

Monday, 3 June 2024

**CABINET**

A meeting of **Cabinet** will be held on

**Tuesday, 11 June 2024**

commencing at **5.30 pm**

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

**Members of the Committee**

Councillor David Thomas (Chairman)

Councillor Billings	Councillor Jacqueline Thomas
Councillor Bye	Councillor Tranter
Councillor Chris Lewis	Councillor Tyerman

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**A Healthy, Happy and Prosperous Torbay**

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# CABINET AGENDA

1. **Apologies**  
To receive apologies for absence.
2. **Minutes** (Pages 4 - 10)  
To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 14 May 2024.
3. **Disclosure of Interests**
  - (a) To receive declarations of non pecuniary interests in respect of items on this agenda.  
  
**For reference:** Having declared their non pecuniary interest members may remain in the meeting and speak and, vote on the matter in question. A completed disclosure of interests form should be returned to the Clerk before the conclusion of the meeting.
  - (b) To receive declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests in respect of items on this agenda.  
  
**For reference:** Where a Member has a disclosable pecuniary interest he/she must leave the meeting during consideration of the item. However, the Member may remain in the meeting to make representations, answer questions or give evidence if the public have a right to do so, but having done so the Member must then immediately leave the meeting, may not vote and must not improperly seek to influence the outcome of the matter. A completed disclosure of interests form should be returned to the Clerk before the conclusion of the meeting.  
  
**(Please Note:** If Members and Officers wish to seek advice on any potential interests they may have, they should contact Governance Support or Legal Services prior to the meeting.)
4. **Urgent Items**  
To consider any other items the Chairman decides are urgent.
5. **Matters for Consideration**
6. **Bus Service Improvement Plan 2024 Update** (Pages 11 - 43)  
To consider the submitted report which provides an update on the Bus Service Improvement Plan for 2024.
7. **Council Business Plan 2023-2027** (To Follow)  
To consider the submitted report on the Council Business Plan for 2023-2024.
8. **Productivity Plan** (Pages 44 - 61)  
To consider the submitted report on the Draft Productivity Plan which needs to be submitted to the Government.

9. **Cabinet Urgent Decision taken by Chief Executive** (Page 62)  
To note the submitted report on the above.
10. **Brokenbury Solar Farm** (Pages 63 - 93)  
To consider the submitted report in respect of Brokenbury Solar Farm.  
  
(Note: this report contains exempt appendices which have been circulated separately.)
11. **Exclusion of Press and Public**  
To consider passing a resolution to exclude the press and public from the meeting prior to consideration of the following items on the agenda on the grounds that exempt information (as defined in Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) is likely to be disclosed.
12. **CSW Group Ltd** (Pages 94 - 111)  
To consider the submitted exempt report on the future of CSW Group Ltd.

**Live Streaming and Hybrid Arrangements**

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

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

## Minutes of the Cabinet

14 May 2024

-: Present :-

Councillor David Thomas (Chairman)

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

(Also in attendance: Councillors Harvey, Barbara Lewis, Long, Maddison, Stevens,  
Tolchard and Twelves)

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### 1. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 25 April 2024 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 2. Matters for Consideration

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

### 3. Public Question

In accordance with Standing Order A24, the Cabinet heard from Ms Colette O'Brien who had submitted a question in relation to the involvement of Brixham Councillors in meetings regarding the Brixham Breakwater Development. The Cabinet Member for Place Development and Economic Growth, responded to the question that had been put forward and responded to the supplementary question asked by Ms O'Brien.

### 4. Nomination to list Breakwater Car Park, Berry Head Road, Brixham TQ5 9AF as an Asset of Community Value

### 5. Next Steps Properties at Ryan Place

### 6. Report of the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board - Dementia Support in Torbay Spotlight Review

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Chairman/woman

## Record of Decisions

### **Nomination to list Breakwater Car Park, Berry Head Road, Brixham TQ5 9AF as an Asset of Community Value**

#### **Decision Taker**

Cabinet on 14 May 2024.

