capital Projects Working Party

To receive detailed briefings on the Council's overarching Regeneration Programme and the Council's work with its Regeneration Partner.

To receive detailed briefings on capital projects, to ensure Members have up to date information on key capital projects and be aware of upcoming project milestones and future Council decisions related to the overall Programme and to allow officers to seek Members views (individual and collective) on certain project elements where options are available.

Reason for the Decision

Widening the Terms of Reference for the Cabinet Capital Projects Working Party will ensure regeneration workstreams are incorporated.

Implementation

This decision will come into force and may be implemented on 2 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 Capital Projects Working Party had been tracking projects that already had capital funding, but there was a gap in visibility when it came to regeneration projects that hadn't yet been allocated capital funding. This made it harder for Members to get a full picture of progress and priorities.

The Group Leaders reviewed the Terms of Reference and suggested amendments for the Cabinet to consider.

At the meeting Councillor David 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

To not change the Terms of Reference and propose an alternative way to update Members. This option was not recommended as it would not provide oversight of intended regeneration projects.

Is this a Key Decision?	
No	
Does the call-in procedure apply?	
Yes	
Declarations of interest (including details of any relevant displayed Standards Committee)	pensations issued by the
None	
Published	
22 August 2025	
Signed:	Date:

Deputy Leader of Torbay Council on behalf of the Cabinet



Meeting: Cabinet Date: 16 September 2025

Wards affected: All

Report Title: Community Grant Fund 2025 - Funding Awards Tranche 1

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

Cabinet Member Contact Details: Councillor Jackie Thomas, Cabinet Member for Tourism, Culture & Events and Corporate Services, <u>Jackie.thomas@torbay.gov.uk</u>

Director Contact Details: Matthew Fairclough-Kay, Director of Corporate Services, matthew.fairclough-kay@torbay.gov.uk

1. Purpose and Introduction

- 1.1 Torbay Council introduced a Community Grant Fund for 2025 to further support the voluntary and community sector organisations because we believe that a vibrant Third Sector is vital to our community.
- 1.2 The Council is committed to supporting organisations that deliver projects which have a beneficial impact on the local community and support one or more of the Council's strategic themes from the Torbay Community and Corporate Plan. This grant fund aims to further enable work in Torbay's deprived areas outside of Torquay, which is benefiting from other significant place-based funding.
- 1.3 The Council received 69 applications for funding. All of the applications have been evaluated by the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance and their recommendations for the first tranche of awards are enclosed at the Appendix. There will follow a second tranche of awards, to be determined at the Cabinet meeting in November this year, following clarification questions relating to a small number of applicants.
- 1.4 Funding has been allocated above the revenue split expected due to the nature of the applications received and the desired outcomes of the fund.

2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

2.1 The proposals in this report help us to deliver the Council's ambition by providing further funding to the voluntary and community sector organisations in support of our long-term objectives for the Bay.

3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

- 1. That 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 at Appendix 1 are approved and delegated authority be given to Director of Finance, to enter into funding agreements with the relevant parties in accordance with the Community Grant Fund Policy 2025/26.

Appendix

Appendix 1: Community Grant Fund 2025 tranche 1 funding awards.

Background Documents

NA

Supporting Information

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Torbay Council introduced a Community Grant Fund for 2025/26 to further support the voluntary and community sector organisations because we believe that a vibrant Third Sector is vital to our community.
- 1.2 The Council is committed to supporting organisations that deliver projects which have a beneficial impact on the local community and support one or more of the Council's strategic themes from the Torbay Community and Corporate Plan. This grant fund aims to further enable work in Torbay's deprived areas outside of Torquay, which is benefiting from other significant place-based funding.

2. Options under consideration

2.1 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.

3. Financial Opportunities and Implications

3.1 This fund is limited to the current budget year; applications will be assessed against the outcomes in our Community and Corporate Plan to ensure that the allocations further the agreed objectives contain therein.

4. Legal Implications

4.1 The Council will enter into a grant agreement with the relevant organisation to ensure that the grant payments are managed appropriately.

5. Engagement and Consultation

5.1 This fund was included as part of the budget consultation for 25/26. At the Council Meeting of 27 Feb 2025, the Chief Finance Officer 2025/26 Budget Update Report included the following information on this allocation in relation to the receipt of the Recovery Grant:

The receipt of circa £2m 'Recovery Grant' for 2025/26 has been allocated based on a national formula whereby Councils with large pockets of deprivation have received larger sums. Several specific allocations within this budget update paper will help address deprivation issues including funding for:

- Affordable housing;
- · Child care preventative measures; Page 29

- · Youth Justice and Family Assessment Resource Centre;
- · Play Parks and
- Sport and Leisure

In addition to this, £200k one-off funding is allocated to enable further targeted support for local communities. This could be in the form of a 'Community Grant Fund' with options for facilitating applications / payments being considered alongside existing grant funding arrangements such as the Household Support and Lottery Funds.

£18k on-going funding is also being added to Community Ward budgets increasing the amount of spend available for each Councillor to £2,500 per annum.

6. Purchasing or Hiring of Goods and/or Services

6.1 Not applicable

7. Tackling Climate Change

7.1 Grant applications have been assessed using the strategic themes in the Community and Corporate Plan, including those relating to tackling climate change.

8. Associated Risks

8.1 Entering into funding agreements with third parties carries inherent risk. Such risk is mitigated through the application process and due diligence. Details on what the Council require from applicants to mitigate financial and delivery risk were provided to Cabinet when launching the fund and are available on the website.

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 Page 31	18 per cent of Torbay residents are under 18 years old. 55 per cent of Torbay residents are aged between 18 to 64 years old. 27 per cent of Torbay residents are aged 65 and older.	The Community Grant Fund 25/26 will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's older and younger residents. We know that older people face increased fragility as they age and may require additional support to live independently. We also know that young people benefit from having access to good quality education and skills development opportunities and a healthy home environment.	Not applicable	Not applicable

		It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of the Fund.		
Page	At the time of the 2021 census there were 14,900 unpaid carers in Torbay. 5,185 of these provided 50 hours or more of care.	The Community Grant Fund 25/26 will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's residents who are carers. It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of the Fund.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Disability	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.	The Community Grant Fund 25/26 will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents. This includes people with disabilities as we recognise that they face additional barriers when accessing buildings and participating in public life. The Fund may provide opportunities to enhance accessibility.	Not applicable	Not applicable

		To support people with disabilities, reasonable adjustments are available throughout the Community Grant Fund application process to support people with disabilities with applying for the Fund. It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of the Fund.		
Gender reassignment Page 33	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.	The Community Grant Fund 25/26 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 the Fund.	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.	The Community Grant Fund 25/26 will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.	Not applicable	Not applicable

		It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of the Fund.		
Pregnancy and maternity Page 34	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.	The Community Grant Fund 25/26 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 the Fund.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Race	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, Asian and minority ethnic individuals are more likely	The Community Grant Fund 25/26 will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents and promoting equality and community cohesion.	Not applicable	Not applicable

	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 the Fund.		
Religion and belief	64.8% of Torbay residents who stated that they have a religion in the 2021 census.	The Community Grant Fund 25/26 will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents and promoting equality and community cohesion. It is not anticipated that any adverse	Not applicable	Not applicable
Page 35		impacts will be caused by the implementation of the Fund.		
Sex	51.3% of Torbay's population are female and 48.7% are male	The Community Grant Fund 25/26 will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents.	Not applicable	Not applicable
		It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of the Fund.		

Sexual orientation	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.	The Community Grant Fund 25/26 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 the Fund.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Veterans Page 36	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 Community Grant Fund 25/26 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 the Fund.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Additional considerations				
Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child		The Community Grant Fund 25/26 will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes	Not applicable	Not applicable

poverty and deprivation)	supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents including those from disadvantaged backgrounds. It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of the Fund.		
Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay) Page 37	The Community Grant Fund 25/26 will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which will contribute to positive public health outcomes. It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of the Fund.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Human Rights impacts	The Community Grant Fund 25/26 will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's most vulnerable residents. It will operate in accordance with the Human Rights Act despite an eligibility criteria which limits some activity e.g. That of a political nature.	Not applicable	Not applicable

		It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of the Fund.		
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.	The Community Grant Fund 25/26 will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting Torbay's young residents. It is not anticipated that any adverse impacts will be caused by the implementation of the Fund.	Not applicable	Not applicable

10. Cumulative Council Impact

10.1 The Community Grant Fund will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting the broad spectrum of Torbay's residents. It is therefore, anticipated that the cumulative council impact will be positive.

