Torbay on the Move: Emerging Strategy for Active Lives, Stronger Communities and Better Health

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Board
Date:	11 November 2026
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Wards affected:	All wards

1. Summary of Report:

1.1 This report asks the Overview and Scrutiny Board to test the direction and deliverability of the emerging Torbay on the Move Strategy before it is finalised. It is a place-based framework for helping more people be more active, more often. It brings together physical activity and sport with leisure, active travel, green and blue spaces and community life to support better health, reduce inequalities and strengthen communities.

1.2 In particular, Members are invited to test the four-pillar model, priority audiences, proposed swimming flagship, outcomes associated with each pillar and arrangements for delivery and measurement. The Board is also asked to consider whether the relationship with the separate Playing Pitch Strategy and proposed Built Facilities Strategy is clear, whether engagement is sufficient, and what must be resolved before Cabinet and Council consider the final strategy. No new spending is sought through this report.

2. Recommendations and Proposed Decision:

2.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Board reviews the emerging Torbay on the Move Strategy and makes recommendations to Cabinet on:

- the proposed four pillars: Active People, Active Places, Active Networks and Active Champions;
- the priority audiences and proportionate universal approach;
- the proposed flagship project, “Born by the Sea. Built to Swim.”;
- the outcomes associated with the four pillars and the approach to monitoring and evaluation;
- governance and delivery arrangements; and
- the relationship with the separate Playing Pitch Strategy and proposed Built Facilities Strategy, and any further engagement or evidence required before Cabinet consideration.

2.2 That the Board notes that approval of the strategy would not, by itself, commit the Council to new expenditure and that any future commissioning, grant award, procurement or capital project would require the appropriate approvals.

3. Reasons for Recommendations/Proposed Decision:

3.1 Overview and Scrutiny provides an opportunity for Members to test whether the emerging strategy is clear, evidence-led, deliverable and sufficiently focused on residents who face the greatest barriers to being active.

3.2 Member feedback will inform the final wording before the strategy is presented to Cabinet. If Cabinet recommends approval, Council would decide whether to adopt the strategy and add it to the Policy Framework.

4. Background and Context:

4.1 Torbay on the Move is convened by Torbay Council, supported by Active Devon and delivered with a network of partners. It has operated since 2018 as a whole-system initiative to reduce inactivity, tackle health inequalities and improve opportunities to be active.

4.2 A 2021 review and consultation involving more than 50 organisations identified the need for a clearer external strategy, stronger focus on priority audiences, a whole-system approach and better alignment across services and partners. The network has since grown to more than 100 organisations.

4.3 The draft strategy reports that 28% of children and 27% of adults in Torbay are categorised as inactive. It recognises that cost, confidence, transport, safety, health, accessibility, caring

responsibilities, topography and the availability of suitable local opportunities can all affect participation.

4.4 The strategy is for everyone, but proposes additional focus on people on lower incomes or experiencing poverty, disabled people and people with long-term health conditions, people experiencing poor mental health, and children and young people. Ward-level evidence and lived experience would be used together to guide planning and investment without negatively labelling communities.

4.5 The strategy simplifies the previous eight themes into four connected pillars: Active People (more people moving their way, so inactivity reduces); Active Places (spaces and places that inspire and support activity for all); Active Networks (positive change delivered through united partnerships); and Active Champions (everyone can see themselves in an active Torbay).

4.6 Four headline outcomes are proposed: increased participation, support for active and independent living, a better resident experience of opportunities to be active, and a prioritised investment pipeline for places and facilities.

4.7 “Born by the Sea. Built to Swim.” is proposed as a flagship project bringing all four pillars together. Its focus is to help more children and families, particularly those growing up in deprivation, feel confident, safe and welcome in and around the water.

4.8 Strategic leadership would sit with a Torbay on the Move Oversight Group. Four pillar working groups would maintain delivery plans, risk logs and opportunity trackers. Community voice and lived experience would inform delivery, including through a community reference group and representation at the Oversight Group.