#### **Decision**

That Breakwater car park be designated as an Asset of Community Value.

#### **Reason for the Decision**

If a community group nominates land or buildings that meet the definition of an Asset of Community Value, and a valid nomination is made, then the local authority must include the asset on its list of Assets of Community Value.

#### **Implementation**

The decision in respect of the nomination to list Breakwater Car Park, Berry Head Road, Brixham as an Asset of Community Value will come into force immediately as the decision maker has decided that any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would prejudice the public's and the Council's interest. The Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinator was consulted on 26 April 2024.

#### **Information**

The Council has received a nomination to list Breakwater Car Park as an Asset of Community Value. The Asset of Community Value regime provides communities a right to identify a building or other land that they deem to be of importance to their community's social wellbeing.

To be listed, the land must be nominated by an organisation with a local connection. This application has been made by an unincorporated group of 21 Torbay residents known as the 'Breakwater Beach Community Group' and must be determined by the Cabinet in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and the Assets of Community Value (England) Regulations 2012.

The nomination has been assessed by Officers who recommend approval of the application and the designation of Breakwater car park as an Asset of Community Value.

At the meeting Councillor Jackie Thomas proposed and Councillor Billings seconded a motion that was approved unanimously by the Cabinet, as set out above.

#### **Alternative Options considered and rejected at the time of the decision**

The alternative option would have been to refuse the application; in which case written reasons for refusal would need to be provided to the applicant.

#### **Is this a Key Decision?**

No

**Does the call-in procedure apply?**

No

**Declarations of interest** (including details of any relevant dispensations issued by the Standards Committee)

None

**Published**

17 May 2024

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Leader of Torbay Council on behalf of the Cabinet

## Record of Decisions

### Next Steps Properties at Ryan Place

#### Decision Taker

Cabinet on 14 May 2024.

#### Decision

1. That the two properties owned by Torbay Council at Ryan Place, 62 St Marychurch Road, Torquay be disposed of as soon as the properties become vacant; and
2. That the Chief Executive be given delegated authority to use the money from the sales of the two properties at Ryan Place to purchase new properties for Next Steps accommodation, in compliance with the original grant criteria.

#### Reason for the Decision

The reason for the proposal is to dispose of the properties when they next become available, in order to acquire alternative more appropriate locations which will provide Next Steps residents the opportunity to succeed whilst minimising impact upon others.

#### Implementation

This decision will come into force and may be implemented on 28 May 2024 unless the call-in procedure is triggered (as set out in the Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny).

#### Information

The Council were successful in obtaining Government Grant through the Next Steps Accommodation Programme (NSAP), through which 14 properties were acquired. The overall objective of NSAP is to reduce rough sleeping, with a focus on the successful resettlement and recovery of those who have a long and/or repeat history of rough sleeping or are at risk of the same. Tenancies under the scheme are for a maximum of two years.

The delivery of the programme in Torbay has seen some great successes, providing tenants with the stability and support (provided by Bournemouth Churches Housing Association) to enable them to successfully move into fully independent housing. However, the two properties at Ryan Place have resulted in significant impact upon other residents, and despite the introduction of a Sensitive Letting Policy, that impact is still felt. As such it is proposed to dispose of these two properties as soon as they become vacant, replacing them with properties elsewhere.

At the meeting Councillor Tyerman proposed and David Thomas seconded a motion that was unanimously approved by the Cabinet, as set out above.

#### Alternative Options considered and rejected at the time of the decision

The Council could continue to provide Next Steps accommodation at Ryan Place, however the level of impact on other residents at Ryan Place would remain significant and it would not provide Next Steps residents with an environment in which they will have the best opportunity of achieving stability to enable them to successfully move into fully independent housing. Whilst

measures to lessen the impact on other residents at Ryan Place have been adopted through the introduction of a sensitive letting policy, this has not significantly altered the impact on the other residents.

In light of this, it is considered that the most appropriate option is to dispose of the two properties and acquire accommodation elsewhere.