11. Cumulative Community Impact

11.1 The Community Grant Fund will help to ensure that the organisation meets its corporate vision and aims which includes supporting the broad spectrum of Torbay's residents. It is therefore, anticipated that the cumulative community impact will be positive.

Appendix 1

Grant Allocations – Tranche 1

Applicant	Brief Description	Award
Children's Week (Torbay)	Mobile PA system	£1,616
Church 180	Flat renovation, cost of materials.	£15,000
Foxhole Community Association	Replacement equipment for young people's free meals	£20,000
Gaia Giving CIC	Gazebo to enable year-round access	£4,122
Great Parks Community Fund	Capital works funding	£35,000
Home Start South & West Devon Ltd	Volunteer recruitment activities	£20,000
Sound Communities	New outreach activity and refurbishment of bus	£20,000
The Music Factory	New equipment and instruments	£4,000
Torbay Citizens Advice Bureau	Capital costs for new pop-up advice surgery - Visibility in deprived wards	£10,400
Torbay Furniture Project CIC	Providing recycled furniture to deprived areas	£10,000

Agenda Item 7



Meeting: Cabinet Date: 16th September 2025

Wards affected: All

Report Title: Corporate Parenting Strategy

When does the decision need to be implemented? Immediately

Cabinet Member Contact Details: Cllr Nick Bye, Lead Cabinet Member Children's Services -

nick.bye@torbay.gov.uk

Director Contact Details: Nancy Meehan, Director of Children's Services –

Nancy.meehan@torbay.gov.uk

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. Torbay Council's existing 'Corporate Parenting Strategy 2022 2025' is due to expire this year and as such, a new strategy is being developed by the Chief Executive, Anne-Marie Bond, and the Children's Independent Consultant, Steve Hart.
- 1.2. 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.
- 1.3. To ensure the development of a comprehensive and inclusive Corporate Parenting Strategy, we will undertake a thorough consultation process. This 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 outlined within this report will take place within the period of other planned activity to ensure that it informs and influences the Strategy which will then be placed before Cabinet in November 2025 and subsequently full Council in December 2025. Therefore, permission is sought from Cabinet to allow the Director of Children's Services delegated authority through a Record of Decision to initiate this consultation, in line with the strategy development.
- 1.4. The consultation process will involve engaging with a wide range of stakeholders, including cared for and care experienced children and young people, as well as our partners in education, police, health services, and the voluntary and community sector.
- 1.5. We will use a variety of methods to gather input, such as surveys, focus groups, and public meetings and events, to ensure that wpager4 diverse perspectives and insights. This

collaborative approach will help us to develop a strategy that is responsive to the needs and aspirations of all those children and young people affected, and one that reflects our commitment to being truly aspirational corporate parents.

2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

- 2.1. As previously mentioned, the purpose of this report is to inform members about the necessity of developing a new Corporate Parenting Strategy and in particular outline the consultation process we will undertake to inform the strategy.
- 2.2. Under the Children and Social Work Act 2017, the legislative responsibility for local authorities in respect of their corporate parenting duties is 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 highlights that corporate parenting is a task which should be shared Council-wide and across the partnership.
- 2.3. This includes ensuring that these children and young people have access to the necessary support and services to help them achieve positive outcomes. The strategy must also reflect the Council's commitment to being a supportive, responsive, considerate, and sensitive corporate parent, working in collaboration with partners in education, police, health services, and the community and voluntary sector.
- 2.4. We want to ensure that across the Council, including elected members, senior officers and all staff, there is 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.
- 2.5. As such this report has been drafted to inform members of the consultation exercise that we will undertake to inform the updating of this critical strategy.

3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

3.1. 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.

4. Appendices

Appendix 1: Corporate Parenting Survey Appendix 2: Guidance Sheet for Feedback

5. Background Documents

None

Supporting Information

6. Introduction

- 6.1. Torbay Council's existing Corporate Parenting Strategy 2022 2025 is due to expire this year and as such a new strategy needs to be developed as part of the new strategy we aim to improve the experience and outcomes for children and young people in care by involving them meaningfully in its development and evaluation. This includes a review of the Corporate Parenting Action Plan aligned to the Strategy in terms of delivery of principles in action, consideration of previous pledges of cared for and care experienced children and young people, how the voice of children and young people is influencing service development priorities and the evidence of impact in terms of strategy implementation over the last five years.
- 6.2. As part of this process, we will emphasise collaboration with young people, practitioners, and other stakeholders to ensure the Strategy is a living document focused on trust and actionable commitments.
- 6.3. This is a serious effort to enhance care experiences, not merely a procedural exercise, and the final Strategy will be the foundation used to support young people in evaluating progress and holding us/the system accountable.
- 6.4. To aid this, a feedback survey has been developed which includes several questions designed to gather feedback from young people. These questions cover topics such as views on the name 'corporate parents', what a corporate parent should do, awareness of the 'Promise to you' pledge, and the suggested 'priorities' of the strategy. Each question is accompanied by prompts and examples to help young people articulate their thoughts and feelings this can be found at appendix one.
- 6.5. In addition to the survey outlined above, we have developed supplementary tools to support our consultation efforts, including conversational tools and a professional's guide for use in one to one conversations. For further details, please refer to appendix two.
- 6.6. Given the significance of the strategy, it is classified as a 'Policy Framework' document, and therefore, the final strategy will require approval from Full Council. To ensure that we have a new strategy in place for 2026, this is scheduled for Full Council consideration in December 2025. To meet the governance deadlines and to allow for a meaningful six-week consultation period, we need to commence the consultation process immediately and seek delegated authority to the Director of Children's Services, to enable this to happen at pace.

7. Options under consideration

- 7.1. No other options have been considered.
- 8. Financial Opportunities and Implications
- 8.1. N/A

9. Legal Implications

- 9.1. As stated above Local authorities must adhere to the corporate parenting principles set out in section 1 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. These principles require local authorities to consider the needs and best interests of cared for children and care experienced young people when exercising their functions.
- 9.2. This includes ensuring that these children and young people have access to the necessary support and services to help them achieve positive outcomes. The strategy must also reflect the Council's commitment to being a supportive, responsive, considerate, and sensitive corporate parent, working in collaboration with partners in education, police, health services, and the community and voluntary sector.

10. Engagement and Consultation

- 10.1. To ensure the development of a comprehensive and inclusive Corporate Parenting Strategy, we will undertake a thorough consultation process. This will involve engaging with a wide range of stakeholders, including cared for and care experienced children and young people, as well as our partners in education, police, health services, and the community and voluntary sector.
- 10.2. We will use a variety of methods to gather input, such as surveys, focus groups, and public meetings, to ensure that we capture diverse perspectives and insights. This collaborative approach will help us to develop a strategy that is responsive to the needs and aspirations of all those involved, and that reflects our commitment to being a supportive and considerate corporate parent.

11. Procurement Implications

11.1. N/A

12. Protecting our naturally inspiring Bay and tackling Climate Change

12.1. N/A

13. Associated Risks

- 13.1. Non-compliance with statutory requirements: Local authorities must adhere to the corporate parenting principles set out in section 1 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. Failure to update the strategy could result in non-compliance with these statutory requirements, leading to legal and reputational risks for the Council.
- 13.2. Lack of stakeholder engagement: Without consultation, there is a risk that the voices of cared for and care experienced children and young people, as well as partners in education, police, health services, and the community and voluntary sector, may not be adequately captured. This could result in a strategy that does not fully reflect the needs and aspirations of all those involved.

13.3.	Implementation challenges: The successful implementation of the strategy requires collaboration between various departments and partners. Without an updated strategy and proper consultation, coordination and communication challenges among these stakeholders could hinder the effective execution of the strategy.

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 Page 46	18 per cent of Torbay residents are under 18 years old. 55 per cent of Torbay residents are aged between 18 to 64 years old. 27 per cent of Torbay residents are aged 65 and older.	The development and implementation of the Corporate Parenting Strategy will consider the diverse needs and characteristics of all stakeholders involved, including cared for and care experienced children and young people, as well as our partners in education, police, health services, and the community and voluntary sector. The strategy aims to ensure that all children and young people, regardless of their background or circumstances, have access to the necessary support and services to help them achieve positive outcomes.	To mitigate any potential adverse impacts, we will implement targeted actions and interventions. These may include providing additional support services, ensuring accessible communication, and promoting inclusive practices across all areas of the strategy.	The Children's Services department will be responsible for implementing the mitigation activities outlined. The timeframe for implementation will align with the overall timeline for the development and execution of the Corporate Parenting Strategy.

