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Date: Tuesday, 02 July 2024

Governance Support  
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Dear Member

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD - TUESDAY, 9 JULY 2024**

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at the Tuesday, 9 July 2024 meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board, the following reports that were unavailable when the agenda was printed.

| <b>Agenda No</b> | <b>Item</b>                                 | <b>Page</b>    |
|------------------|---|----------------|
| 8.               | <b>Economic Growth Strategy Action Plan</b> | (Pages 3 - 38) |

Yours sincerely

Governance Support  
Clerk

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**Meeting:** Overview and Scrutiny Board **Date:** 9<sup>th</sup> July 2024

**Wards affected:** All Wards

**Report Title:** Economic Growth Strategy 2030 - Action Plan Performance Update

**When does the decision need to be implemented?** No decision required

**Cabinet Member Contact Details:** Councillor Chris Lewis, Place Development and Economic Growth

**Director Contact Details:** Lisa Tuck, Divisional Director, Economy, Environment and Infrastructure

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## 1. Purpose of Report

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- 1.1 This report provides an overview of the achievements and progress made between 1st October 2022 and 31st March 2024, against with the Torbay Economic Growth Strategy 2030 Action Plan. The report evaluates the initiatives, programs, and partnerships delivered by the Council that have contributed to Torbay's economic development over the period.
- 1.2 Background on 8 December 2022, the Council approved the Torbay Economic Growth Strategy 2030. Consequently, an action plan was developed which sets out the key actions that would deliver the priorities within the Torbay Economic Growth Strategy 2030. The action plan was adopted on 10th January 2023.
- 1.4 Since the adoption of the Councils Economic Growth Strategy the Council has formed a Levelling Up Partnership with the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities, a range of other significant sums of Government funding to support the regeneration and economy of Torbay have been

announced and the cost of living and doing businesses crisis has increased challenges to businesses and our communities.

- 1.5 Seeking to refocus our ambitions to reflect these changes, and the substantial opportunities for Torbay's economy, a review of the Economic Growth Strategy 2030 Action Plan is required. The work to review the Economic Growth Strategy action plan has commenced and is due to be completed in September 2024, with a report to Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet in November.
- 1.6 The review will also include a detailed report on achievement against the current action plan, this report provides an interim light touch update on progress made against the Economic Growth 2030 Action Plan.

## 2. Performance Update

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- 2.1 A copy of the Economic Growth Strategy Action Plan can be found at Appendix 1.

### **Priority Theme 1: Supporting Innovation, Entrepreneurs, and Business Owners**

#### Boosting Innovation:

Electronics and Photonics Innovation Centre (EPIC) has consistently maintained high occupancy rates, surpassing 90% and reaching full occupancy by March 2024.

Tenants reported significant business growth and increased employment.

EPIC has effectively supported the high-tech cluster in Torbay, demonstrating strong demand for innovation space, and working with South Devon College supporting skills development.

Levelling Up Partnership funding has been secured to progress the Torbay Tech Production Park in Paignton which will bring forward grow-on units for EPIC tenants and a new inward investment site for Torbay.

An innovation focussed business support programme has successfully fostered innovation across multiple sectors. 59 Businesses were supported and 7 businesses were facilitated to achieve a grant award through the program funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).

#### Business Support

An Enterprise Coaching Programme has been delivered, supporting 36 individuals in starting their own business, resulting in the creation of 3 new businesses to date.

Follow up support will enhance the long-term success rates of new businesses started as a result of the programme.

### Skills and Labour pipeline

Torbay Jobs Fairs have connected job seekers with employment opportunities and are well attended with 267 recorded at the last event and have led to 27 individuals gaining employment.

### Net Zero

The Make it Net Zero Programme, has helped 81 businesses create decarbonisation plans, saving 4500 tonnes of carbon. The program has significantly contributed to sustainability efforts.

### Inward Investment

The EPIC team hosted a German trade delegation and has participated in a range of international trade events which have enhanced Torbay's visibility and attractiveness to national and international investors.

As a result, a £150,000 collaboration has been secured between EPIC and the iAero Centre in Somerset.

## **Priority Theme 2: Building up our Economic Specialisms**

### Hi-Tech and Tech Production

Continued work with the Hi-Tech cluster is focussing on marketing the Hi-Tech offer in Torbay to establish the identify of Torbay as a Hi-Tech innovation district, and to work with schools and colleges to promote career paths.

### Medical and Healthcare

Organisations in the Med-Tech sector have been invited to join the Hi-Tech cluster, to widen the reach and benefit across innovation sectors.

The Health and Social Care recruitment pilot being explored with Plymouth was unsuccessful with its funding application. However, conversations have resumed with DWP to explore the viability of a project solely for Torbay.

### Visitor Economy:

English Riviera Destination Management Group (DMG) continues to deliver against the Destination Management Plan with initiatives that have strengthened the visitor economy. Over the last 12 months a new performance monitoring framework has been established. Funding for business tourism (conferencing and events) and new walking tour projects have been secured. There is also progress against the 'in and on the water' offer, including a cruise ship visit programme and work with external partners to establish Torbay as the Stand-up Paddleboarding destination in the UK.

### Creative Industries:

Support for business growth in the Creative Sector has been delivered through the Creative UK Devon Create Growth Programme. This resulted in 13 businesses benefiting from advice on funding, and business growth opportunities for the sector.