4.9 Torbay on the Move is the overarching place-based strategy, not a replacement for technical evidence on sport and leisure facilities. The existing Playing Pitch Strategy provides a separate assessment of pitch provision; the scope of its update should be agreed with Sport England. Torbay does not currently have a Built Facilities Strategy. The need, scope, funding and timetable for one should be considered alongside the Playing Pitch Strategy. Neither commission is approved or funded by this scrutiny report. Their findings should inform the Active Places delivery plan and prioritised investment pipeline.

4.10 Each pillar delivery plan would identify leads, milestones, funding dependencies, equality considerations, risks and a small number of measures. Partners would use progress reporting and ongoing learning to adapt activity as evidence and resident experience emerge, rather than waiting for a quarterly or annual review. An annual summary would report progress, with a fuller strategy refresh proposed after three years.

5. Alternative Options Considered:

5.1 Proceed without a refreshed strategy. This would retain existing activity but would not provide the clearer shared direction, simplified governance or coordinated outcomes sought through the review.

5.2 Retain the previous eight-theme framework. Partner feedback and learning indicate that a simpler four-pillar structure would be easier to understand, coordinate, deliver and measure.

5.3 Delay consideration until all delivery plans and measures are complete. This could provide more operational detail, but would postpone agreement on strategic direction. The proposed approach is to agree the framework first, then develop realistic and resourced annual delivery plans.

6. Contribution to Council Priorities:

6.1 The strategy supports the ambition for a healthy, happy and prosperous Torbay. It contributes to Community and People through prevention, physical and mental wellbeing, healthy ageing, children and young people's development, inclusion and stronger community connections.

6.2 It contributes to Pride in Place by making better use of parks, streets, leisure facilities, neighbourhood spaces and the coast, and by linking active lives to local identity, belonging and the Torbay Story.

6.3 It contributes to Economic Growth through skills, volunteering, employment pathways, sustainable facilities, events, the visitor economy and stronger investment propositions. It also aligns with the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, Health and Wellbeing priorities, Children and Young People's outcomes, spatial planning, active travel and wider place leadership.

7. Consultation and Engagement:

7.1 The strategy builds on the 2021 consultation involving more than 50 organisations. Subsequent development has drawn on the Torbay on the Move Oversight Group, network events, leadership-course participants, recent discussions with Sport Torbay, and continuing youth, community and lived-experience input.

7.2 The 2021 consultation is a starting point, not a substitute for testing this draft with current stakeholders. Further targeted engagement should include Sport Torbay, sports clubs, Sport England, Active Devon, health and education partners, leisure operators, community and

voluntary organisations, National Governing Bodies, relevant Place Leadership Boards and people with lived experience. Feedback should test the proposed priorities, the swimming flagship, facility needs and what partners can realistically deliver; the final report should explain what changed as a result.

7.3 Communications should be coordinated between Torbay Council and Active Devon. Following scrutiny, published communications should explain the feedback received, changes made and the next decision stage, without making unconfirmed claims about funding or delivery.

8. Implications:

Financial Implications:

8.1 Approval of the strategy would not, by itself, commit the Council to new spending. The strategy seeks to align existing activity and strengthen Torbay's position to secure external funding. A prioritised investment pipeline would identify proposals and track progress through feasibility, funding and delivery; inclusion would not mean that a project is funded or approved.

8.2 Delivery will depend on staff capacity, partner support and external funding, so annual plans must distinguish funded commitments from proposals still needing resources. The scope and funding of a Playing Pitch Strategy update and any Built Facilities Strategy remain to be agreed; this paper does not authorise either commission. Any future commissioning, grant award, procurement or capital expenditure will require the usual financial and governance approvals.

Legal Implications:

8.3 Torbay on the Move is proposed as a Policy Framework document and is not currently part of the Council's Policy Framework. Overview and Scrutiny is considering the emerging strategy, not taking a key decision. Subject to the strategy being ready and the Council's normal governance requirements, the proposed next stages are Cabinet consideration and, if Cabinet recommends adoption, a Council decision on whether to approve the strategy and add it to the Policy Framework. The Forward Plan requirements and final decision timetable remain subject to Governance confirmation.

