

Meeting: [Cabinet](#) **Date:** [11 July 2024](#)

Wards affected: [All](#)

Report Title: [Torbay Resident Discount Scheme Launch Approval](#)

When does the decision need to be implemented? [02 September 2024](#)

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1. Purpose of Report, Reason for Proposal and its benefits

- 1.1 To seek approval to launch the Torbay Resident Discount Scheme for the residents of Torbay aged 16 and above. The scheme gives discounted access to parking and public toilets, and discounted leisure and retail offers from local businesses.
- 1.2 The proposals in this report help us to deliver our vision of a healthy, happy, and prosperous Torbay and our strategic themes as below:
 - **Community and People:** The proposals aim to increase belonging for residents in Torbay and provide opportunities for individuals and families to benefit from discounts.
 - **Pride in Place:** The proposals support local businesses to invest in our place through the offer of discount to residents, encouraging use of local businesses and areas and increasing satisfaction in the area.
 - **Economic Growth:** The proposals will attract and increase expenditure in the local economy, in our attractions and highstreets.
- 1.3 The proposals in this report help deliver our ambition of supporting Torbay and its residents to thrive. The scheme is expected to promote the retention of local spending and contribute to an improved sense of community.
- 1.4 The proposals meet our ambitions to:

- Put our residents at the heart of everything we do,
 - Present evidence-based activity,
 - Collaborate with other organisations,
 - Maximise the use of our leisure assets,
 - Enable residents to access new opportunities and discounts on local attractions and leisure facilities, public toilets, and parking.
- 1.5 A resident discount scheme facilitated by the Council is expected to:
- Provide local offers that give residents better value for their money and help reduce the cost of living,
 - Improve marketing of local businesses and facilities among residents,
 - Increase local spending by residents,
 - Increase footfall and income for local businesses, leisure and sports, arts and culture venues, and parking.

2. Outline of the Scheme

- 2.1 The proposal would enable residents to access the following discounts:
- **Parking:** An additional 1-hour free parking (when buying at least an hour) across Zones 1 to 3. The offer will be available across all off-street Council managed pay and display car parks in Torbay. The scheme can be used in short stay car parks, although does not give an exclusion to any time limits placed on length of stay. Hourly parking rates in the car parks range from £1.50 to £1.70.
10 car park stays could have a value to residents of £15 per card per year.
 - **Toilets:** Up to 33 free visits a year.
The card would have an equivalent value to residents of £10 per card per year.
 - **Leisure and retail:** The card will provide residents with access to exclusive offers across a range of businesses and attractions in Torbay.
10 uses of the card could have a value to customer of circa £20-£50 per card per year. Additional uses will result in additional value.
- 2.2 The resident discount cards will not hold any cash value. Based on the above, the estimated average savings offered by each card could be between £45 and £75 per year.
- 2.3 Residents will receive a credit card sized discount card they can use to access toilets and leisure offers. Residents will also receive a paper car park permit to display on their vehicle dashboard to access the additional free hour of parking.
- 2.4 The scheme will aim to launch in September 2024 and will be open for residents to sign-up to until mid-November 2024. Resident cards and permits will be posted out in December 2024 allowing residents to use these from 1st January 2025 for a 15-month period until April 2026. This will be classed as an 'Early Bird' sign up offer.

- 2.5 The scheme will be open again for sign ups in January and February 2025, with cards posted to residents for use from 1st April 2025.
- 2.6 Annually thereafter the sign-up period will be open each year between December and February to start from 1st April.
- 2.7 All residents signing up to the scheme will be charged a non-refundable annual fee of £10 per person to cover the administration costs of the cards and permits.
- 2.8 Residents will sign up for membership of the scheme through their 'MyTorbay' account via the Council's website. Following validation of the applicant's primary residence in Torbay, residents will receive a notification to pay for their scheme membership via their 'MyTorbay' account.
- 2.9 Alternative methods of applying to join the scheme via the Council's customer service telephone line will be available for those that need assistance or are unable to access the application digitally using the 'MyTorbay' accounts.
- 2.10 Any individual residents over the age of 16 and able to provide the necessary evidence of local residence can apply for the Torbay Resident Discount Scheme.
- 2.11 Council officers will work with businesses to ensure as many offers as possible include a family or group discount, to ensure children in Torbay can also benefit as much as possible from the scheme.