### **Priority Theme 3: Reaching our Economic Potential**

#### Skills and Employment:

The Torbay Multiply Programme has supported 82 learners in improving numeracy skills to improve their chances of securing employment.

#### Build Torbay:

The Build Torbay co-ordinator has established a programme that connects schools with the construction industry through events and site visits. Work has also commenced on linking construction and development businesses directly to education providers and to strengthen planning processes to maximise skills and employment targets for new developments.

#### Community Wealth Building:

Work has been delivered that focuses on the 'Fair Employment' and 'Progressive procurement of goods and services' pillars of community wealth building. Additional Degree apprenticeship courses and roles have been established with South Devon College and local businesses as a result of this work. The first 'Meet the buyer' event was held in June 2024, introducing over 50 businesses to the councils contracts team, with new businesses signing up to be suppliers to the Council and NHS Trust. Requirements to consider the use of local supply chain has been written into the Councils procurement processes and a framework to measure Council expenditure in the local economy has been established.

#### Economically Inactive Support:

The Ready for Work programme has been delivered and evaluated and has informed a new employment program with Stronger Economy funding secured to support delivery.

### **Priority Theme 4: Utilising our Natural Capital**

#### Natural Capital and Tourism:

Natural assets in Torbay have been leveraged through the work of the Destination Management Group and UNESCO Geopark Board, involving partners and associate partners from across public, voluntary and private sector to promote and raise the profile of the UNESCO Geopark status and assets. Funding has been secured for activities such that include digital and guided experiences funded by UKSPF.

#### Town Centre Improvements:

Key regeneration projects have been progressed over the last 12 months that will increase employment opportunities in, and promote the use of Town Centres across Torbay, such as The Strand and Paignton Sea Defence Scheme, with funding also secured to progress the Port Infrastructure Project in Brixham.

## **Conclusion**

The period from 1st October 2022 to 31st March 2024 has seen substantial progress across various strategic themes of the Torbay Economic Growth Strategy Action Plan. While challenges such as core funding and resource allocation remain, the achievements highlight that a good foundation has been laid for continued economic development and growth in Torbay.

## **Appendices**

**Appendix 1: Economic Growth Strategy 2030 - Action Plan**

**Appendix 2: Economic Growth Strategy Quarterly Report - Q4 2023/24**

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## ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan sets out a high-level programme for the Council's economic development activities over the next 3 years.

Torbay Council will produce an annual update on the programme, provide greater detail on planned activity and the progress on outcomes for each of the workstreams. This will be determined by the level of resources available to deliver the Action Plan.

The Action Plan captures potential costs (annually) to Torbay Council on a scale of '£' indicators:

- A single '£' represents under £25k
- Two '££' represents up to £100K
- Three '£££' represents up to £500k
- And ££££ represents over £501k.

The timeline is set out as 'Short, Medium or Long term.'

- Short terms relate to projects that will be completed within 12 months.
- A medium timescale equates to delivery in 1-3 years.
- A long term is over 4 years to completion.

**Focus 2022-2030**

**i) Supporting innovators, entrepreneurs and business owners**

| <b>High Level Actions</b>   | <b>Our role</b>  | <b>Our partners</b>               | <b>Costs, resources and funding</b> | <b>Challenges and risks</b>   | <b>Timeline Short/Medium/Long</b> | <b>Monitoring and measurement</b>  |
|---|--|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| <b>We will help to boost innovation throughout the economy by providing advice and signposting to our business community, including commercialising knowledge from universities and government, and supporting firms of all sizes in all sectors.</b> | We will continue to support the Hi-Tech Cluster  | South Devon College<br>Growth Hub | £                                   | Challenge is to secure public funds to support businesses and the time required to signpost enquiries and attendance at partner meetings<br><br>Key risk is meeting potential demand from Torbay's businesses | Long                              | Number of companies assisted by SetSquared or similar  |
|   | We will further develop relationship with Universities   | Business community                | £                                   |   |                                   | Number of learners of Photonics and Opto-electronics courses   |
|   | We will further embed SetSquared or similar support into Torbay                                    |                                   | ££                                  |   |                                   | EPIC occupancy rate  |
|   | We will develop a R&D grant programme to boost development of new products, processes and services |                                   | ££                                  |   |                                   | Financial value of innovation grants won by companies supported<br>Number of jobs created<br>Number of R&D grants provided<br>Number of new products, processes and services |
| <b>We will provide business support services to Torbay's start-ups and scale-up businesses and to improve resource efficiency.</b>  | We will strengthen the local entrepreneurial ecosystem supporting businesses at all stages to      | Growth Hub<br>South Devon College | ££                                  | Reaching smaller companies and providing a valuable programme is the major challenge  | Long                              | Number of new businesses started<br>Number of aftercare visits undertaken<br>Number of businesses receiving decarbonisation grants   |

start, sustain and grow in hi tech sectors

Number Individuals supported in hi tech business start-ups

We will deliver an Aftercare Programme to support the growth of our key businesses

£

Number of jobs created

Number of jobs safeguarded

We will commission a decarbonisation programme to improve business resource efficiency

££

We will enable our business community to sell their goods and services to our anchor institutions

£

**We will provide workspace to encourage innovative companies to grow, invest & develop in Torbay.**

The Council will lead & support the delivery of new workspace

Co-working space providers  
Serviced office providers  
Developers

££

Torbay needs to be able to attract and house entrepreneurs in high quality facilities

Medium

New workspace enabled

Medium

**We will support our under-represented business communities to engage with local business support networks.**

We will establish a new business network for ethnic minority businesses and support the network as part of the wider business environment

Torbay Business Forum  
Torbay Champions

£

Our key challenge is ensuring that all under-represented communities can access local business support networks.