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Page	At the time of the 2021 census there were 14,900 unpaid carers in Torbay. 5,185 of these provided 50 hours or more of care.	Foster carers, parents and kinship carers are of great significance in achieving our corporate parenting aspirations. It will be of critical importance to involve them in the consultation process, and ensure that their voice is reflected in the final Strategy. The principles within the Strategy are reflected in our Fostering Family Charter, and how Torbay as corporate parents interact with our fostering families, parents and carers and work with them to meet our cared for children and care experienced young people's needs.	As above	As above
isability	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.	Cared for and care experienced children and young people can experience SEND in their own right, as can their parents, carers or fostering families. It is important that the consultation process is as representative as possible, and captures the lived experience of those who experience SEND, both in terms of effective support and barriers they may face.	As above	As above
Gender reassignment	In the 2021 Census, 0.4% of Torbay's community answered that their gender	There are a number of cared for and care experienced children and young people who identify as a	As above	As above

	identity was not the same as their sex registered at birth. This proportion is similar to the Southwest and is lower than England.	gender other than the sex registered at their birth. Considering the stigma that can be associated with being cared for or care experienced, and the impact of gender reassignment discrimination, it is vital that any such experience is understood, and that as corporate parents, the right support is available for children and young people.		
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.	No differential impact	As above	As above
Pregnancy and maternity	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.	No differential impact	As above	As above

Page 49	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, 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.	The heritage, ethnicity and cultural identity of our care for and care experienced young people is one of the most important things to assess, consider and support. Increasingly, Torbay is welcoming a number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children, for whom this is particularly important. Considering the stigma that can be associated with being cared for or care experienced, and the impact of racism and racial discrimination, it is vital that any such experience is understood, and that as corporate parents, the right support is available for children and young people.	As above	As above
Religion and belief	64.8% of Torbay residents who stated that they have a religion in the 2021 census.	Our cared for and care experienced young people	As above	As above
Sex	51.3% of Torbay's population are female and 48.7% are male	No differential impact	As above	As above
Sexual orientation	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	Considering the stigma that can be associated with being cared for or care experienced, and the impact of discrimination due to sexual orientation, it is vital that any such	As above	As above

	describe their sexual orientation.	experience is understood, and that as corporate parents, the right support is available for children and young people.		
Armed Forces Community	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 served in the UK armed forces.	No differential impact	As above	As above
Additional considerat	ions			
Socio-economic mpacts (Including mpacts on child poverty and deprivation)		The Corporate Parenting Strategy aims to address the socio-economic challenges faced by cared for and care experienced children and young people in Torbay. By providing targeted support and services, the strategy seeks to mitigate the effects of child poverty and deprivation, ensuring that all children and young people have the opportunity to achieve positive outcomes. This includes access to education, healthcare, and other essential services that contribute to their overall well-being and development.	To mitigate the socio- economic impacts related to the Corporate Parenting Strategy, several targeted actions and interventions can be implemented. These activities aim to address the challenges faced by cared for and care experienced children and young people in Torbay, ensuring they have the opportunity to achieve positive outcomes: • promoting inclusive practices across all areas of the strategy is essential. This involves	The Children's Services department will be responsible for implementing the mitigation activities outlined. The timeframe for implementation will align with the overall timeline for the development and execution of the

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The strategy will also focus on improving the socio-economic conditions of families and communities, recognising that a supportive environment is crucial for the success of children and young people. By working collaboratively with partners in education, police, health services, and the community and voluntary sector, the strategy aims to create a holistic approach to addressing socio-economic disparities and promoting social inclusion.

Furthermore, the strategy will include measures to monitor and evaluate the impact of these initiatives, ensuring that they are effective in reducing child poverty and deprivation. This will involve collecting and analysing data on key indicators, such as educational attainment, health outcomes, and access to services, to identify areas for improvement and make necessary adjustments.

working collaboratively with partners in education, police, health services, and the community and voluntary sector to create a holistic approach to addressing socio-economic disparities and promoting social inclusion. By fostering a supportive environment, we can improve the socioeconomic conditions of families and communities, which is crucial for the success of children and young people

 The ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the initiatives within the final strategy will be vital. This will include collecting and analysing data on key indicators such as educational attainment, health outcomes, and Corporate Parenting Strategy.

		access to services. By identifying areas for improvement and making necessary adjustments, we can ensure that the initiatives are effective in reducing child poverty and deprivation.	
Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of forbay)	By committing to this Strategy, Torbay will be committing to the supporting all of our cared for children and care experienced young people in order to meet their needs, and to achieve their best outcomes; by doing this, we will have a significant, positive impact on the longer term health outcomes for cared for children and care experienced young people.	As above	As above
Human Rights impacts	Links to the Convention on the Rights of the Child: This consultation honour the rights of cared for and care experienced children and young people in terms of participation and non-discrimination.	As above	As above

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² age	
53	

Child Friendly	Torbay Council is a Child Friendly Council, and all staff	This consultation and resulting Strategy is a fundamental part of	As above	As above
	and Councillors are Corporate Parents and have a responsibility towards cared	Torbay's Child Friendly commitment.		
	for and care experienced children and young people.			

15. Cumulative Council Impact

15.1. The cumulative impact on the Council for implementing the Corporate Parenting Strategy is multifaceted and significant. This strategy aims to enhance the Council's role as a supportive, responsive, considerate, and sensitive corporate parent. By doing so, it will positively influence the lives of cared for and care experienced children and young people in Torbay.

16. Cumulative Community Impacts

16.1. The cumulative community impact of the Corporate Parenting Strategy will be far-reaching - the strategy will foster a supportive environment by working collaboratively with partners in education, police, health services, and the community and voluntary sector. This holistic approach will help to promote social inclusion, reduce socio-economic disparities, and ensure that all children and young people have the opportunity to achieve positive outcomes.



Feedback on the Corporate Parent Strategy

The Corporate Parenting Strategy, also known as the 'Our Promise to You' pledge, is a plan that helps adults understand how to give the best support possible. It's designed to make sure adults do everything they can to help children in care feel safe, happy, and ready for their future.

We're making changes to this plan, and your ideas will help us make it better.

🙎 About You	
• Age:	
Are you	
☐ In care	
☐ Care experienced	
☐ Prefer not to say	
② ② ③ ○ 1. We call the adults and organ care 'corporate parents'. Does that name f them instead?	isations who support young people in feel right to you? If not, what would you call
2. What do you think a 'corporate pare	ent' should do?
(Pick as many as you like)	
☐ Be there when I need help	
☐ Listen to me and take me seriously	
\square Help me feel safe and cared for	
☐ Support me with school, college or work	
☐ Treat me with respect	
☐ Make sure I have a good place to live	
□ Other:	
$\begin{picture}(100,0) \put(0,0){\line(0,0){100}} \put(0,0){\line(0,0){10$	o you' pledge for children in care?
□ Yes	□ No

Page 1 of 5 Page 55

4. Priorities

where you live?

The pledge outlines our commitment to supporting young people in care like you. This pledge has **five key priorities** that were co-created with children and young people in care, and we want to hear your thoughts on each of them. Your feedback will tell us how well these priorities are being met by us.