Corporate Parenting/Children and Young People:

8.4 Children and young people are a priority audience. The strategy proposes action on physical literacy, movement, play, school and youth provision, inclusive activity, swimming

confidence and water safety. Youth voice and lived experience are intended to shape design, delivery and review, including the proposed “Born by the Sea. Built to Swim.” project.

Associated Risks and Mitigations:

8.3.1 The principal risks relate to delivery capacity, reliance on partner support and external funding, weak coordination, insufficiently robust measures, community engagement and the risk that expectations for facilities exceed available resources. Annual delivery plans, named leads, risk logs, opportunity trackers and escalation to the Oversight Group are proposed to manage these risks.

8.3.2 Risk owners should assess and record likelihood, impact, residual risk and any tolerance or acceptance decision through the Council's risk-management process as delivery plans are developed. The table below identifies the main risks, mitigations and review routes; numerical risk scoring will need to be agreed through that process.

8.3.3 Pillar risk logs, quarterly progress and learning reports, and the investment pipeline will support review and escalation to the Oversight Group. The risks of not progressing a refreshed strategy include fragmented activity and weaker shared accountability.

Risk	**Mitigations**	**Monitoring and escalation**
Insufficient staffing, partner capacity or funding.	Set realistic annual commitments and identify capacity and funding dependencies before work starts.	Monitor through pillar risk logs; escalate unfunded or undeliverable commitments to the Oversight Group.
Fragmented delivery or duplication.	Use four connected working groups, named leads and shared delivery plans.	Review coordination and gaps through quarterly progress and learning reports.
Measures do not demonstrate meaningful change.	Develop a small dashboard using local measures, qualitative evidence and Active Lives trends without relying on one dataset.	Test data quality, baselines and interpretation through the Oversight Group and annual summary.
Expectations for facilities exceed resources.	Use a prioritised pipeline and make clear that inclusion is not funding or approval.	Review the pipeline and apply normal financial and project approvals before commitments are made.

Contributions to tackling climate change or achieving carbon neutrality:

8.5 The strategy can support lower-carbon travel by linking walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure with behaviour-change activity. It also promotes use of local green and blue spaces and more sustainable, energy-efficient sport and leisure facilities. Carbon benefits will depend on individual projects, which should complete the Council's environmental and carbon assessment at the appropriate stage.

Social Value Considerations:

8.6 The strategy seeks social value through improved health and wellbeing, stronger community connections, volunteering, skills, employment pathways, inclusive activity and better use of community assets. Future commissioning and investment decisions should define and monitor relevant social value outcomes.

Procurement Implications:

8.7 No procurement decision is sought through this report. Any commission to update the Playing Pitch Strategy or develop a Built Facilities Strategy would first need an agreed scope, funding and approval route, with Sport England's relevant requirements taken into account. Other future commissioning, grant awards or procurement arising from delivery plans would also follow the appropriate procedures and approvals.

Other Implications:

8.8 The strategy is cross-cutting. Services likely to contribute include Public Health, Children's Services, Adult Social Care, Family Hubs, Pride in Place, Economy, Culture and Events, Spatial Planning, Transport, Parks, SWISCo and 0 to 19 services. Partner organisations include Active Devon, Sport England, Sport Torbay, Torbay Communities, health and education partners, leisure operators, clubs, National Governing Bodies, Active Travel England, The Outdoor Partnership and Place Leadership Boards.

9. Equalities Impact Assessment:

9.1 The strategy is intended to reduce inequalities in opportunities to be active. Its proportionate universal approach applies to all residents while directing additional effort towards people and communities experiencing the greatest barriers. The existing local data in this assessment provides context; project-level assessments will test impacts and mitigations as delivery plans develop.