Number of companies engaged  
Number of events networking events held  
Research projects / Data collection through short surveys etc.

**We will target prospective inward investment opportunities which we can accommodate in the employment space we have available.**

We will focus our inward investment activity on targeting hi growth, tech-based businesses

Torbay Hi-Tech Cluster  
Department for International Trade

£

Our biggest risk is the lack of employment land available in Torbay

Medium

Number of companies attracted to Torbay  
New Jobs created

ii) Building on our Economic Specialisms

| High Level Actions   | Our role  | Our partners   | Costs, resources and funding | Challenges and risks   | Timeline Short/Medium/Long  | Monitoring and measurement  |
|--|---|--|------------------------------|--|---|---|
| <p><b>We will provide business support to companies in our key sectors to enable them to start, grow, improve resource efficiency and prosper.</b></p>                                     | <p>The Council will support companies of all sizes through signposting to available business support services and advice</p>            | <p>Torbay Business Community and business networks</p> <p>Growth Hub</p> <p>Torbay Hi-Tech cluster</p> | <p>£</p>                     | <p>Macro-economic factors such as Covid-19, leaving the EU and its resulting change in regulations provide risks we need to account for when supporting businesses</p> | <p>Medium</p>   | <p>Number of new businesses created.</p> <p>Number of jobs created.</p>   |
|  | <p>We will commission business support aligned to the needs of our key sectors, prioritising the hi tech sector</p>                     |  |                              | <p>££</p>  | <p>Reaching smaller companies and providing a valuable programme is the major challenge</p> |   |
| <p><b>We will work with local businesses to identify barriers which restrict recruitment. We will work with the business community to identify initiatives that will address this.</b></p> | <p>The Council has a planning role in ensuring enough high quality affordable housing and employment space is available through the</p> | <p>South Devon College</p> <p>Job Centre+</p> <p>Torbay Business Community</p>                         | <p>£££</p>                   | <p>Finding skills to meet business demand is a growing challenge across the country</p>  | <p>Short</p>  | <p>New workspace enabled</p> <p>New affordable housing units built</p> <p>Number of employers attending</p> <p>Number of potential jobs on offer</p> <p>Number of job seekers</p> |

|   |   |   |     |   |        |  |  |
|---|---|---|-----|---|--------|--|--|
|   | delivery of the Housing Strategy  |   |     |   |        |  | Unemployment levels<br>Vacancy rates   |
|   | We will deliver or enable an annual jobs fair   |   | £   |   |        |  |  |
| <b>We will work with our Medical and Healthcare sector to better understand the needs the growth needs of this sector</b> | We will convene a new medical and healthcare cluster group                              | Medical and Healthcare partners.                          | £   | The project will need broad buy in from the local community if we are to secure new opportunities.            | Long   |  | Growth needs identified  |
|   | We will establish clear economic growth needs with this sector                          |   | TBC |   |        |  |  |
| <b>We will work with Torbay's visitor economy sector to deliver the Destination Management Plan</b>                       | We will work with the visitor economy sector to deliver the Destination Management Plan | English Riviera Tourism BID<br>Visitor economy businesses | ££  | The project will need support from the sector and media to ensure that new initiatives receive public support | Medium |  | Increased number of day visitors<br>Increased number of staying visitors<br>Jobs created<br>Increased footfall |

We will develop a programme to support the development and promotion of the visitor economy and aligns to the Events and Cultural Strategy

£

We will develop and deliver a grant programme to help businesses bid to host international business events and conferences

£

|  |   |                          |     |  |      |                         |
|--|---|--------------------------|-----|--|------|-------------------------|
| <b>We will work with our creative industries sector to better understand the needs the growth needs of this sector</b> | We will convene a new creative industries cluster group | Creative sector partners | £   | The project will need broad buy in from the local community if we are to secure new opportunities. | Long | Growth needs identified |
|  | We will establish a set of clear economic               |                          | TBC |  |      |                         |

|   | growth needs from this sector.  |   |     |  |  |  |
|---|---|---|-----|--|--|--|
| <b>We will address the challenge regarding the limited amount of employment land we have available to support economic growth, We will work to expand the amount of land available for employment, and to safeguard allocated land from other uses.</b> | The Council will identify opportunities to increase employment space and meet the demands of the business community | Developers and Landowners<br><br>Local Planning Authority | £££ |  | The Council needs to acquire and/or redevelop employment land and protect that which is already designated in order to help facilitate economic growth | Medium.<br><br>Amount of employment land available identified in the Local Plan<br><br>Development Plan wording of “reasonable prospects” test for changing the use of employment land (Strengthened wording to Local Plan Policy SS5) |
|   | We will ensure the Local Plan adequately protects employment sites and enables them to be developed                 |   | £   |  |  | S106 funding allocated to employment sites<br><br>Updated Employment Land Review produced  |
|   | We will explore using S106 funding to address site viability to aid bringing sites forward                          |   | £   |  |  |  |
|   | We will support the   |   | £   |  |  |  |