**Is this a Key Decision?**

No

**Does the call-in procedure apply?**

Yes

**Declarations of interest** (including details of any relevant dispensations issued by the Standards Committee)

None

**Published**

17 May 2024

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Leader of Torbay Council on behalf of the Cabinet



## Record of Decisions

### Report of the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board - Dementia Support in Torbay Spotlight Review

#### Decision Taker

Cabinet on 14 May 2024.

#### Decision

That Cabinet supports the plans for a dementia unit at Rowcroft, as highlighted in the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Boards report and agreed the Cabinet's response to the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub Board recommendations in respect of dementia support in Torbay.

#### Reason for the Decision

The Cabinet was required to respond to the findings of the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board.

#### Implementation

This decision will come into force and may be implemented on 28 May 2024 unless the call-in procedure is triggered (as set out in the Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny).

#### Information

The Cabinet received a report of the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board on dementia support in Torbay. In accordance with section D7 of Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny as set out in the Constitution, the Cabinet was required to respond to the recommendations of the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board within two months. Subsequently the Cabinet prepared a response to the recommendations of the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board which was proposed by Councillor Tranter and seconded by Councillor Bye and agreed unanimously by the Cabinet, as set out above.

#### Alternative Options considered and rejected at the time of the decision

None

#### Is this a Key Decision?

No

#### Does the call-in procedure apply?

Yes

#### Declarations of interest (including details of any relevant dispensations issued by the Standards Committee)

None

**Published**

17 May 2024

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Leader of Torbay Council on behalf of the Cabinet

**Meeting:** Cabinet **Date:** 11 June 2024

**Wards affected:** All

**Report Title:** Bus Service Improvement Plan 2024 Update

**When does the decision need to be implemented?** ASAP

**Cabinet Member Contact Details:** Adam Billings, Cabinet Member for Pride in Place and Parking

**Director Contact Details:** Alan Denby, Director of Pride in Place

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## 1. Purpose of Report

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- 1.1 In October 2021 the first Torbay Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) was agreed and submitted to Government as a bidding document demonstrating ambitious proposals to deliver the National Bus Strategy at a local level. Since then, the funding packages available have substantially changed and the Council is required by Government to update the BSIP to reflect this.
- 1.2 The Plan will continue to set out a vision and priorities for the future of bus services in Torbay and will be a high-level document used to secure revenue grant funding in 2024 from the Department for Transport and demonstrate further opportunities for investment in future years.
- 1.3 On 15th March 2021 the Government published the National Bus Strategy, 'Bus Back Better'. This strategy applies to England and sets out a vision for improving bus services nationally. It recognises the need to act quickly, whilst acknowledging that the industry will need ongoing support for some time to recover from the consequences of Covid-19. The aim now is to re-establish patronage at pre-covid levels and then to exceed them. To do this, buses must be a practical and attractive alternative to the car, providing genuine choice to the community.
- 1.4 The strategy makes it clear that funding will be made available to Local Authorities who pursue this vision and seek to make the improvements to their services and network. Whilst the extent and timing of such funding is unknown beyond 2024, it is important to

consider as it has clear direct benefits to the Local Authority, not least in respect of accessibility for the community and supporting the carbon neutrality aims.

- 1.5 The BSIP will be delivered in partnership with local bus operators, through the Torbay Bus Enhanced Partnership, established in 2022.

## 2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

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- 2.1 We want to see a healthy, happy and prosperous Torbay. The proposals help us to deliver this ambition by improving accessibility for everyone across Torbay, improving connectivity to facilities whether that is education, health, employment or other, ensuring those most deprived are not excluded from that connectivity. The proposals support our town centres and other trip generating hubs in our towns, and help give our community choice in how they travel and move journeys away from the private car and onto zero emission buses to contribute to reductions in Torbay's carbon footprint.
- 2.2 The BSIP will support the whole community as well as visitors and businesses. It increases the opportunities for travel around Torbay for all, whether through improvements to the vehicles used on existing services or considering alternative and new opportunities for routes.
- 2.3 It will contribute to many of the priorities and outcomes of the community and corporate plan and specifically help to achieve the following:
  - Improve transport links to and within Torbay.
  - People have better transport and digital connections to jobs and amenities.
  - Improve wellbeing and reduce social isolation.
  - People feel safe in their local area, during the day and after dark.