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	• 18% of Torbay residents are aged under 18 years old. • 55% of Torbay residents are aged 18 to 64 years old. • 27% of Torbay residents are aged 65 and older.	Potential benefits for children, young people and older residents; provision may not suit every life stage.	Use youth voice, physical literacy, school and family settings, Live Longer Better approaches and co-design with priority audiences.	Pillar working groups; from delivery-plan development.
Carers	• At the time of the 2021 census there were 14,900 unpaid carers in Torbay. • 5,185 of these carers provided 50 hours or more of care.	Caring responsibilities can restrict time, travel and access to regular activity.	Use affordable, flexible local provision and seek carers' feedback during design.	All pillar groups; annual delivery plans.

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
Care experienced	• As of January 2026, there were 277 former care experienced young people aged 18-24 in Torbay.	Opportunities for belonging and activity; additional cost, access or support barriers may remain.	Include care-experienced young people in targeted engagement where relevant; design safe, inclusive provision.	Children's Services and partners; design and review.
Disability	• In the 2021 Census, 23.9% of Torbay residents answered that their day-to-day activities were limited a little or a lot by a physical or mental health condition or illness.	More inclusive opportunities may benefit residents; inaccessible facilities, information, transport or programmes could exclude them.	Use co-design, accessibility learning and inclusive-provider development; consider access in project prioritisation.	All pillar leads; ongoing.
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.	Safety, confidence and welcome may affect participation; assess through community feedback rather than assumptions.	Use inclusive programme design and confidential, voluntary feedback to improve access.	Working groups; ongoing.

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
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 specific differential effect identified at strategy stage; assess household access and participation as programmes develop.	Apply accessible, inclusive design and monitor resident feedback.	Working groups; during programme development.
Pregnancy and maternity	• Between 2013 and 2024, the rate of live births (as a proportion of females aged 15 to 44) has been slightly but significantly higher in Torbay (average of 56.0 per 1,000) than the Southwest (53.4) and broadly in line with England (56.3). • For the period 2022 to 2024, rates in Torbay (44.6) have been significantly below England (50.0).	Safety, confidence, caring and practical barriers may affect access.	Use relevant local evidence, inclusive programme design and resident feedback.	Working groups; ongoing.
Race	In the 2021 Census, Torbay residents described their ethnicity as follows:	Cultural confidence, trust and suitability of opportunities may affect participation.	Use community voice and co-design; monitor participation and	Working groups and community reference

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
	• 1.6% as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh • 0.3% as Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African • 1.5% as being of Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups • 96.1% as White • 0.4% described their ethnicity another way. • Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic communities are more likely to live in areas of Torbay classified as being amongst the 20% most deprived areas in England.		feedback and adapt provision.	arrangements; ongoing.
Religion and belief	The 2021 Census showed that the residents in Torbay identify their religion and/or belief as the following; • 48.5% are Christian • 0.4% are Buddhist • 0.2% are Hindu	Suitability of opportunities and trust may affect participation; avoid assuming one approach fits all residents.	Use community voice and co-design; adapt opportunities in response to feedback.	Working groups; ongoing.

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
	• 0.6% are Muslim • Less than 0.1% are Sikh • 0.1% are Jewish • 0.7% have another religion • 43.2% have no religion • 6.3% did not answer			
Sex	• 51.3% of Torbay's population are female. • 48.7% of Torbay's population are male.	Different safety, confidence, caring and practical barriers may affect access.	Use relevant local evidence, inclusive programme design and resident feedback.	Working groups; ongoing.
Sexual orientation	In the 2021 Census, residents described their sexuality as follows; • 89% as Straight or Heterosexual • 1.7% as Gay or Lesbian • 1.1% as Bisexual • 0.1% as Pansexual • 0.1% described their sexuality another way	A welcoming and safe experience matters; specific differential effects should be tested through engagement, not presumed.	Use inclusive settings and voluntary, confidential resident feedback to adapt provision.	Working groups; ongoing.