development  
of an  
Employment  
Land Review  
to accurately  
reflect  
demand for  
employment  
space

iii) Helping our community to reach their economic potential and build an inclusive economy

| High Level Actions   | Our role  | Our partners  | Costs, resources and funding | Challenges and risks   | Timeline | Monitoring and measurement  |
|--|---|---|------------------------------|--|----------|---|
| <b>We will work with key skills stakeholders in Torbay to ensure that business needs are understood, and that provision is focused on ensuring that our young peoples are equipped with the skills Torbay businesses need.</b> | We will support the development of the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP)                               | South Devon College<br>Job Centre+<br>Schools                   | £                            | Enhancing the skills agenda will need support from a range of agencies. Coordinating this is a risk                                    | Long     | LSIP produced and reflective of Torbay's skills needs   |
|  | We will develop and implement a sector pathway programme  | Business community<br>Anchor Institutions<br>Training Providers | ££                           |  |          | Improved NVQ attainment   |
|  |   |   |                              |  |          | Reduced vacancy rates   |
| <b>We will bring employers and education providers together to ensure education and training meets employers' needs.</b>   | We will work with the local business community to better engage with schools to inspire our young people. | South Devon College<br>Schools<br>Local Education Board         | £                            | The main challenge is to ensure that Torbay businesses are engaged and participating in activities, particularly in key growth sectors | Medium   | Number of secondary schools/college and businesses engaged in delivery  |
|  | We will support the Careers Hub and ensure all secondary schools have Enterprise Advisors.                | Training providers<br>Business Community                        | £                            |  |          | For the Construction sector the number of Employment and Skills Plans established on all Torbay Council contracts<br>The number of new modules/courses developed to improve resource efficiency |
|  | We will work to connect businesses and  |   | £                            |  |          | Each secondary school to have an Enterprise Advisor   |
|  |   |   |                              |  |          | Number of employers supporting schools  |

sector leads with school leaders to raise the profile of our key sectors

Number of sector leads identified

**We will promote the delivery of apprenticeships to the Torbay business community.**

We will deliver an annual apprenticeship fair.

Chambers of commerce

£

The key risk is change to Apprenticeship policy. At present this is not foreseen

Short

Number of apprenticeships offered

We will promote apprenticeships as a route into employment

Business Forum  
ERTBID

£

These will be hard to reach and innovative solutions will be needed

Number of schools attending apprenticeship fair

We will work with careers advice providers to find solutions to up skilling and help people develop their careers.

Careers Hub  
South Devon

££

College and private training providers

Careers Service

**We will help those who are in work to access training opportunities to further develop their career**

We will develop and deliver a digital skills programme to help people progress in work.

South Devon College and training providers

££

Long

Number of people gaining a qualification

Number of learners

We will develop and deliver a tailored programme to address barriers to accessing training and education

££

We will deliver numeracy courses to help people progress their career

££

|   |  |   |            |  |               |   |
|---|--|---|------------|--|---------------|---|
| <p><b>We will promote the Community Wealth Building Memorandum ensuring that our businesses and institutions consider where we buy goods, the people that are employed, the assets they own, and the powers that they have, to bring about positive change and maximise the local economic opportunities.</b></p> | <p>The aim of community wealth building is to use local economic assets to develop the economy in ways that have tangible benefits for its citizens, communities, organisations and businesses. This will have considerable benefit for Torbay residents (a separate action plan is agreed</p> | <p>All Key stakeholders and Anchor Institutions</p> | <p>££.</p> | <p>The community wealth building approach will need broad support from the Torbay community and institutions</p> | <p>Medium</p> | <p>Level of Progressive procurement undertaken proactively engaging and enabling businesses and social organisations based in these neighbourhoods to compete to supply goods and services</p> <p>Level of Progressive procurement: working with existing suppliers based in these neighbourhoods to encourage, support and, ultimately, require them to work with the Big Local /resident-led partnership to recruit residents into secure jobs paid at or above the</p> |
|---|--|---|------------|--|---------------|---|

|  |  |  |     |   |        |   |
|--|--|--|-----|---|--------|---|
|  | annually by the CWB Board that contains detailed actions and KPIs)   |  |     |   |        | Living Wage Foundation living wage  |
| <b>We will support economically inactive people to enhance their economic opportunities particularly those in the most disadvantaged communities in Torbay</b> | We will deliver an employment support programme to help those furthest from the labour market to find work | Job Centre +<br>Community and Voluntary groups   | ££  | With reducing unemployment, those needing support will need more support to address key barriers  | Medium | Number of people engaged<br><br>Number of people finding employment (paid or voluntary) or further training<br><br>Number of learners |
|  | We will deliver life skills courses to improve adult numeracy.   |  | ££  |   |        |   |
| <b>We will work with stakeholders to develop bespoke support for the over 50s which enhance their economic opportunities.</b>                                  | We will commission an employment support programme that targets (but is not limited to) over 50s           | South Devon College.<br>Job Centre +<br>Community and Voluntary groups<br><br>Business Community | £££ | Working with key stakeholders such as South Devon College and Job Centre + we will explore options that will support the economic opportunities | Medium | Number of people moved into employment  |