## 3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

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1. That the Bus Service Improvement Plan 2024 in outline, as set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report, be approved and submitted to the Department for Transport in June 2024; and
2. That the final publication of the Bus Service Improvement Plan 2024, including design and editorial changes as required, be delegated to the Divisional Director – Planning, Housing and Climate Emergency in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Pride in Place, Transport and Parking.

### Appendices

Appendix 1: Bus Service Improvement Plan 2024

### Background Documents

Cabinet Report and Record of Decision for the Bus Service Improvement Plan 2021 (Item 267)

(available through

<https://www.torbay.gov.uk/DemocraticServices/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=741&MId=10010&Ver=4>)

Bus Service Improvement Plan 2021

(available through [www.torbay.gov.uk/bus-network-improvements](http://www.torbay.gov.uk/bus-network-improvements))

National Bus Strategy “Bus Back Better”

(available through [www.gov.uk/government/publications/bus-back-better](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bus-back-better))

Bus Service Improvement Plan Guidance

(available through [www.gov.uk/government/publications/bus-service-improvement-plan](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bus-service-improvement-plan))

## 1. Introduction

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- 1.1 A BSIP is a public document published on the Local Transport Authority's (LTA) website, intended to set out clearly the vision and plan for improving bus services and growing bus patronage in the local area, in line with the National Bus Strategy.
- 1.2 The 2024 guidance sets out that the key themes for the 2024 BSIP are as follows:
  - Updating the baseline to 2023/24: updating the 2021 BSIP's account of the current situation to reflect all developments since 2021
  - Setting out the improvement programme in financial year 2024/25: to reflect the known funding envelope of BSIP funding and all other funding sources for BSIP delivery, including the LTA's own resources.
  - Getting ready for 2025 and beyond: refreshing the plan's ambition and content to set out a high quality and flexible pipeline of prioritised proposals for the four years 2025/26 to 2028/29, nested within the BSIP's overall 10 year plus vision, attractive to funders, and ready for delivery as opportunities for funding arise.
- 1.3 Every LTA should produce a 2024 BSIP to secure the release of its BSIP funding for 2024/25. It is for the LTA to determine, with partners, the extent to which the 2021 BSIP is to be revised. Unlike the 2021 BSIP, the 2024 BSIP will not function as a bidding document for specific DfT funds. The BSIP will be subject to the transition to Devon and Torbay CCA as that body will take on devolved transport powers. Future BSIP and Enhanced Partnership arrangements will be combined across the Devon and Torbay area.
- 1.4 The Plan will continue to align closely with other policies such as the Community and Corporate Plan and Local Transport Plan, as well as town investment proposals.
- 1.5 The Council has a current Local Transport Plan (LTP) until 2026 but is bringing forward a new LTP with Devon County Council over the next 12 months. This updated LTP will be part of the devolved discussions with a decision on it to be made by the Devon and Torbay CCA as the powers for the LTA transition to that body.
- 1.6 The existing LTP is the strategic transport planning document and includes within the objectives, making better use of the transport network and strengthening/improving the public transport network. There are also a list of key elements including Improvements to public transport.
- 1.7 LTPs should set out holistic place-based strategies for improving transport networks, proposed projects for investment and ultimately how key objectives will be achieved. Bus Service Improvement Plans must be fully aligned with wider Local Transport Plans.

- 1.8 A further update to the BSIP document is likely to be required in 2025. After that, BSIP documents themselves will be updated on a less than annual basis responding to need, including synchronising with cycles for Government's multiyear spending plans.