3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

- 3.1 That the delivery of the Torbay Resident Discount Scheme as outlined in the submitted report be approved for launch in September 2024.
- 3.2 That the Director of Pride in Place seeks to keep the operational budget of the scheme within the £200,000 allocated within the Council's 2024/2025 budget, and within any budget set for the scheme in future years.
- 3.3 That the Director of Pride in Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Pride in Place and Parking, and Director of Finance, be given delegated authority to approve future changes to the scheme.
- 3.4 That the Director of Pride in Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Pride in Place and Parking, and Director of Finance, be given delegated authority to offer residents on low incomes a reduction on the entry cost of the scheme, in the event the Director is not satisfied that the scheme will achieve a neutral or positive impact on financial equality for those on low income solely through the provision of leisure and retail offers intended to target these groups.
- 3.5 That the Director of Pride in Place be given delegated authority to award the contract(s) in respect of the services of external suppliers for the printing and posting of promotional materials, and resident cards and permits for use in the scheme.

Supporting Information

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Council with its place partners has secured significant investment to deliver regeneration in Torbay and in particular in the town centres of Torquay and Paignton, this is complemented by investment in support of key sectors and cultural heritage. Such change will inevitably take time to deliver. While this physical regeneration of the area begins Torbay's Corporate and Community Plan makes a clear commitment for the Council to support our communities and people and direct local spend into the local economy.
- 1.2. The Resident Discount Scheme will provide residents of Torbay with offers on Council off street parking, discounts on access to public toilets, local leisure and sports facilities, arts and cultural venues, and local attractions. Raising awareness of local offers is expected to increase footfall in key areas of Torbay, improve participation in cultural activities and complement the physical regeneration of the place.
- 1.3. A review of the scheme will take place at the end of the first year and annually, to include resident feedback to inform decisions on or changes to the scheme going forward.

2. Options under consideration

- 2.1 Below details the three main options that were under consideration:

Option 1: Do Nothing	
Details:	If this approach is adopted, the Council will continue in an 'As Is' state, with no discount scheme across local businesses, leisure and sports, arts and culture, and parking available for all residents.
Likely advantages:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No additional increase in cost or resources required.
Time and cost estimates:	None
Likely disadvantages:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The benefits described in section 1 of this report above – Reason for proposal and its benefits, will not be realised.
Outcome:	It is recommended that this option is NOT pursued.

Option 2: Physical resident discount card and a physical parking permit sent to all residents in Torbay.

Details:	Council to provide all residents physical discount cards and a physical parking permit at no cost to residents to enter the scheme.
Likely advantages:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for higher uptake of the scheme and its benefits by residents.
Likely disadvantages:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not environmentally friendly to print and post all the physical resident cards and permits that may not be required or used by the residents. • Printing and posting cost for the scheme will be considerably higher.
Outcome:	It is recommended that this option is not pursued.

Option 3: Physical resident discount card and a physical parking permit at a sign-up cost of £10.00 per annum for residents to enter the scheme.

Details:	<p>Council to provide residents physical discount cards and a physical parking permit at a sign-up cost of £10.00 per annum for residents to enter the scheme.</p> <p>Residents will be charged £5.00 for any replacement of lost or damaged resident cards and parking permits.</p>
Likely advantages:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charging the residents would cover some of the operational costs of the scheme. • Customers will receive an estimated benefit of £45-£70 per annum. • A higher value may be placed on the card due to the initial payment, and therefore residents will ensure they maximise the benefits of the card.
Likely disadvantages:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The scheme might not be perceived well by residents if there is a cost attached to it. • Might reduce the uptake of the scheme and its benefits, also resulting in increased cost for printing and posting lower volumes of cards and permits. • There will be a requirement to maintain a minimum level of offers at all times to ensure value for money.
Outcome:	It is recommended that this option IS pursued.

3. Financial Opportunities and Implications

- 3.1 An annual budget allocation of £200,000 has been provided for the financial year 2024/25 to deliver the scheme.

- 3.2 As a pilot scheme, it is difficult to estimate take up and accurately estimate costs, therefore there is an element of financial risk that the scheme will not be supported within the allocated budget. However, this risk has been deemed low as this will only occur for sign-ups of over 20,000 in the first year.
- 3.3 The scheme may have an impact on parking income levels. Any impact on income could be mitigated by offering free parking in addition to paid parking. The scheme could also encourage new users for parking over and above previous usage.
- 3.4 Cost of printing and posting are likely to be reduced from year 2, with the option for residents to retain their original resident discount card when they renew their membership.
- 3.5 Advertisement letters, resident cards, and parking permits will be designed internally at Torbay using existing resources to reduce and avoid the cost of designing these with an external supplier.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 Applicants will be provided with full terms and conditions for signing up and the use of the discount card and parking permit before they sign up to the scheme.
- 4.2 A statement will be included in the terms and conditions of the scheme that no refunds are available if a resident chooses to leave the scheme during the year.