iv) Maximising the economic value of nature capital

| High Level Actions   | Our role   | Our partners                                  | Costs, resources and funding | Challenges and risks  | Timeline | Monitoring and measurement   |
|--|--|---|------------------------------|---|----------|--|
| <b>We will explore how Torbay’s natural capital can offer new opportunity for economic growth. We want to positively and sustainably use our natural environment to help secure economic growth.</b> | The Destination Management Plan (DMP) has priorities linked to maximising the benefits from the UNESCO Geopark Designation and coastline   | Key stakeholders<br><br>Local businesses      | ££                           | We will explore opportunities that will enhance the local environment and increase economic growth  | Long     | KPI’s within the DMP   |
| <b>We will deliver improvements to our town centres, using Towns Fund and Future High Street Funding alongside other public and private investments.</b>   | We have secured £21.9m for Torquay town centre from the Towns Fund and £13.36m from the Future High Streets Fund for Paignton. We will seek further funding to increase pace of delivery | Businesses<br><br>Government<br><br>Investors | £££                          | Improvements will kick start the exciting transformation of Paignton and Torquay town centres. The volatility of market prices and the public sector funding position are risks | Short    | Retail Vacancy rates<br><br>Footfall data from platforms such as Town and Place and AI<br><br>Town Investment Plan delivered |

|   |   |  |            |   |                      |   |
|---|---|--|------------|---|----------------------|---|
| <p><b>We will explore the potential to establish a maintenance centre for the South West’s fishing fleet.</b></p> | <p>We will work with an investor to establish whether Brixham could become the location for a new fishing fleet maintenance centre</p>                      | <p>Marine and Maritime partners<br/><br/>Torbay Harbour Authority<br/><br/>Fishing sector</p>                | <p>£££</p> | <p>Risk surrounds industry enthusiasm and ability to see the potential economic benefits of a regional hub in Torbay<br/><br/>The availability of suitable land and space</p> | <p>Medium</p>        | <p>Investment secured<br/><br/>Jobs created</p>   |
| <p><b>We will deliver Build Torbay to support the Construction sector in Torbay.</b></p>                          | <p>As a commissioner of services and leader of key projects the Council will ensure our community has the skills to benefit from the investment planned</p> | <p>Build Torbay works in partnership with Tier 1 contractors, sub-contractors, engineers and consultants</p> | <p>££</p>  | <p>Without skills being available we run the risk of capital projects facing delivery problems</p>  | <p>Medium – Long</p> | <p>Number of schools events delivered<br/><br/>Number of tier 1 contractors supported<br/><br/>Number of students enrolled on construction courses<br/><br/>Number of employment and skills plans developed and implemented<br/><br/>Number of awareness raising events delivered</p> |

**Cross Cutting Theme – Tackling the Climate Emergency**

| <b>High Level Actions</b>  | <b>Our role</b>   | <b>Our partners</b>   | <b>Costs, resources and funding</b> | <b>Challenges and risks</b>   | <b>Timeline</b> | <b>Monitoring and measurement</b>  |
|--|---|---|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------|--|
| <b>Torbay and the Council is committed to becoming Carbon Neutral by 2030. We will proactively deliver initiatives which reduce our carbon emissions.</b>                | Torbay Council is committed to addressing the Climate Emergency as a key priority                               | All stakeholders<br><br>Business Community  | £££                                 | Key risk is not taking action early enough to mitigate the impact of Climate change | Long            | Torbay’s total Carbon emissions per year   |
|  | We will commission a programme to help raise awareness of energy efficiency measures                            | Torbay’s Communities<br><br>Torbay Climate Partnership                            | £                                   |   |                 |  |
| <b>We will encourage our businesses and stakeholders to reduce their carbon footprint through updated and more effectively implemented planning policy/ influencing.</b> | The Council has a partnering role in encouraging stakeholders to take measures to reduce their carbon footprint | Businesses<br><br>English Riviera BID<br><br>Devon Chamber<br><br>Health partners | £                                   | Improvements are dependent on stakeholders seeking to reduce their carbon footprint | Short           | Key metrics will include the number of businesses engaged and the extent of reductions they make to their carbon footprint |
|  | We will develop and deliver a resource efficiency programme   |   | ££                                  |   |                 |  |



Economic Growth Quarterly Performance Report Q4 – 2023/24

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## Executive Summary

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### Delivery of the Torbay Council Corporate and Community Plan

#### **A Thriving Economy: We will create an environment in which businesses and jobs can grow**

Torbay's UKSPF Programme is now going into the last year of delivery and is continuing to deliver impact to people living and working in Torbay. The Innovation focussed programme has supported 59 businesses which has enabled new ideas and growth; seven businesses have successfully applied for and received grant funding and another 10 applications will be reviewed later in April. The *Make it Net Zero* programme has helped 81 businesses create decarbonisation plans resulting in a carbon saving of 4,500 tonnes. The People and Skills programmes have recently been commissioned with contracts starting from April 2024.

Following the Levelling Up Funding (Round 3) announcement, the round 2 application was reworked to be affordable and re-submitted to government for approval. The application focusses on new Technology Park and new business space in Brixham harbour.

Having reworked the costs and negotiated a different rent, we are progressing positively with a Teignbridge based company interested in relocating to Edginswell.

Torbay is part of a Devon-wide consortium that has been successful in securing funding for the Creative UK Devon Create Growth Programme. 13 Torbay businesses have applied to take part in the programme.