## 2. Options under consideration

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- 2.1 There are options about the level of ambition demonstrated in the plan and therefore the extent of the proposals. Those included in this report set out a strong basis to recover and rebuild bus use in Torbay and in many ways to initially go "back to basics". The overall rate of recovery for bus passenger journeys in Torbay is around 78%, having fallen initially from 7.6 million in 2018/19 to 2.7 million in 2020/21. Concessionary passenger journeys were at 3.5 million and reduced to 0.9 million. These have recovered to 2.3 million (66%).
- 2.2 The proposals also seek to deliver the visions of corporate policy in alignment with the National Bus Strategy.
- 2.3 The document is necessary to secure the indicative 2024/25 grant funding for bus services which will support the contracts recently approved as well as contribute to improved facilities, passenger information, and possible fare promotions. To not submit a BSIP would undermine the objectives of the Community & Corporate Plan and is and this option is therefore discounted.
- 2.4 The 2024 is a 'light-touch' update of the 2021 BSIP. It proposes many of the same schemes but, in accordance with the guidance, has updated the baseline position, notes the successes to date, and realigns some of the schemes and ambitions to the future periods. It does not seek to revisit all of the schemes, nor to pursue alternative priorities and proposals at this stage.

## 3. Financial Opportunities and Implications

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- 3.1 If the Plan is aligned to corporate and national policy, and clearly meets those respective aims and objectives, the Council will be able to bid for funding opportunities to help deliver the plan, as well as working with the bus operators and others who may be able to provide solutions for delivery. We will also be able to maximise income from external bidding opportunities.
- 3.2 Having the 2021 BSIP in place has enabled the Council to secure over £800,000 in revenue grant to support the delivery of the new bus contracts with the investment they have brought to the local network. It also acted as a reference for the recently successful bid to secure £7.1m to introduce electric buses within Torbay in the coming years.
- 3.3 The submission of a 2024 BSIP to DfT by 12 June 2024 is a condition of the provision of any DfT BSIP funding in financial year 2024/25

- 3.4 As explained in the guidance, the purpose of the 2024 BSIP is to set out a realistic and attractive plan which explains clearly what will have been delivered by the end of 2024/25 and also sets out a 'shop window' of ambitions and proposals for the years after 2025. Although the 2024 BSIP is not a bidding document, it is the delivery plan for 2024-25 funding and a report on what has already been achieved with BSIP funding, and it may be used as a factor by Government to determine future levels of funding.

## 4. Legal Implications

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- 4.1 Tendering, subsidy arrangements and associated contract management will be an integral part of getting the delivery mechanisms right for this Plan.
- 4.2 The Partnership proposals will be a legal commitment between the parties (and any new bus operators starting in Torbay in future) to achieve certain standards.

## 5. Engagement and Consultation

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- 5.1 There is ongoing close working with neighbouring Councils, particularly with Devon County Council which also links with the continuing discussions around devolution. This is important with any transport plan and proposals as there are very often cross border benefits and impacts.
- 5.2 Working with operators is also key to this process. They must be able to agree, through the partnership, to implementing and supporting the measures in order for the Plan to be successful and for bus service improvements in Torbay to be realised.
- 5.3 Given that the 2024 BSIP is a progression of the 2021 BSIP, and particularly that it does not differ in the priorities or ambitions, the proposed plan has not been to public consultation. There was also insufficient time to do such consultation and engagement work. Instead, with a clarified position from Government on the way forward with these plans (which has been unclear since the original publication in 2021), it is intended that later in 2024 work will commence on a draft BSIP 2025, ensuring continued alignment with the updated Local Transport Plan, and developing more bespoke proposals with emerging data such as where and how to target fare promotions to best effect.
- 5.4 A Bus Forum has been established which the purpose of ensuring delivery of the measures within the Enhanced Partnership. That forum will be key to the development and further engagement later in 2024/25.

## 6. Purchasing or Hiring of Goods and/or Services

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- 6.1 The proposals do include the use of existing contracts as well as new tenders for bus services or part of services.



6.2 Where possible, through both these tenders and the partnership, local skills, employment and the use of apprenticeships will be included alongside exploring opportunities where the bus sector can support the Council as a Corporate Parent and give opportunities to those for whom we have responsibility.