5. Engagement and Consultation

- 5.1 There is no requirement for any formal consultation to be carried out for the delivery of this scheme. The scheme takes into account intelligence from engagement carried out during the pre-election period, and through resident engagement events and surveys.
- 5.2 Throughout the resident discount scheme, Council officers will carry out customer satisfaction surveys to identify any changes to the delivery of the scheme. Businesses will also be encouraged to collate data on the uptake of the scheme and share this information with the Council to allow us to make any changes to the delivery of the scheme.
- 5.3 Council officers will engage with local businesses to encourage their participation in the scheme and provision of special offers for residents. Council officers will also offer support to businesses with the creation or review of their resident offers.
- 5.4 A full communication plan is being drafted currently by the Communications Team to inform and engage both residents and businesses.

6. Procurement Implications

- 6.1 The Council will need to procure the services of external print suppliers for the printing and posting of the physical resident discount cards and parking permits.

- 6.2 The printing of marketing and advertising literature will be through suppliers on Council's printing services framework.
- 6.3 The scheme uses the Council's website, internal back-office system, and MyTorbay accounts. Therefore, these aspects of the scheme do not require procurement.

7. Protecting our naturally inspiring Bay and tackling Climate Change

- 7.1 Printing and posting of resident discount cards and parking permits are unavoidable for the delivery of the scheme. However, once the scheme is live and following reviews, we will look for alternative options for the delivery of the scheme to reduce the need for print and postage resources.
- 7.2 From the second year, there will be an option for residents to reuse their existing discount cards to reduce the number of new cards printed and posted in the following years. Following payment of the annual sign-up fee, toilet credit will be refreshed on their discount cards and new parking permits will be posted out each year.
- 7.3 We will work with the print suppliers to identify opportunities for printing the resident cards and parking permits on recyclable materials.

8. Associated Risks

- 8.1 The risks associated with making this decision are:

	Risk Description	Mitigation
1	Lack of staff resource/ capacity for the set up and ongoing maintenance of the scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicated project team to support the setup of the scheme. Allow additional time for the setup of the scheme to reduce the pressure on services involved in the delivery of the scheme who will need to do this work on top of existing projects, and business-as-usual activities.
2	Lack of budget to cover the cost of set up and delivery of the scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Close control of the costs and tracking the number of signups will take place to limit the risk of budget overrun.
3	Potential loss of income for parking services is difficult to estimate and is unlimited. There is no data available on the actual resident usage and frequency in the car parks currently.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By offering free parking in addition to paid parking, it is expected to minimise this loss. The scheme could also encourage new users for parking over and above previous usage.
4	Potential loss of toilet income for the Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By capping the number of toilet entries/ the credit on the cards, it is expected to minimise this loss.

	Risk Description	Mitigation
5	Potential loss of income for local businesses with residents as main customer base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support businesses to create offers that benefit them. • Provide the option to withdraw or amend the offer if their initial offer is not beneficial.
6	Lack of engagement from business groups and businesses in promoting the scheme and/or providing complementary benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early engagement with the English Riviera BID company and Chambers of Commerce and other business groups including Council tenants to explain the scheme. • Adapt the scheme to take account of the lessons from the Maybe* loyalty programme piloted in Covid-19 recovery. • Adapt the scheme to take account of lessons from Torbay Leisure Cards currently delivered by the Council. • Adapt the scheme to take account of lessons from other Council who are running similar schemes currently. • Explore the potential of including advertisements of the scheme in Business rate letters.
7	Potential loss of income for the Council by providing offers in Council-owned assets such as Torre Abbey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the organisations to create offers that benefits the organisation. • Provide the option to withdraw or amend the offer if their initial offer is not beneficial.
8	Clashing priorities and limited resources to do any work with the corporate CRM and MyTorbay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow additional time for the set up and delivery of the scheme to reduce the pressure on the resources.
9	Increased pressure on Customer Service team with queries or complaints regarding the scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the service aware of the potential increase in customer queries prior to Go-Live and provide them with all the necessary information to answer any general queries. Include all the relevant information and FAQ section on the webpage for the scheme. • Set up a dedicated email address for the scheme, which can be monitored by the dedicated resource for the scheme and include auto responses with links to the webpage. • Additional staff will be recruited to support the service.
10	Including existing offers that residents can get without participating in the scheme as part of the scheme could result in challenges from the resident on the need for the scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with businesses to gather as many unique offers as possible which are not available elsewhere. • Where existing offers outside of the scheme are mentioned as part of the scheme,