In this quarter, EPIC reached full occupancy. However, the Centre Director has left the post and recruitment is underway.

Towards the end of the quarter, the team was asked to manage the Plan for Towns submission to govt. A Torquay Town Investment Plan is required by 1<sup>st</sup> Aug.

Levelling UP Partnership business case was submitted to government and we await the outcome.

### **A Thriving Economy: We will become the premier tourist resort in the UK**

The Destination Management Group partnership continues to deliver the Destination Management Plan (DMP) which has priorities linked to maximising the benefits of key themes on/in the water, food and drink, culture and events and the UNESCO Geopark. Activity in the quarter:

- Meet Devon have now completed the UKSPF programme to drive forward business tourism, although outcomes will continue to be monitored over the next 12 months. So far, over £1M of business has been secured and provisionally secured for Torbay up until 2027.
- Aligning with actions in the DMP, engagement has taken place with the Torbay Sustainable Food Place Group and members of the Torbay Water Sports Forum around the blue economy.
- Engagement with the Devon and Somerset Visitor Economy Data Hub (a Heart of the South-West Tourism Data Hub project) continues with involvement on the steering group. ToR and priorities are currently being established.
- Devon Local Visitor Enterprise Partnership (LVEP) application was submitted on 28<sup>th</sup> February, with a letter of support from Torbay Council. The LVEP is part of a new structure with VisitEngland/VisitBritain looking to cultivate strategic partnerships with other areas within the region to create a strong visitor brand, experience and strengthen the visitor economy

## Priority Theme 1: Supporting Innovation, Entrepreneurs and Business Owners

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### Boosting Innovation

- Studio Zao (SZ) continue with delivery of their innovation focussed business support programme, Impact Torbay, funded through UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). Since the programme began, 59 Torbay businesses have received support, with another 22 businesses committed to support in May/June. The grant element of the project remains live and so far, 7 grants have been administered to Torbay businesses, with another 5 likely in the next quarter. SZ are working with businesses on their funding applications through their accelerators and hackathons, to ensure maximum opportunities for innovation and growth are being utilised.
- The Torbay UKSPF programme continues to be regularly promoted, the latest press release on programme achievements has been published attracting media attention.

### Providing business support to start up and scale up to improve resource efficiency

- Local Spark continue to engage Social and Community businesses through events and workshops, including the launch of the Social Economy Hub at Parkfield House, which will enable better links and resources for social businesses. So far, 23 organisations have received support and 7 pre-start social businesses have been supported.
- Through UKSPF, SW Manufacturing Advisory Service (SWMAS) continue to deliver the Make it Net Zero Programme to Torbay businesses to help reduce carbon emissions and energy bills. SWMAS have supported 81 businesses in creating decarbonisation plans, saving over 4,500 tonnes of carbon to date.
- The UKSPF Start-Up Torbay programme continues to gain positive traction. This quarter, 23 businesses have been supported through workshops/one to one's, and 3 businesses have been started. Delivery of a Torbay *Women in Business* event for International Women's Day (IWD) on 8<sup>th</sup> March took place, promoting UKSPF support programmes with inspirational speakers on self-confidence, strategy planning and taking the leap into self-employment, over 70 attended and initial event feedback is positive.

## Providing workspace to help innovative companies to grow

- The 30+ EOIs submitted (to date) for Lymington Road development are currently being assessed by the estates team, and local companies continue to be notified about this opportunity.
- Torbay Technology Park was submitted as part of Levelling Up Fund R3 and we await the decision.
- New employment space at Brixham harbour was submitted as part of Levelling Up Fund R3 and we await the decision.

## We will support our under-represented business communities

- DBI held a celebration and reflection event for the Torbay Inclusive Business Network on 19<sup>th</sup> January. The event provided the opportunity for the network to come together, reflect on the progress, challenges, and future needs of the group.
- Since the conclusion of the SLA at the end of January, internal focus has been on evaluating the project and identifying next steps for future delivery options and support to businesses.

## We will target prospective inward investment opportunities

- Inward Investment strategy work has started, including reviewing marketing collateral (websites, brochures).
- Identifying pipeline opportunities for EPIC, Technology Park and employment land continues to be regularly maintained.
- SEDO continues to monitor GrantFinder and other sources to share information to companies supporting growth ambitions.
- SEDO is developing links with Department for Business and Trade and attended several South-West Operations Group meetings.
- EPIC Centre Director achieved 100% occupancy in March 2024.
- EPIC showcased its collaboration with both Exeter and Plymouth Science Parks by co-exhibiting at the South West Innovation Expo in March. SEDO also attended and has followed up with contacts.
- EPIC attended several events and conferences in this quarter including Photonics West.

## Activity for Next Quarter

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- UKSPF programmes delivering and monitoring will continue.
- Enterprise Fund planning.