Priority 1: We will work with you

On a scale of 1 to 5, how involved do you feel in the decisions that affect your life?
(1 = You feel like you never get to help make decisions about your life. Other people decide everything for you. 5 = You feel like you always get help making decisions about your life. Your ideas and opinions are always listened to)
⊕ 1 □
Is there anything you think we could do better, or anything you feel is going really well in how we work together?
Priority 2: We will ensure your placement (where you live) is safe and meets your needs
On a scale of 1 to 5, how safe and comfortable do you feel in your current placement (where you live)?
(1 = You don't feel safe or comfortable where you live. 5 = You feel very safe and comfortable where you live.)
② 1□ ② 2□ ③ 3□ ③ 4□ ② 5□

Is there anything you think we could do better, or anything you feel is going really well about

Priority 3: We will support you to fulfil your potential (help you to achieve your goals and dreams)

On a scale of 1 to 5, how supported do you feel in pursuing your goals and dreams?
(1 = You don't feel supported in reaching your goals. 5 = You feel fully supported to reach your goals and dreams)
ⓐ 1□ ② 2□ ○ 3□ ○ 4□ ○ 5□
Is there anything we could improve in the support we provide, or anything you feel is working particularly well in helping you achieve your goals?
Priority 4: We will ensure that your physical, emotional, mental health needs are met
Priority 4: We will ensure that your physical, emotional, mental health needs are met On a scale of 1 to 5, how well do you feel your physical, emotional, and mental health needs are being met? (1 = Your health needs are not being met at all. 5 = All your health needs are being completely met)
On a scale of 1 to 5, how well do you feel your physical, emotional, and mental health needs are being met? (1 = Your health needs are not being met at all. 5 = All your health needs are being
On a scale of 1 to 5, how well do you feel your physical, emotional, and mental health needs are being met? (1 = Your health needs are not being met at all. 5 = All your health needs are being completely met)
On a scale of 1 to 5, how well do you feel your physical, emotional, and mental health needs are being met? (1 = Your health needs are not being met at all. 5 = All your health needs are being completely met) (2) 1
On a scale of 1 to 5, how well do you feel your physical, emotional, and mental health needs are being met? (1 = Your health needs are not being met at all. 5 = All your health needs are being completely met) (2) 1
On a scale of 1 to 5, how well do you feel your physical, emotional, and mental health needs are being met? (1 = Your health needs are not being met at all. 5 = All your health needs are being completely met) (2) 1
On a scale of 1 to 5, how well do you feel your physical, emotional, and mental health needs are being met? (1 = Your health needs are not being met at all. 5 = All your health needs are being completely met) (2) 1

Priority 5: You will be supported to develop into an independent, confident and responsible adult

(This means that you'll get support to learn to do things by yourself, believe in yourself and make good choices).

On a scale of 1 to 5, how well do you feel supported to develop into an independent, confident and responsible adult?
(1 = You don't feel supported to grow into an independent adult. 5 = You feel fully supported to grow into an independent, confident and responsible adult)
❷ 1□ ❷ 2□ ❷ 3□ ❷ 4□ ❸ 5□
Is there anything you feel is missing, could be improved, or is working well in how we support your confidence and independence as you move toward adulthood?
5. What does 'amazing' support look like to you? We understand that your experiences in care may have included positive and negative
things. Our goal is to ensure that the support and care you receive is 'amazing'. To help us improve, we would like you to tell us about what 'amazing' care should look like.

6. Is there anything else you want to say?					
Thinking about your care experience, is there anything else that is working for you right now that you're happy with or anything you think could be better? You can write or draw your thoughts in the box below—whatever feels easiest for you.					





Guidance sheet for Corporate Parent Strategy feedback form

Practical Materials Required:

- Printed copies of the survey (with large print or simplified versions if needed)
- · Pens, pencils, highlighters, and erasers
- Sticky notes for jotting down thoughts or ideas before answering

Other useful aids:

- Mood cards or emoji cards to help express feelings
- Drawing materials (paper, markers, crayons) for those who prefer to draw their answers
- Fidget toys or sensory items to help with focus and comfort
- Prompt cards with simplified versions of each question or examples
- Flashcards with the five priorities and what they mean in plain language
- Scenario cards (e.g. "What would a great foster carer do?") to spark ideas
- Yes/No paddles or thumbs-up/down cards for quick responses (we have paddles available in the Learning Academy office at the Town Hall)

Visual rating scales

Some questions use a rating scale (see below). Please choose the option that best reflects how the young person feels about the question. The scale is from 1 to 5.

⊕ 1 □ ♀ 2 □ ⊕ 3 □ ⊕ 4 □ ⊕ 5 □

Set the scene

Provide a youth-friendly description of what a corporate parent and corporate parent strategy is. Be sure to offer to read the blurb aloud to young people if they prefer to aid in comprehension. Once this is done then you can move on to the first question:

Q1.We call the adults and organisations who support young people in care 'corporate parents'. Does that name feel right to you? If not, what would you call them instead?

- Start with a **clear and simple explanation** of what a corporate parent is When we say corporate parent, we mean all the adults and organisations –

- social workers, teachers, the local council who are here to support you, just like a good parent would
- **Prompt with examples if needed**: "some young people have suggested names like 'Support Team' or 'Safe Circle'
- Reassure: "whatever you think is totally fine, we just want to hear your voice"

Q2. What do you think a 'corporate parent' should do?

- Go through each of the multiple choice options one by one and ask openended questions:
- **Be there when I need help -** "Can you think of a time when you needed help—what did you want from the adults around you?"
- **Listen to me and take me seriously -** "Do you feel like adults listen to you? What does being taken seriously look like to you?"
- **Help me feel safe and cared for -** "What makes you feel safe? Who helps you feel cared for?"
- Support me with school, college or work "What kind of support do you need with school or your future plans?"
- Treat me with respect "What does respect mean to you? How do you know when someone is treating you with respect?"
- Make sure I have a good place to live "What makes a place feel like a good home to you?"
- For the "Other" box, prompt them to think about anything that's important to them that isn't listed:

"Is there anything else you think a good corporate parent should do that's not on this list?"

If the young people prefer, they could possibly be encouraged to write or draw their answers in 'Other'

Q3. Have you heard about our 'Promise to you' pledge for children in care?

- Simple 'yes' or 'no' answer required only
- Mood scale, or thumbs up/down paddles could be used in non-verbal cases or to increase confidence

Priorities

Priority 1: We will work with you

- **Reassure and empower** before asking any of the questions, emphasise to young people that there are no wrong answers, that their voice matters and it will help adults to understand how to be better for them
- Try breaking down the scale and provide relatable examples to help them choose:

- 1–2: "Do you feel like decisions are made for you without asking what you think?"
- o 3: "Do you sometimes get asked, but not always listened to?"
- 4–5: "Do you feel like your views really matter and help shape what happens?"
- You could also use the **visual emoji scale** to illicit an answer
- Scenario cards with images of school, a home etc could be used to provide examples of areas where they can talk about how involved they feel in decisions made regarding them

Priority 2: We will ensure your placement [where you live] is safe and meets your needs

For the sake of consistency, we haven't changed the wording of the priority, but it may be best to avoid the term 'placement' when going through this priority as it may have trauma surrounding it and could be a trigger word. Try "where you live" instead

- Again, important to **reassure and empower:** "You don't have to share anything you're not comfortable with. But if something could be better, this is a chance to help us understand and improve it."
- **Explain**: "This question is about how you feel where you live—whether it's a foster home, residential care, or supported accommodation. It's about your comfort, safety, and whether it feels like a good place for you."
- As above, break down the scale, use visual emoji scale and relatable examples to prompt responses such as "Do you feel safe when you're at home?", "Is it a place where you can relax and be yourself?", "Do you feel listened to and respected by the people you live with?"

Priority 3: We will support you to fulfil your potential (help you to achieve your goals and dreams)

- **Explain:** "This question is about your goals—big or small—and whether you feel like the adults around you are helping you get there. That could be school, college, work, hobbies, or anything you dream of doing."
- Use same tips as previous priorities
- To support the open-ended question you can ask questions to fill in any missing information such as:
 - "What's something you'd love to do or achieve?"
 - "Is there anything stopping you from working towards that?"
 - "What kind of support would make a difference like mentoring, or someone to talk to?"
- Offer to let them draw their goals or dreams

Priority 4: We will ensure that your physical, emotional, mental health needs are met

- Explain: "This question is about how well you feel looked after—physically, emotionally, and mentally. That includes things like seeing a doctor, having someone to talk to when you're upset, or getting help with stress or anxiety."
- **Reassure** that they do not have to answer anything they feel uncomfortable with and show that you understand that this is a sensitive topic and we just want to get a better understanding in order to improve things for them.
- Use the **visual emoji scale** and **break down the numbered scale**, using prompt questions like "Do you feel like your health needs are taken seriously?" "Is there someone you can talk to when you're feeling low or anxious?" "Do you get help when you're unwell or struggling?"
- To support the **open-ended question** you can ask questions to fill in any missing information such as:
 - "Is there anything you wish you had more help with—like sleep, stress, or emotions?"
 - o "Do you feel comfortable talking to adults about how you're feeling?"
 - "Is there anything that would make you feel healthier or more supported?"