	Risk Description	Mitigation
		clearly state that this and include information on the scheme for residents.
11	Providing reusable cards without an expiry date that are reloaded with the toilet offer when residents sign up again in the future years could result in residents not signing up, but still able to use the card to receive the offers in other local businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential cost of reprinting and posting new cards on an annual basis is more expensive than the risk of residents using this card for the following years with local businesses. • Residents will not be able to use the parking and toilet offers without signing up again and getting the new parking permits and cards reloaded with toilet credits. Therefore, the cost implications are minimal.
12	By charging residents to enter the scheme, it might be perceived as a commercial venture rather than a service provided by the Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly state the reason and purpose of the fee to enter the scheme to avoid legal challenges in the future.

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9. 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	<p>18 per cent of Torbay residents are under 18 years old.</p> <p>55 per cent of Torbay residents are aged between 18 to 64 years old.</p> <p>27 per cent of Torbay residents are aged 65 and older.</p>	<p>Older people are less likely to have access to the internet, and so may find it more difficult to access the scheme.</p> <p>The scheme is only open to residents aged 16+ limiting the offers available for children to benefit from.</p>	<p>We will offer support via Council's Customer Services to help residents with completing the application form online. For residents who have no access to digital means at all, we will provide paper application forms, or complete the application form on their behalf. We will encourage businesses to extend their offers to children accompanied by adults with a resident card.</p>	<p>RDS Business Development Officer.</p> <p>Ongoing from launch of scheme on 2nd September 2024.</p>

			Additionally, children already often have reduced charges at most venues.	
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.	People with caring responsibilities might encounter difficulties in accessing the scheme with an annual sign-up fee. It is known that they are more likely to experience poverty compared to those who are not carers.	There is an existing scheme - Torbay Carers Discount scheme administered by Torbay and South Devon NHS providing free carer cards with discounts across Torbay. We will signpost information to other existing offers on the webpage of the resident scheme.	RDS Business Development Officer. Ongoing from launch of scheme on 2 nd September 2024.
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.	It might be more difficult for people with some disabilities to provide any evidence to verify their resident status. In addition, people with disabilities might encounter difficulties in accessing the scheme with an annual sign-up fee as they are more likely to experience financial difficulties.	We will offer support and work with relevant Council services to verify their resident status. We will also encourage businesses to extend their offers to a limited number of people in a	RDS Business Development Officer. Ongoing from launch of scheme on 2 nd September 2024.

		<p>Furthermore, some people with disabilities are more likely to be reliant on public toilets due to health conditions. It is important that we take steps to ensure equitable access to both public toilets and parking facilities.</p>	<p>group accompanied by an adult with a resident card.</p> <p>We will also encourage businesses to extend the offer to carers of card holders with disabilities.</p> <p>There are existing schemes such as Torbay Carers and Carers Toilet card providing offers around Torbay at no cost. The Torbay Leisure card is also available for eligible residents at zero cost for discounts in leisure and sports facilities.</p> <p>We will signpost information to other existing offers on the webpage of the resident scheme.</p>	
Gender reassignment	In the 2021 Census, 0.4% of Torbay's community answered that their gender identity was not the same as	There is no differential impact anticipated.	Not applicable	Not applicable

	<p>their sex registered at birth. This proportion is similar to the Southwest and is lower than England.</p>			
Marriage and civil partnership	<p>Of those Torbay residents aged 16 and over at the time of 2021 Census, 44.2% of people were married or in a registered civil partnership.</p>	<p>There is no differential impact.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
Pregnancy and maternity	<p>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.</p>	<p>There is no differential impact.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
Race	<p>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.</p>	<p>People who are from black, Asian or minoritised ethnic backgrounds are more likely to experience financial hardship.</p>	<p>The existing scheme Torbay Leisure card is available for residents on lower income for receiving discounts in sports and leisure facilities. We will signpost information to other existing offers on the</p>	<p>RDS Business Development Officer.</p> <p>Ongoing from launch of scheme on 2nd September 2024.</p>