- SWMAS will focus the remainder of their UKSPF project on administering small, match funded grants to businesses to invest in carbon saving equipment, technology and advising businesses on a less intensive basis.
- Completion of the Torbay Inclusive Business Network project evaluation and development of future delivery plan.
- To support the development of the Torbay Technology Park we are still in negotiations with the Landowner for acquiring an option to purchase 6 acres of land at Torbay Business Park.
- DBT EPIC visit with sector specialist for overseas opportunities (date in June TBC)

## Priority Theme 2: Building up our Economic Specialisms

### Providing business support to companies in our key sectors

- SZ and SWMAS are actively engaging all key sectors in Torbay, including participation from Tourism, Hi-Tech, Photonics and Manufacturing businesses. So far 140 businesses have been supported across both programmes through workshops/121s.
- Meet Devon, (UKSPF Meet English Riviera project promoting Torbay as a business tourism destination), have attended 4 international events and secured 30 lead partners (hotels, venues, travel operators etc). To date, over £1M of business has been secured/provisionally secured for Torbay until 2027.
- Sector business support information has been included in the monthly Economic Development newsletter, including support programmes, DBT and exporting opportunities.

### Work with businesses to identify barriers to recruitment

- Due to UKSPF, progress on the new strategic skills group for Torbay was delayed this quarter. Now UKSPF procurement is coming to an end, skills lead will move on to setting the group up. Led by Torbay Council, the group will have strategic oversight of skills and employment interventions throughout Torbay, working collaboratively to demonstrate impact.
- The next Torbay Jobs Fair is being planned for September (date TBC).
- Hi Tech Cluster now has a new Chair, Chris Wardle (QLM) is looking to develop a programme of awareness and engagement in schools to raise the profile of tech based careers.

## Support development of the medical and healthcare sector

- Businesses from across the med tech sector have been invited to join the Hi Tech Cluster although there has been limited engagement so far.

## Support development of the visitor economy

- The Destination Management Group (DMG) meeting took place on 22<sup>nd</sup> January with updates from Torbay Council Officers on planning and harbours activity.
- Completion of the quarterly (Oct-Dec) DMP monitoring and evaluation report.
- Engaging, facilitating, and supporting discussions aligned to actions in the DMP such as the Torbay Sustainable Food Place group with LocalMotion and around the blue economy with members of the Torbay Water Sports Forum.
- Engagement with the Heart of the South-West Tourism Data Hub project continues, with the EDO on the steering group, ToR and priorities are currently being established. (This is a regional HotSW project with funding until March 2025).
- The Devon Local Visitor Enterprise Partnership (LVEP) application was submitted on 28<sup>th</sup> February, with a letter of support from Torbay Council. The LVEP is part of a new structure with VisitEngland/VisitBritain looking to cultivate strategic partnerships with other areas within the region to create a strong visitor brand, experience and strengthen the visitor economy.

## Support development of the creative industries sector

- January appointment of the research consultant, Chimera. Completion of desk top research, policy review and interviews with sector businesses representatives, including Digital Torbay network, EPIC businesses and stakeholders across Torbay. Data from the MNAi platform has also been used to inform the research commission. The final report will be delivered in April. The research is focussed on identifying barriers and opportunities for growth, what support the sector needs and how this may be delivered in the future.
- The DCMS funded Create Growth programme has been launched to Torbay businesses, an event on 24<sup>th</sup> January, at Palace Theatre Paignton, attracted over 100 attendees (data from MNAi has been utilised to promote the programme). 7 businesses have now been accepted on the 9-month (investment ready) programme. The next deadline is Monday 1<sup>st</sup> April for the 6-month (general support) programme. The SEDO is monitoring Torbay's programme engagement and updates will be shared through the Programme Board meetings.

## Addressing the supply of employment land

- SEDO is managing the pipeline of enquiries.

- SEDO meetings with commercial property agents to identify available space, building market intelligence and local relationships are ongoing.

## Activity for Next Quarter

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- Completion of the Creative Industries research and receipt of final report.
- Inward investment strategy work continues.
- DMG meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> April, next monitoring, and evaluation report to be completed.
- Continue to support the Torbay engagement with the HotSW Tourism Data Hub and Devon LVEP.
- Formalise the Torbay Skills Group, action plan and Terms of Reference.

## Priority Theme 3: Reaching our Economic Potential

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### Working with local stakeholders to ensure business needs are fully understood

- Recommendations in the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) report have been considered within the scoping of the Sector Pathways programme, which is now live and aligned to the UKSPF People and Skills programmes.
- The 5 UKSPF People and Skills programmes have been procured, following a comprehensive procurement process. The following programmes have been awarded to the corresponding delivery partners:
  - Supporting the Economically Inactive – Eat That Frog / I Can Do That CIC
  - Supporting NEETs in Torbay (Under 25s Not in Education, Employment or Training) - Sound Communities CIC
  - Supporting Digital skills - Turning Heads CIC
  - Supporting Green skills – South Devon College
  - Providing tailored support to the employed in key sectors (Sector Pathways) - South Devon College
- Due to some slight delays, contracts will begin on 8<sup>th</sup> April for all programmes, (except for Economically Inactive, which will begin on 15<sup>th</sup> April).
- Work will begin in April to promote these new programmes and ensure referral pathways are clear and streamline.



## Bringing employers and education providers together

- Quarter 2 of the HotSW Careers Hub SLA has achieved the following outputs and outcomes:
  - 100% of Torbay Secondary Schools now have a minimum of 1 Enterprise Adviser.
  - To date, we have recorded 97 separate employer interactions with schools (surpassing the target of 60).
  - As per the SLA, the annual Dragons Den event was delivered in December, all associated outputs were achieved.
  - Currently, a 5.5 average across secondary schools of all Gatsby benchmarks, achieving 100% (in line with SLA targets).