Alternatively, they could draw how they feel physically and emotionally, or mood or emoji cards could be used to ascertain feelings

Priority 5: You will be supported to develop into an independent, confident and responsible adult

- **Explain:** "This question is about how much support you feel you're getting to grow into the adult you want to be—things like learning life skills, making your own choices, and feeling confident in yourself."
- **Prompt questions** for reflection to respond to the scale:
 - "Do you feel like you're learning how to do things on your own like cooking, budgeting, or managing appointments?"
 - o "Do you feel confident making decisions about your life?"
 - "Do you have people who encourage you and believe in you?"
- For the open-ended questions: ask open-ended prompts to explore what's missing or could be better:
 - "Is there anything you wish you had more help with to feel more independent?"
 - "What would help you feel more confident or ready for adult life?"
 - "Are there any skills you'd like to learn but haven't had the chance to yet?"
- Let them draw their future self or what they think independence looks like
- **Use scenario cards** with a common goals on them ("what's one thing you'd like to learn to do on your own?")

Q3. What does 'amazing' support look like to you?

- **Explain:** "Some young people say amazing support means being listened to, having someone check in regularly, or being helped without having to ask. What's it like for you?"

- **Prompt reflection on past experiences:** "You've probably had some good and not-so-good experiences. What made the good ones stand out? What would you change about the others?"

Gauge the situation and the young person's feelings before asking this as the reflection may prompt difficult emotions. Reassure them that there is no wrong answer and that their ideas will help to make things better

- Draw it: "Can you draw what amazing support looks like?"
- **Build a 'dream team'**: "If you could build your perfect support team, who would be in it and what would they do?"
- Use emojis or cards to describe feelings when support is good vs. not so good

Q4. Is there anything else you want to say?

- **Explain:** "This is your chance to say anything that hasn't been asked yet—something you're proud of, something that's going well, or something you'd like to change."
- **Reassure**: "You don't have to say anything if you don't want to—but if there's something on your mind, this is a safe space to share it. Your voice matters."
- Let them **draw or write freely** about their care experience
- Use story starters like:
 - "One thing I wish people knew about being in care is..."
 - o "Something that's going really well for me is..."

Wrap Up

1. Thank Them Genuinely

"Thank you so much for taking the time to share your thoughts. What you've said is really important and will help us make things better—not just for you, but for other young people too."

2. Reflect Back What You Heard

- Briefly summarise or reflect on something they shared:
- "You mentioned that you'd like more support with [e.g. college, mental health, independence]—that's really helpful to know."
- This shows you were listening and that their feedback matters.

3. Explain What Happens Next

- "Your feedback will be shared [anonymously we will only take their first name on the feedback survey and only if they want to disclose it] with the team working on the new Corporate Parenting Strategy. It helps shape how we support young people in care going forward."
- "If you'd like to be involved in future workshops or help shape the final version, we can talk about that too." [Mention our Children in Care Council

participation group at Torbay Council, if interested let our participation team know on participation@torbay.gov.uk]

4. Check In Emotionally

- "How are you feeling after going through those questions?"
 "Was there anything that felt difficult or brought up any feelings?"
- Offer space to talk or decompress if needed.

5. Offer Next Steps or Support

- "Is there anything you'd like to talk more about or get help with now?" "Would you like me to follow up on anything you mentioned?"
- This helps turn feedback into action and shows you're responsive.

6. End on a Positive Note

- "You've done something really powerful today by sharing your voice. That takes courage, and it really matters."

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

Report to Cabinet on 16 September 2025

Background

- The Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board met on 23 July 2025 to consider the submitted report on youth provision and physical activity. Torbay on the Move is a strategic approach to promoting more physical activity across the board with the submitted report focussing on children and young people. It looked to build a shift in behaviour for children and young people linking to climate change and the environmental benefits from shift to active forms of travel in the future as well as seeing the benefits of physical and mental health from physical activity.
- 2. The Director of Active Devon Louise Marshall and the Senior Partnerships Manager, Active Devon Rebecca Skinner highlighted the work that Active Devon were involved with in supporting Torbay on the Move, which was a system and place based approach, recognising the partnerships in place and looking at the ways that more people could move around in their communities, as well as working with schools on ways to support people's mental health using the benefits of physical activity.
- 3. The Divisional Director Children's Services Transformation Shaun Evans highlighted the links to the Youth Hub and work within Children's Services and wider Council but acknowledged that we need to work more collaboratively and holistically to join up to help realise the benefits of physical activity on good physical health and mental health. The redesign of Children's Services had enabled the Council to develop a Youth Offer which would be supported by the Youth Hub Manager and wider Team from 1 September 2025.
- 4. The Sub-Board asked questions in relation to the following:
 - the report refers to additional opportunities for early years and school readiness, was any work being done to get parents to ditch buggies and prams similar to previous initiatives around ditching pacifiers and how much work was being done with early years providers;
 - how many schools were involved in the Open Schools Programme work and did they work proactively with Active Devon;
 - there were lots of free activities during the Summer for young people, what would the offer look like in the winter months;

- of the 11-18 years olds that were surveyed only 54% think there were clean, safe spaces to hang out in Torbay, what has been done to drill down into this statistic;
- how do we replicate the good work in some schools across Torbay to encourage others to do the same e.g. opening up their sports fields more, using learning from the Open Schools Programme;
- what percentage of the HAF places were aimed at elected home educated (EHE) children;
- how were young people from deprived communities enabled to access sports and other activities, which may be prohibitive due to costs;
- were there gaps in provision, especially for people with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND);
- the Council was reviewing its Play Park Strategy, was Torbay on the Move involved:
- was there anything in place for partners to lower the cost or provide free opportunities such as free taster days for young people to try different sports as previously provided; and
- was there anything to help children be able to swim and increase the use of leisure centres, beaches and pools and raise awareness of water safety, linked to UNICEF child friendly work.

5. Members received the following responses:

- The Public Health Lead for Early Years was looking at how to engage with Family Hubs around early skills development. There was a need to identify priorities which put children and young people high up on the list of work on physical activity and there were a number of proposed campaigns. This included working with the support workers for parents and children, practitioner training for those working in early years settings and child and parent clubs to learn and do things together. Active Devon are exploring opportunities with South West Early Years Stronger Practice hub to role out a programme such as Healthy Movers Devon wide, alongside an opportunity of funding from Torbay on the Move;
- Paignton Academy, Torquay Academy and Oldway Primary School were involved in the Open Schools Programme but it had now come to an end. The Paignton Academy gym was funded by the project and was continuing. There were new School Sports Partnerships and the Open Schools Programme may be rebranded in the future. There was varying participation from schools with the Programme for example Ellacombe Academy was not able to take part and Torquay Academy only took part in the first year and not years two and three. The importance of ensuring that Active Devon were talking to the right people within the school was highlighted;
- Appendix 1 just set out the additional offer during the Summer, the main report identified all the different activities available throughout the year. The HAF Programme also ran during Easter and in between Christmas and New Year;
- there had not been an opportunity to drill down into the statistic around young people feeling there were clean, safe spaces to hang out in Torbay and it was recognised that there was a need to gain a higher level of understanding about the young people's perception and what they were trying to convey and what they need or want and compare perception against reality. It was intended that further work would be done to drill down the responses further and how that could be translated into something positive that we could do with the young people. There were some discussions around how we may prioritise bringing

back play areas and other spaces to make them fit for purpose as well as physical work, working with communities and young people so that they could embrace the areas as theirs. Tanny Stobbart from Play Torbay highlighted the work they were doing in the communities running activities in their parks, working with Community Partnerships and various Council departments and other organisations such as the Greenspaces Partnership with three pilot areas being explored (Dart Park, Abbey Park and Victoria Park, Chelston). Play Torbay was keen to work with Torbay on the Move to see how they can work collaboratively to make the spaces safer and more accessible. The benefits of bringing young people and communities together highlighting their right to play and provide activities that work was endorsed by all. Part of the work of the Imagine This Partnership was to listen to children through their engagement groups. Members acknowledged the benefit of codesigning and partnership working to improve outcomes for young people;