			<p>webpage of the resident scheme.</p> <p>Leisure and shopping discounts will also be sought with a view to specifically assisting these groups.</p>	
Religion and belief	64.8% of Torbay residents who stated that they have a religion in the 2021 census.	There is no differential impact.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Sex	51.3% of Torbay's population are female and 48.7% are male	Families headed by females are more likely to experience lower incomes. Therefore, they might be impacted by the charge to enter the scheme and thus find it more difficult to access the scheme.	We will encourage businesses to extend their offers to a limited number of people in a group accompanied by an adult with a resident card.	<p>RDS Business Development Officer.</p> <p>Ongoing from launch of scheme on 2nd September 2024.</p>
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.	There is no differential impact.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Veterans	In 2021, 3.8% of residents in England reported that they had previously served in the UK armed forces. In Torbay,	There is no differential impact.	Not applicable	Not applicable

	5.9 per cent of the population have previously serviced in the UK armed forces.			
Additional considerations				
Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child poverty and deprivation)		<p>Discounts will provide offers with local businesses that could help residents with the cost of living locally.</p> <p>Charging residents to enter the scheme on an annual basis will impact residents on low incomes as they have lower levels of disposable income than the general population.</p>	<p>We will signpost information of other existing schemes which are free and relevant, such as the Torbay Leisure Card, and the Torbay Carers Discount Card on the webpage for this scheme.</p> <p>Leisure and shopping discounts will also be sought with a view to specifically assisting these groups.</p>	<p>RDS Business Development Officer.</p> <p>Ongoing from launch of scheme on 2nd September 2024.</p>
Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay)		<p>Discounted leisure and sports facilities can support healthier lifestyle for Torbay residents.</p> <p>We will encourage as many sports and leisure facilities to sign-up to provide an offer to residents as part of this scheme.</p>	Not applicable	<p>RDS Business Development Officer.</p> <p>Ongoing from launch of scheme on 2nd September 2024.</p>

Human Rights impacts		There are no human rights impacts anticipated.	Not applicable	Not applicable
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.	Charging residents to enter the scheme on an annual basis may impact care experienced individuals who are more likely to be on lower incomes.	<p>The existing scheme Torbay Leisure card is available for residents on lower income for receiving discounts in sports and leisure facilities.</p> <p>We will signpost information to other existing offers on the webpage of the resident scheme.</p> <p>Leisure and shopping discounts will also be sought with a view to specifically assisting these groups.</p>	<p>RDS Business Development Officer.</p> <p>Ongoing from launch of scheme on 2nd September 2024.</p>

10. Cumulative Council Impact

10.1 As a minimum the scheme requires the following resources:

- Project resource – to support the setup of this scheme, gather offers from local businesses, and manage this project prior to Go-Live.
- Business development resource – to manage the scheme on a day-to-day basis once the scheme is up and running. To liaise with the local businesses, arts and cultural, and sports and leisure facilities to gather offers for residents.
- Customer services – to support with responding to any queries from the public related to the scheme or for applying for a parking permit online.
- Communications team – to support with both the internal and external communication and marketing of this scheme.
- Web team – to support with the design, set up and maintenance of the dedicated webpage on the Council's external website.
- IT – to support with the set up and maintenance of resident application form on the corporate CRM, and Adelante payments system for taking payments from the residents.
- Parking services – to support with the set up of parking permits and the delivery of the parking discount offer.
- Finance team – to support with any costings and budget monitoring of this scheme.
- Healthmatic – to support with the set up and delivery of the toilet discount offer.
- External print suppliers – for printing and posting the resident card and permits, and promotional materials.

10.2 Working on the delivery of this scheme will be a new and additional requirement to existing work for all the resources above. So, it should be noted that an increased pressure on all the above services is expected because of this project, which could also impact on the delivery of other business-critical projects currently ongoing across the Council.

10.3 Additional resources might also be required to scale up the scheme, and with an increase in the number of parking permit applications, queries and local business offers.

10.4 There are clashing priorities for the CRM project as part of the works already planned for the CRM project which might affect the timeline for the delivery of this scheme, especially due to the limited and same resources that will be working across both projects.

10.5 Multiple procurement exercises are due to commence shortly in Parking services increasing the pressure on the capacity of the service to contribute towards this scheme.

11. Cumulative Community Impacts

11.1 We reviewed potential impacts of the scheme on care experienced, and residents who may need additional support such as those with learning disabilities. We will provide support

where necessary for these residents such as by offering assistance with completing application forms and verifying their resident status to help them sign up to the scheme.

11.2 Through the availability of discounted offers in parking, toilets and other local venues, this scheme is expected to provide a small financial relief to the residents with their local spending during the current cost-of-living crisis.

11.3 Businesses may not find it financially viable to offer any discount with the recent rising costs of goods, materials, and energy. However, the scheme will offer wide advertising opportunities for the business and aims to drive footfall into the businesses. Further one aim of the scheme is to drive footfall to local businesses which should overall assist local businesses.

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