

Meeting: Overview and Scrutiny Board

Date: 9 April 2025

Wards affected: All Wards

Report Title: Torbay Council Food Action Plan

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1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report shares with Overview and Scrutiny Board the Torbay Food Action Plan which aims to support the delivery of the Torbay Food Strategy. This report seeks support from Overview and Scrutiny Board on the Action Plan.

2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

- 2.1 For the last few years we have seen high levels of inflation and in turn the worst cost of living crisis in decades.
- 2.2 While the inflationary highs of the last couple of years are starting to subside, food remains unaffordable for many people. In addition, the instability of global food supply chains and fuel supplies have highlighted the need to re-evaluate how we access and consume food.
- 2.3 To make our communities more resilient, we need to shorten food supply chains and equip local communities with the ability to grow their own food where this is appropriate. We also need to continue to ensure emergency food provision for those experiencing food insecurity.
- 2.4 We must make best use of our assets and resources in Torbay to ensure effective systems change within our food system; creating an environment that better supports local food consumption and production. These issues are likely to worsen in the long term as the impact of climate change is felt more intensely.
- 2.3 Therefore, while we continue to support our most vulnerable residents to meet the immediate cost of living crisis through the Torbay Food Alliance, we must also take a longer-term, strategic view to address the challenges within our local food system. We must however recognise that many issues within the food system are out of our control and so it is important that we harness our resources and energy into those areas where we will have a local impact.

- 2.4 Adoption of an annual Food Action Plan (see Appendix A), will help to ensure a coordinated and focused approach to promoting positive change within our food system locally and will support the future resilience of communities.
- 2.2 The food workstream will be fundamental to delivering priorities within Public Health, Climate, Turning the Tide on Poverty, Family Hubs, and Economic Development.

3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

- 3.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Board consider the Torbay Food Action Plan and provide feedback to the Cabinet for its consideration.

Appendices

Appendix A: Food Action Plan

Background Documents

None

Supporting Information

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In September 2022, agreement was given by Members to pursue development of a Food Strategy for Torbay. There was an understanding that developing a strategy with a clear commitment to the Vision and Charter would help to ensure the future resilience of our communities and local food system.
- 1.2 There was also an acknowledgement that the food workstream is fundamental to delivering priorities within Public Health, Place, Turning the Tide on Poverty, Family Hubs, and Economic Development.
- 1.3 Cabinet also agreed to support the Torbay Food Network. This has been meeting throughout 2024 and includes representation from the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector, Public Health, Economic Development and Climate/Planning.
- 1.4 The Network's purpose is to take a collaborative approach to the following key priority areas:
 - Tackling food poverty, diet-related ill-health and access to affordable healthy food
 - Supporting the creation of a vibrant, prosperous and diverse sustainable food economy
 - Tackling the climate and nature emergency through an end to food waste locally
 - Building public awareness, active food citizenship and a local good food movement.
- 1.5 Since 2023, the Torbay Food Network has been hosted by Local Motion, Torbay, which is facilitated by Torbay Communities. This has been a positive, neutral space for collaboration, connecting different departments and sectors to amplify work already underway and think creatively about the future.
- 1.5 In 2024, the Network took its next development step and become a member of the Sustainable Food Places (SFP) network – a national partnership programme led by the Soil Association, Food Matters, and Sustain: the alliance for better food and farming.
- 1.6 In 2025, the Network reached a key milestone and published the Torbay Food Strategy. It set out the blueprint for the approach to sustainable food systems change in Torbay.
- 1.7 The development of a Council Food Action Plan is the next step in supporting food systems change in Torbay. It aims to set out some of the actions that the Council can take to deliver the Torbay Food Strategy. It is important to note that the Action Plan focuses on the actions that the Council can take to promote sustainable food systems change and is not a wider Torbay Food Network action Plan.

3. Legal Implications

- 4.1 There are no legal implications to undertaking the actions as set out in the recommendations.

4. Engagement and Consultation

5.1 The Food Action Plan has been developed in consultation with Council departments.

9. Equality Impacts - Identify the potential impacts on specific groups

The Council has a public sector duty under the Equality Act 2010 to have 'due regard' to equality and to advancing equality of opportunity between those persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The Act also seeks to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and promote cohesion. It is important that you carefully and thoroughly consider the different potential impacts that the decision being taken may have on people who share protected characteristics.

It is not enough to state that a proposal will affect everyone equally. There should be thorough consideration as to whether particular groups or individuals are more likely to be affected than others by the proposals and decision. Please complete the table below. If you consider there to be no positive or negative impacts state 'there is no differential impact'.

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 per cent of Torbay residents are under 18 years old. 55 per cent of Torbay residents are aged between 18 to 64 years old. 27 per cent of Torbay residents are aged 65 and older.	No adverse impacts are anticipated from this decision.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Carers	At the time of the 2021 census there were 14,900 unpaid carers in Torbay. 5,185 of	No adverse impacts are anticipated from this decision.	Not applicable	Not applicable

	these provided 50 hours or more of care.			
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.	No adverse impacts are anticipated from this decision.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Gender reassignment	In the 2021 Census, 0.4% of Torbay's community answered that their gender identity was not the same as their sex registered at birth. This proportion is similar to the Southwest and is lower than England.	No adverse impacts are anticipated from this decision.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Marriage and civil partnership	Of those Torbay residents aged 16 and over at the time of 2021 Census, 44.2% of people were married or in a registered civil partnership.	No adverse impacts are anticipated from this decision.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Pregnancy and maternity	Over the period 2010 to 2021, the rate of live births (as a proportion of females aged 15 to 44) has been slightly but significantly higher in Torbay (average of 63.7 per 1,000) than England (60.2) and the South West (58.4). There has been a notable fall in the numbers of live births since the middle of the last decade across all geographical areas.	No adverse impacts are anticipated from this decision.	Not applicable	Not applicable

Race	In the 2021 Census, 96.1% of Torbay residents described their ethnicity as white. This is a higher proportion than the South West and England. Black, Asian and minority ethnic individuals are more likely to live in areas of Torbay classified as being amongst the 20% most deprived areas in England.	No adverse impacts are anticipated from this decision.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Religion and belief	64.8% of Torbay residents who stated that they have a religion in the 2021 census.	No adverse impacts are anticipated from this decision.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Sex	51.3% of Torbay's population are female and 48.7% are male	No adverse impacts are anticipated from this decision.	Not applicable	Not applicable
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.	No adverse impacts are anticipated from this decision.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Armed Forces Community	In 2021, 3.8% of residents in England reported that they had previously served in the UK armed forces. In Torbay, 5.9 per cent of the population have previously served in the UK armed forces.	No adverse impacts are anticipated from this decision.	Not applicable	Not applicable

Additional considerations				
Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child poverty and deprivation)		No adverse impacts are anticipated from this decision.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay)		No adverse impacts are anticipated from this decision.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Human Rights impacts		No adverse impacts are anticipated from this decision.	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.	No adverse impacts are anticipated from this decision.	Not applicable	Not applicable

6. Cumulative Council Impact

6.1 No impacts have been identified.

7. Cumulative Community Impacts

7.1 No impacts have been identified.