- Torbay on the Move now have information, tools and resources from the Open Schools Programme that could be used to help other schools make their facilities open to the community outside of the school day;
- The eligibility for the HAF programme was based on free school meals, with 15% to target other young people, which may be children with disabilities who need opportunities for play activities during holiday time, this element was discretionary with the rest based on eligibility. EHE was one of the targeted areas where the Council was making progress, but there was a need to understand the reasons for EHE as this could be for a number of reasons, the biggest being due to social anxiety, sometimes HAF could be a hook to get the young people into social environments and get them involved in activities and slowly get them back into the school environment;
- part of the work of the Torbay on the Move was to look at lower socio-economic barriers, working in partnership to look at how we could make activities as accessible as possible. National programmes ensure they were as accessible as possible or free. There were two funds to support groups to apply for funding to make accessible opportunities, including Believe to Achieve to help those who can perform at County or national level. The Team was looking at how they could engage as many children and families as possible to design them to ensure that the facilities were right for them;
- Torbay on the Move identified SEND as a gap in provision and want to work with partnerships looking at what the provision was. There were some opportunities already but a gap in ensuring there was something for everyone. The VeloPark have adaptive cycles but they were not used, Torbay on the Move want to engage with Cycle Torbay and deliver regular adaptive cycle activities which could be supported by British Cycling and Limitless looking towards having something in place from Spring/Summer 2026. There was a need to ensure it was sustainable past an initial Stage. There was also a need to link up with wider statutory partners as well as the voluntary and community sector to join up all provisions and use existing resources smarter or together looking at the place and transport as well. Outdoor Partnership had identified Torbay as an area to identify more outdoor activities e.g. walking and water sports, with 50% funding available with a need to see how we could match the funding;
- Torbay on the Move had not been actively involved in the development of the revised Play Park Strategy but would welcome the opportunity to be involved; and
- Swimming was part of the schools' curriculum but there had been a gap with children who missed out due to Covid-19. There did not appear to be consistency across schools in terms of swimming and water safety. Some

schools took children to swimming pools or the beach whilst others did not. The cost of families taking children to swimming pools could be prohibitive for some people.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board welcomed and thanked colleagues for the report in relation to the overall transformation work on physical activity for young people and the Torbay on the Move work and requested that Tanny Stobbart provide an update to the next meeting on the work with the play parks and community as part of Action Tracker.
- 6.2 The Sub-Board reflected and debated the information provided to them, both verbal and written and formed the following recommendations to the Cabinet. On being put to the vote, the motion was declared carried unanimously.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1 That the Cabinet be recommended:
 - 1. that Torbay on the Move and Councillors be recommended to engage with more schools to support them in opening up their facilities to the community outside of the normal school day;
 - 2. that Torbay on the Move be recommended to engage with early years providers and family hubs as part of the joined-up partnership working to raise awareness of the importance of physical activity in early years development;
 - 3. that the Director of Pride Place be recommended to engage with Torbay on the Move in the development of the Play Parks Strategy;
 - 4. that opportunities be explored to provide free sports taster days for children and young people;
 - 5. to provide targeted physical and sports activities to children and families in the deprived wards within Torbay; and
 - 6. to explore why 46% of children and young people perceived that spaces were not safe or accessible and report back to a future meeting.

Background Papers

Agenda for Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board on Wednesday, 23 July 2025, 3.00 pm

TORBAY COUNCIL

Cabinet Response to the recommendations of the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board – Youth Provision and Physical Activity

Recommendation 1:

That Torbay on the Move and Councillors be recommended to engage with more schools to support them in opening up their facilities to the community outside of the normal school day.

Response/Update:

Off the back of the Opening Schools Facility (OFS) programme that was delivered across Devon, Active Devon are developing guidance to encourage, enthuse and enable schools that were not able to access the OFS funding, to be able to do it themselves. This information and all toolkits will be housed on the Active Devon website and support will be given to schools via the Council's early life team. Torbay on the Move will ensure that we share with all schools through our Partnership Officers and our 0-19 team.

Recommendation 2:

That Torbay on the Move be recommended to engage with early years providers and family hubs as part of the joined-up partnership working to raise awareness of the importance of physical activity in early years development.

Response/Update:

Torbay on the Move is already linking in with the public health team around the 0-19 agenda and planning to bring Healthy Movers, an initiative focused on promoting physical activity in early years, to the Bay, which will include delivery within Family Hubs. Torbay on the Move are also engaged with the steering group of the **Imagine This** network and through this connection continue to promote the importance of the role physical activity plays in child development. As part of the communications strategy for Torbay on the Move, we will ensure that we work with partners within early years to plan key messages and link opportunities.

Recommendation 3:

That the Director of Pride Place be recommended to engage with Torbay on the Move in the development of the Play Parks Strategy.

Response/Update:

Officers within the Pride in Place Directorate have regular monthly meetings with SWISCO colleagues. Through this connection Torbay on the Move has been linked into the development of the Play Parks Strategy and the possible inclusion of outdoor gym equipment.

Recommendation 4:

That opportunities be explored to provide free sports taster days for children and young people.

Response/Update:

Sport Torbay have previously delivered Talent Scout Days and have expressed an interest to deliver similar days in the future. Our Sport Development officer meets Sport Torbay regularly and will raise this with them at the next regular meeting.

Recommendation 5:

To provide targeted physical and sports activities to children and families in the deprived wards within Torbay.

Response/Update:

Torbay Council delivers "Free Movement" which enables access for children and families in deprived areas and this will continue throughout the winter months. Sports clubs will continue to be able to access 'More Active More Often' funding to deliver subsidised or free sessions for children and young people. We will ensure that information is targeted to activity providers within our deprived wards to encourage them to apply for this funding.

Recommendation 6:

To explore why 46% of children and young people perceived that spaces were not safe or accessible and report back to a future meeting.

Response/Update:

Torbay Youth Service, in collaboration with a number of partners, delivers a comprehensive programme of youth activities ranging across arts, sports and general socio-wellbeing sessions. The response noted above followed engagement with over 200 young people aged 11-18 years old. The 46% represents how those surveyed think about their area and the environments that they want to socialise in. One of the over-arching messages that came through from the surveys was young people telling us that they need more to do and more clubs and parks. However, as can be seen from the Youth Service programme of activities, there are numerous opportunities being provided so this does raise the question with regards to engagement and particularly reaching out to the more vulnerable young people in the area. The Youth Transformation work going forward will seek to address this matter and ensure all partners work together to provide services and opportunities for all young people that are aligned with their wishes and feelings and are accessible. As part of this workstream further work will be undertaken with young people to understand better what activities they want and how this can be constructed into an appropriate place-based model of delivery.

Agenda Item 9



Meeting: Cabinet Date: 16th September 2025

Wards affected: All

Report Title: Re-procurement of Mental Health Helpline

When does the decision need to be implemented?

Procurement to start in September 2025 for new contract to be let from 01 April 2026.

Cabinet Member Contact Details: Cllr Hayley Tranter, Cabinet Member for Adult and Community Services, Public Health and Inequalities, Hayley.Tranter@torbay.gov.uk

Director Contact Details: Lincoln Sargeant, Director of Public health, lincoln.sargeant@torbay.gov.uk

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The Mental Health Helpline has been running 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.
- 1.2. This proposal is to procure the services so that a new contract can commence from April 2026 with a longer-term, more stable financial basis.
- 1.3. The outcomes are 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.
- 1.4. The Council's Officer Scheme of Delegation sets out that contracts with a total value above £500,000 are to be submitted to Cabinet or Council (where budget is not already approved) for approval to go out to tender. Where approval in consultation with the relevant member, or by Cabinet or Council is given to undertake the tendering, the Chief Executive, Director, Divisional Director or budget holder has the authority to award the resultant 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 maintaining access to advice, information, signposting and interventions for those with low level mental health and emotional wellbeing issues.

- 2.2. These issues have exacerbated and remain prevalent since the COVID-19 pandemic and the resultant financial shockwaves in terms of wage stagnation and cost of living pressures.
- 2.3. This service fills a space between routine advice and guidance for low mood etc and statutory mental health services.
- 2.4. The reasons for the proposal, and need for the decision are;
 - 2.4.1. There is ongoing and increasing demand for this service since it grew organically from the VCSE sector in 2021.
 - 2.4.2. The sustainability of this service has always been precarious; the service has been financially maintained through the use of grants, one off adult social care funding and public health grant funding.
 - 2.4.3. This proposal aims to shore up this provision to give it longer-term viability and stability.
- 3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision
- 3.1 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).