## We will promote the delivery of apprenticeships

- Delivery of the Virtual Apprenticeship Assembly for National Apprenticeship Week in February in partnership with South Devon College and the Careers Hub. The event was a success and has received extremely positive feedback. The following outputs were achieved:
  - 532 viewers and registrations from school cohorts across Torbay and South Devon.
  - 116 additional registrations and views from parents or adults interested in apprenticeships.
  - 8 guest speakers – 6 of whom were from key sectors.

## We will help those in work access training to further develop their career

- The UKSPF People and Skills interventions will begin to deliver within the first half of April. There is just over £767,000 available of UKSPF funding for these interventions, which must all be spent by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.
- The Torbay Multiply programme continues into the third and final year of delivery. Q4 of year 2 has just passed and the following outputs have been achieved:
  - 150 participants engaging with the Multiply programme.
  - 131 participants completing substantive provision.
  - 34 Separate interventions delivered.
- The Investment Plan for third year of the Multiply programme has been approved from the Department for Education (DFE). The total funding available for the year will be £214,700, (delivery begins April 2024).

## We will promote Community Wealth Building

- The Community Wealth Building (CWB) Board meeting took place on 20<sup>th</sup> March. Key discussion points included findings of the internal review with 3

recommendations made to the Board, including CLES training, sharing accountability between anchors and working to streamline internal processes.

- A review and next steps for the Torbay 'bid writing club' previously funded by LocalMotion are being considered to identify ways to continually support Torbay SMEs with bid writing, developing skills and winning contracts.
- Planning is underway for a Meet the Buyer event to be held on 25<sup>th</sup> June. This will be an opportunity for local businesses and VCSEs to work with anchor institutions to identify contracts and services that they could supply.

### We will support the economically inactive to improve their employment chances

- This cohort will be directly supported by the UKSPF People and Skills interventions starting in April 2024; 2 projects have been commissioned focussing on supporting the economically inactive (NEETs and over 25s).
- The next Torbay Jobs Fair is being planned for September (date TBC).

### We will work with stakeholders to develop bespoke support for over 50s.

- This cohort will be directly supported by the UKSPF People and Skills interventions starting in April 2024; 2 projects have been commissioned focussing on supporting the economically inactive and those at risk of digital exclusion.

### We will deliver Build Torbay

- We have successfully recruited for the Build Torbay Co-ordinator vacancy, the postholder is due to start on 1<sup>st</sup> July.

## Activity for Next Quarter

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- Commencement of delivery of UKSPF People and Skills interventions
- DPT Careers Hub SLA will enter its 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of delivery.
- Torbay Skills Group Terms of Reference in place and priorities agreed.
- The Torbay Multiply programme will enter the first quarter of year 3 delivery.
- CWB activity:
  - Work to implement the 3 Board recommendations and develop the 2024 Action Plan of activity against all CWB pillars.
  - Begin imbedding CWB to Torbay Council as an internal team.
  - Work with regeneration partners Willmot Dixon & Milligan and onboarding to CWB.

- Hold the Meet the Buyer event.
- Hold the next CWB Board meeting.

## Priority Theme 4: Utilising our Natural Capital

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### Exploring how Torbay's natural capital can offer new opportunities for economic growth

- Aligned to the DMP, engagement with Torbay Water Sports Forum members, facilitating introductions with other DMG partners/ Council contacts to explore opportunities for SUP, the blue economy and Torbay's natural capital offer.
- UKSPF funded projects aligned to natural capital and economic growth continue to be delivered and promoted e.g. creating new UNESCO Geopark experiences and the Make it NetZero Torbay support programme.

### Activity for Next Quarter

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- Continue to support the Destination Management Group to deliver the English Riviera Destination Management Plan and associated action plan of activity.

| Title  | Polarity               | Status                  | 2022/23 Actual | Annual Target | Quarter 4 2022/23 | Quarter 1 2023/24   | Quarter 2 2023/24   | Quarter 3 2023/24   | Quarter 4 2023/24                     | Year to date      |
|--|------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Number of businesses assisted                          | It's better to be high | Much better than target | 183            | 120           | 36                | 19                  | 40                  | 55                  | Data unavailable at time of reporting |                   |
| New investment from companies in key sectors           | It's better to be high | TBC                     | New Indicator  | TBC           | New PI - TBC      | KPIs being reviewed | KPIs being reviewed | KPIs being reviewed | KPIs being reviewed                   |                   |
| Title  | Polarity               | Status                  | 2022/23 Actual | Annual Target | Quarter 4 2022/23 | Quarter 1 2023/24   | Quarter 2 2023/24   | Quarter 3 2023/24   | Quarter 4 2023/24                     | Last period value |
| Occupancy of Electronics & Photonics Innovation Centre | It's better to be high | Much better than target | 90.0%          | 85.0%         | 91.0%             | 90.0%               | 95.0%               | 95.0%               | 100%                                  |                   |

|   |                        |                         |                     |        |        |        |       |       |                                       |  |
|---|------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|--------|--------|--------|-------|-------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Number of secondary schools engaged with business (Voluntary enterprise advisers) | It's better to be high | On target               | 100.0%              | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 86.0% | 86.0% | 100%                                  |  |
| Number of people supported through Multiply programme                             | It's better to be high | Much better than target | 78 (Half year data) | 190    | 73     | 82     | 46    | 85    | Data unavailable at time of reporting |  |

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