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
	• 7.4% of people didn't answer the question			
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% of the population have previously served in the UK armed forces.	No specific differential impact is identified at strategy stage; local access needs should be tested during delivery planning.	Engage local organisations where relevant and adapt opportunities in response to feedback.	Working groups; delivery planning and review.
Additional Considerations:	The strategy identifies cost, transport, accessibility, confidence and availability of suitable local opportunities as barriers that can overlap for some residents.	Barriers can combine, so a standard offer may not be equally accessible to all residents. The effect of individual projects will depend on their location, cost and design.	Test affordability, accessible information, travel and suitability with residents during delivery planning; record project-level impacts and adjust provision in response to feedback.	All pillar working groups; during delivery planning and review.

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
Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child poverty and deprivation)	• The English Indices of Deprivation 2025 identify areas of significant deprivation in Torbay; neighbourhood-level evidence should inform delivery priorities alongside residents' experience.	Cost, transport and access to suitable local opportunities can restrict participation, particularly for children and families experiencing poverty.	Target additional support where barriers are greatest, develop the Leisure Card, use local provision and apply affordability criteria to investment decisions.	All pillar groups; annual delivery plans.
Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay)	• For the five-year period 2020 to 2024, data shows there is a 6-year life expectancy gap between males who live in Torbay's least and most deprived areas and, a 3-year gap for females.	More accessible activity may support health and independence; benefits will depend on reaching residents facing the greatest barriers.	Strengthen trusted routes from health and care services into local activity and use participation, resident experience and qualitative evidence to review progress.	Active People group with Public Health and partners; ongoing.

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
Human Rights impacts	No separate human-rights dataset is cited for this strategy. Its proposed activity spans public and community spaces; specific arrangements and potential impacts will be assessed as projects are developed.	No adverse human rights impact is identified at strategy stage; delivery should uphold fairness, dignity, accessibility and participation.	Apply these principles through delivery and project-level assessments.	Lead services; project development.
Child Friendly (Children's Rights Impact Assessment considerations)	Children and young people are a priority audience. The draft strategy reports that 28% of children in Torbay are categorised as inactive; it proposes youth voice and lived experience to help shape activity, including a swimming-confidence and water-safety flagship.	Play, movement, swimming confidence and belonging may benefit children and young people. Some, including children with SEND and care-experienced young people, may face additional cost, access or support barriers.	Put best interests, safety, inclusion and youth voice into programme design and review; include children with SEND and care-experienced young people in targeted engagement where relevant.	Children's Services and partners; design and review.

10. Cumulative Council Impact:

10.1 Implementation will require coordinated input across several Council services. The four-pillar model is intended to align activity and reduce duplication, but it may create additional coordination, data, evaluation and governance demands.

10.2 Annual plans should identify lead services, partner contributions, resource dependencies and escalation routes so that delivery expectations do not create unfunded responsibilities elsewhere in the Council.

11. Cumulative Community Impact:

11.1 The strategy has the potential to improve health, independence, wellbeing, community connection, volunteering, skills, pride in place and access to local facilities and spaces.

11.2 Impacts will depend on whether programmes and places are accessible, affordable, safe and welcoming, and on the level of partner capacity and investment secured. Community voice and resident experience should remain central to prioritisation and review.

12. Monitoring and Evaluation:

12.1 Each pillar working group will maintain a delivery plan with named leads, milestones, funding dependencies, risks, equality considerations and a small number of measures. Partners should capture learning during delivery and change course where evidence or resident feedback shows an approach is not working. Quarterly reports will bring together progress, decisions and emerging risks for the Torbay on the Move Oversight Group.

12.2 A simple dashboard should distinguish activity and outputs, such as projects and workshops, from evidence of change in participation, active and independent living, resident experience and the investment pipeline. Each measure should have a defined source, baseline where available, reporting frequency and responsible lead. Active Lives data can show longer-term trends, but should be read alongside local and qualitative evidence because of sample-size volatility and the limits of attributing change to individual projects.

12.3 An annual progress summary will bring together performance, learning, resident stories and emerging outcomes. The strategy proposes annual review and a fuller refresh after three years.

Appendices:

A1 Draft Torbay on the Move Strategy: A place-based strategy for active lives, stronger communities and better health in Torbay (to accompany this report as a separate appendix).

Background Documents:

None

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