Appendices

3.1. None

4. Background Documents

4.1. None

Supporting Information

5. Introduction

- 5.1. The Mental Health Helpline emerged from the COVID pandemic where the need for AGE UK to provide mental health and emotional wellbeing support (including support for long-covid) through periods of lockdown and isolation was essential. As the service developed in response to need, no sustainable funding existed to continue its provision as well as ensure its quality and safety. As such the local authority was approached to support this provision over the longer term.
- 5.2. Since 2021 the Council has supported this function through a series of short-term contracts funded through a range of sources including COMF, public health, adult social care and Council core revenue funding. The current contract expires in March 2026, and a procurement exercise is required to sustain the service on a more stable footing.
- 5.3. The proposal is to undertake a procurement for a two-year contract (plus an extension of up to two further years). This arrangement would have an annual cost of £165,000 (£115,000 of public health funding and it is expected that there will be £50,000 core Council funding also committed to the contract), meaning each two-year period would cost £330,000.
- 5.4. The Commercial Services department are currently (at the time of writing) assessing whether this contract falls under standard procurement regulations or the new Provider Selection Regime for Health (PSR).
- 5.5. Should this fall under standard procurement regulations the plan is to test the market using an expression of interest process to determine market capacity and capability. If this does not demonstrate there is more than a single capable provider, a direct award process will be undertaken; otherwise, an open market procurement will be completed.
- 5.6. Should this fall under PSR for Health, the regulated process will be followed to determine if a direct award should be offered, whether a most suitable provider process should be undertaken or whether a full competitive process should be followed.
- 5.7. To note, the Mental Health Helpline is an adjunct to the Torbay Community Helpline, which has recently been recommissioned via Adults Social Care as part of the Community Wellbeing Contract.
- 5.8. The reasons for wishing to continue this provision is that it is to meet the demonstratable year on year increases in both need and demand for the service. Approximately 50 callers are supported per month.
- 5.9. The service supports almost as many men (47%) as women (53%). This is atypical to mental health services which are usually overrepresented by female service users; indicating the service is accessible and acceptable to men and, therefore, addressing an unmet need. Particularly relevant in an area with a significantly higher suicide rate compared to nationally, where three in every four suicides occur in males.

- 5.10. This is one of the few services that holistically supports a range of (as well as multiple) physical, social and mental health needs through its partnership with the Torbay Community Helpline (via the Community Wellbeing Contract) and additional relationships it has generated.
- 5.11. This Service has minimal entry criteria, no waiting lists and flexes with a person's changing needs over time. Most interventions are either telephone or face-to-face support by the service (34%) or signposting to more appropriate services for their needs (e.g. domestic abuse support, 33%) and has the primary intention to reduce the escalation of need thereby diverting people from a more costly referral to a specialist service later on.
- 5.12. The service is also accessed by people who do not have support elsewhere or who are unable to access NHS mental health support due to long waiting lists, high diagnostic thresholds, treatment modalities that cannot support additional environmental stressors or where specific support is incredibly limited (e.g., for self-harm).
- 5.13. The service undertakes evidence-based evaluations, and these demonstrate meaningful improvements in the mental wellbeing of the client group.
- 5.14. An application for formalised research into the programme's effectiveness has been submitted to the School for Public Health Environments Research at Exeter (SPHERE) which would bring £35,000 of capacity to robustly evaluate and deliver recommendations for future iterations of the programme.

6. Options under consideration

- 6.1. Option 1: Do not procure any service. This option will provide cost savings to both public health and the Authority General Fund. It will however erode any good work brought about by this contract to date, eradicating low level support for residents of Torbay which is likely, in turn, to increase demand for and pressure on already stretched mental health (and potentially social care) services. The likelihood is that this will decrease productivity in the communities affected due to time off or inability to work due to unsupported mental health issues. This proposal is not supported.
- 6.2. Option 2: Procure a service with a reduced cost basis. This option will also provide cost savings to either or both public health and the Authority General Fund. It will however reduce the impact and effectiveness of the service. Cost saving is not the desired outcome in this process and funding provided has 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 reach, effectiveness and outcomes will be proportionate to the reduction. This proposal is not supported.
- 6.3. Option 3: Procure the service on a like for like basis: This option will not cost more money than is 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 can be maintained, whilst also it is most likely to allow the voluntary sector capacity to obtain sustained, longer term secure funding.

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7. Financial Opportunities and Implications

- 7.1. The financial proposals are set out in 6.3 above.
- 7.2. Both the core Council Funding and the Public Health RFG funding outlined has been built into the revenue budget.
- 7.3. There are no additional further funding implications anticipated.

8. Legal Implications

8.1. There are no anticipated legal implications other than those routinely present when undertaking a procurement process.

9. Engagement and Consultation

- 9.1. In 2023, the Adult Social Care and Public Health portfolio lead, Cllr Hayley Tranter, actively participated in an engagement event which developed the latest Torbay Multi-agency Suicide Prevention Plan. The three key priority areas outlined in this plan (accessible mental health support, working with risk factors and collaborative use of resources) are met, in part, by the Torbay Community Helpline and the mental health helpline which sits underneath this.
- 9.2. Partner and community needs are continuously reviewed and responded to via the VCSE Health and Wellbeing Network. This is made up of Torbay Communities (who provide the triage function for the Torbay Community Helpline) as well as all the VCSE organisations which the triage functions links to. Age UK Torbay (the current provider of the mental health helpline) are an integral member of the steering group for this network. The steering group meets quarterly with additional meetings as required.
- 9.3. Torbay Age UK continuously review and adapt service provision in response to caller's needs, staff feedback and VCSE Health and Wellbeing Network feedback. For example, bereavement support was identified as a particular need by service users as it is not readily available from public or charity provision. The service then built relationships with local counselling colleges so that trainee counsellors could provide more timely counselling support to people who have been bereaved whilst helping a trainee counsellor to become qualified.
- 9.4. A report (2023) commissioned by adult social care from people with lived experience of poor mental health exampled the mental health helpline as a service that is 'working well' and its service delivery counters many of the challenges expressed by residents in the report. For example, people found closed and disjointed access routes and the inability to access another service if already receiving mental health support as real barriers to their wellbeing. The mental health helpline has one access route for a range of needs and a range of services can be offered simultaneously if required and appropriate.
- 9.5. Market testing will evidence if there are other providers able to provide a replicable service since it was last tested in 2023. Market engagement will be considered if multiple providers are identified through market testing. Page 77

10. Procurement Implications

- 10.1. Currently this service is managed and delivered via a VCSE sector provider. The previous procurement process in 2023 demonstrated that there was one capable provider able to deliver this provision. This lack of market capability and capacity alongside the fact that the service is delivered by the VCSE sector will be factored into the procurement decision.
- 10.2. As stated in 6.4 6.6 above, the Commercial Services department are currently (at the time of writing) assessing whether this contract falls under standard procurement regulations (PCR) or the new Provider Selection Regime for Health (PSR).
- 10.3. Should this fall standard procurement regulations the plan is to test the market using an expression of interest process to determine market capacity and capability. If this does not demonstrate there is more than a single capable provider, a direct award process will be undertaken; otherwise, an open market procurement will be completed.
- 10.4. Should this fall under PSR for Health, the regulated process will be followed to determine if a direct award should be offered, whether a most suitable provider process should be undertaken or whether a full competitive process should be followed.

11. Protecting our naturally inspiring Bay and tackling Climate Change

- 11.1. By continuing to enable services to support digital access, it is anticipated that this will have a positive impact in terms of reducing the need to travel to services or to clients themselves, where this is in the best interests of the service users.
- 11.2. Social Value (including Climate change) will be assessed as part of any procurement activity that takes place.

12. Associated Risks

- 12.1. Failure to make a decision could result in an inability to conclude the procurement process in time, thus posing a legal risk that we have to offer contracts which does not comply with procurement law or the Council's Standing Orders.
- 12.2. Alternatively, the contract is ceased and there is no provision in the interim, losing all staff, systems and processes during that time. This is expected to create additional work and anxiety both for the Authority and the new Provider whilst and eroding market confidence in the Authority in the interim which is not in the perceived best interests of the Local Authority or our residents.
- 12.3. Failure to consider the incumbent provider and their VCSE status may undermine the Authority's commitment to make procurements and access to services easier for SMEs and VCSE providers to successful secure services in the Bay.

13. 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 Page 79	18 per cent of Torbay residents are under 18 years old. 55 per cent of Torbay residents are aged between 18 to 64 years old. 27 per cent of Torbay residents are aged 65 and older. 42% of the users of this service are aged over 65. 1 in 4 adults experience mental problem annually. 1 in 5 children and young people have a probable mental health disorder.	The Helpline is for adults only (18+). There is no upper age limit. Because of the significantly different skill set required to provide mental health services for Children and Young People (CYP) it would not be appropriate to provide an all-age provision. CYP services are provided through School based mental health support teams, Young Devon and KOOTH (online support) and for more complex young people, CAMHS. The service will signpost CYP to the aforementioned alternative provision. The helpline is accessible via the phone and face-to-face appointment and therefore enables those who are not digitally enabled, usually those in the older demographic (but not all).		

Carers	At the time of the 2021 census there were 14,900 unpaid carers in Torbay. 5,185 of these provided 50 hours or more of care. 84% of carers feel more stressed, 78% feel more anxious and 55% report feeling depressed as a result of their caring role. 38% of young carers report having a mental health problem	The service makes no distinguishing access criteria or provision on the basis of a service users caring responsibilities. The service is dynamic and can offer appointments that will mean that those with caring responsibilities should be able to access the service as conveniently as any other member of the public (either on the phone or in person, at mutually convenient locations). The service is person-centred and trauma informed.		
©isability 80	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. Adults with disabilities report experiencing frequent mental distress almost 5 times more often as adults without disabilities. Approximately 15-20% of the population are neurodivergent. Being	The service provides sessions both on the phone and in mutually convenient locations and therefore those unable to access sessions in person can be accommodated. The service is specifically designed to support those with low level mental health concerns, and support those with more significant issues, into more suitable specialist support. The service is person-centred and trauma informed.	The Torbay Community Helpline (the front door of the mental health helpline – this service) and this service will make reasonable adjustments for people with a disability or neurodivergence where possible, this includes the use IT and text to communicate. Access to British Sign Language will be accommodated wherever possible. Face-to-face is offered,	The Community Helpline is commissioned via Adult Social Care. The public health team will ensure the Mental Health Helpline will

	neurodivergent in a neurotypical world increases the risk of stress, anxiety and depression.	utilised Library lip read Access inform availab	d at Paignton y for people who	receive this training within the first 3 months of contract start.
Page 81		require Oliver and Au a minin manda	elpline staff will be ed to undertake McGowan (LD utism) training as mum. This is a atory requirement CQC registered lers.	
		needs individ they require comfor include	nmodates the sof neurodivergent duals – ensuring eceive what they e to make them ortable. This es face-to-face, at home and in the	

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.	The service makes no distinguishing access criteria or provision on the basis of a referred person's gender assignment. The service is person-centred and trauma informed.	
Marriage and civil partnership Page 82	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. Marriage/civil partnership tend to be associated with more positive mental health.	The service makes no distinguishing access criteria or provision on the basis of a referred person's marital status. The service is person-centred and trauma informed.	
Pregnancy and maternity	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.	The service makes no distinguishing access criteria or provision on the basis of a referred person's pregnancy status. The service is person-centred and trauma informed.	

	Women can develop mental health problems for the first time during pregnancy, and pre-existing mental health conditions can get worse during the perinatal period. Perinatal mental health problems affect up to 20% of women.			
Page 83	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, 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. People from ethnically minoritised communities are at higher risk of developing mental health problems in adulthood and more likely than average to experience common mental health problems in any given week. They're also less likely to receive mental health support.	The service makes no distinguishing access criteria or provision on the basis of a referred person's racial status. The service is person-centred and trauma informed and will remain culturally sensitive to the needs of the people it serves.	The Torbay Community Helpline (the front door of the mental health helpline – this service) and this service will make reasonable adjustments for people where their race may preclude them from traditional service provision or where discrimination has been a previous barrier, wherever possible e.g., access to a translator, choice of male or female, older or younger practitioner.	Resource implications of this will be considered by commissioners on a case by case basis (either Adult Social Care or Public Health respectively).

Religion and belief	64.8% of Torbay residents who stated that they have a religion in the 2021 census. Generally religious involvement is linked to better mental health outcomes, including lower rates of depression and anxiety, higher life satisfaction and reduced substance abuse.	The service makes no distinguishing access criteria or provision on the basis of a referred person's religion or belief. The service is person-centred and trauma informed.	
Sex Page 84	51.3% of Torbay's population are female and 48.7% are male Females tend to have higher rates of depression, anxiety, eating disorders and self-harming behaviour. Men tend to have higher rates of ADHD, autism, PTSD, antisocial behaviour and substance use disorders as well as completed suicides.	Whilst not a criterion that is specifically targeted, the service is accessed by more men that other mental health services. This indicates that the model and delivery is equally attractive to both sexes and is positively supporting a minority population in regards to traditional mental health service accessibility. The service is person-centred and trauma informed.	
Sexual orientation	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	The service makes no distinguishing access criteria or provision on the basis of a referred person's sexual orientation.	

	describe their sexual orientation. LGBT+ individuals are more likely to have poorer mental health outcomes compared to their heterosexual counterparts.	The service is person-centred and trauma informed will remain cognisant of the needs of those who have experienced forms of discrimination in relation to their gender or Sexual orientation.	
Armed Forces Community Page 85	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 served in the UK armed forces. Veterans are more likely to have depression, anxiety, alcohol problems and PTSD compared to the general population.	The service makes no distinguishing access criteria or provision on the basis of a referred person's history with being employed via the armed forces. However we do know this group is disproportionately affected by poor mental health and that the majority of this community are males. This service's offer has good level of representation from males compared to other MH services, and therefore demonstrates good engagement and accessibility in this population. The service is person-centred and trauma informed.	
Additional consideration	ions		Additional considerations
Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child	Approximately 27% of the Torbay population are classified as living in areas	Since the pandemic and cost of living crisis, new mental health conditions have developed or previous conditions have been exacerbated. The helpline	

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poverty and deprivation)	amongst the 20% most deprived in England. 1 in 6 people in Torbay were classified as income deprived. 1 in 5 children and young people being affected by this	has continuously responded to this increasing hardship and mental health need through its holistic provision (supporting basic needs such as debt and housing as well as emotional needs). This service actively looks to support		
	income deprivation. Individuals living in more deprived areas and experiencing socio-economic disadvantage are at higher risk of	those where their mental health is poor and / or they have suffered traumatic events; the majority of these are likely to be from more deprived communities. All service provision is free and if it were to be charged at any point in the future, this would be means tested.		
Page 86	developing/exacerbating mental health problems.	Therefore whilst the service is not specifically commissioned to target more deprived communities, the effects of living in these communities and the impact of more common difficult life events means that these populations are more likely to access this service.		
Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay)	People with severe mental illness experience significantly shorter lifespans, being 15-20 years lower than the general population. This disparity is largely attributed to preventable physical illnesses.	Since the pandemic and cost of living crisis, new mental health conditions have developed or previous conditions have been exacerbated. The helpline has continuously responded to this increasing hardship and mental health need through its holistic provision (supporting basic needs such as debt and housing as well as emotional needs).	Interpreter services are avaaible for those who first language is not English.	

Page	In England, around 1 in 3 children live with at least one parent experiencing emotional distress. This consequently has a negative impact on children such as poorer physical health and academic achievement and being at higher risk of developing a mental health problem themselves.	There is a proportionate universalism approach where those most at risk or in need are prioritised, but there are no thresholds to prevent access (other than clients being too complex to safely be supported and need onward referral for specialist services). Physical (e.g., signposting to programmes which increase physical activity) as well as mental health interventions are provided where required. The service tries to cover the broad range of presenting needs that come through from the helpline, so that no needs are not supported except where they are too complex and /or too specialist to safely be supported.	
uman Rights impacts		This service is not expected to materially impact on any referred persons human rights.	
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.	This service is not appliable to young people. Young adults who are care experienced may access this service. The service is person-centred and trauma informed.	

14. Cumulative Council Impact

14.1. None.

15. Cumulative Community Impacts

- 15.1. This is likely to have positive impacts on our partner organisations in the VCSE who refer into this provision. This also provides continuity of a destination for referrals the Community Hub and Community Helpline that triages general callers from the Community looking for a wide range of support and advice.
- 15.2. This remains a valuable community provision for those not reaching statutory thresholds for mental health support.