## 7. Tackling Climate Change

7.1 It is well known that transport is a considerable contributor to carbon emissions in Torbay and in our role as influencer we have both a responsibility and an opportunity to support change. This will be a core objective of the Plan.

7.2 This is firstly achieved by encouraging and giving the opportunity to our residents, visitors and those working within Torbay to switch journeys from the private car to sustainable modes, including buses. We can also further reduce emissions by reducing those emitting from the buses and progress on this has been made with new vehicles operating on the most recently tendered services and will be further improved through the delivery of electric buses following the grant funding award.

## 8. Associated Risks

8.1 There is a significant risk if the proposal is not implemented. This risk is that the Authority is not likely to be eligible for funding from Government towards the public transport or other specific funding opportunities for the bus network. The Partnership will need a plan for what to deliver and funding to enable delivery.

## 9. Equality Impacts - Identify the potential positive and negative impacts on specific groups

2021 Table	Positive Impact	Negative Impact & Mitigating Actions	Neutral Impact
Older or younger people	<p>Improved access to facilities has a positive impact on this group. All age groups with people who do not have access to a motorised vehicle are likely to be impacted. This group are less likely to have the same opportunities for other travel choices and as such may rely more on public transport.</p> <p>Young people are most likely to use buses for employment, education and training. This age group are more reliant on digital forms of information provision via mobile apps and web applications. Evidence indicates a high proportion of bus passengers are older people with concessionary passes. This group are most likely to use buses for shopping, leisure and to attend health</p>		

	<p>appointments. This age group will continue to require access to traditional paper based forms of information such as printed timetables and timetable books.</p>		
<p>People with caring Responsibilities</p>	<p>Improved access and more frequent services, linking to key facilities, could have a positive impact on this group – especially if caring within the community and helping residents to live independently. Exploring ticket options for this group is also an option proposed.</p> <p>Carers who do not have access to a motorised vehicle are likely to be impacted. The Plan seeks to make bus services more attractive, cheaper, easier to use, faster, more reliable, and greener. Vehicle and bus stop accessibility, including low floor buses, raised curbs and space to transport pushchairs and wheelchairs, is critical for carers.</p>		
<p>People with a disability</p>	<p>Ensuring that all services are fully accessible and fitted with on board audio-visual equipment, as well as ensuring there are more services, accessing more facilities will have a positive impact on this group.</p> <p>Disabled people who do not have access to a vehicle are likely to be impacted. The Plan seeks to make bus services more attractive, cheaper, easier to use, faster, more reliable, and greener. The National Travel Survey (NTS, 2019) identifies that people with a disability or illness expected to last more than 12 months make more trips by bus than those without a disability. Vehicle and bus stop accessibility, including low floor buses, raised curbs and space to transport wheelchairs, is critical for anyone with a physical impairment. Accessible information provision is also critical, both pre journey and during the journey, including traditional paper based information, digital media, and on bus announcements and displays. Through the Enhanced Partnership information will be produced in an easy to read/understand format for customers with visual, hearing, and physical disabilities, and all other customer groups.</p>		
<p>Women or men</p>	<p>The proposals will have a positive impact on both users and non-users of the bus network and as such is likely to have a positive impact on this group although there are not specific proposals.</p>		
<p>People who are black or from a minority ethnic background (BME) (Please note Gypsies / Roma are within this community)</p>	<p>The proposals will have a positive impact on both users and non-users of the bus network and as such is likely to have a positive impact on this group although there are not specific proposals.</p>		

Religion or belief (including lack of belief)	The proposals will have a positive impact on both users and non-users of the bus network and as such is likely to have a positive impact on this group although there are not specific proposals.		
People who are lesbian, gay or bisexual	The proposals will have a positive impact on both users and non-users of the bus network and as such is likely to have a positive impact on this group although there are not specific proposals.		
People who are transgendered	The proposals will have a positive impact on both users and non-users of the bus network and as such is likely to have a positive impact on this group although there are not specific proposals.		
People who are in a marriage or civil partnership	The proposals will have a positive impact on both users and non-users of the bus network and as such is likely to have a positive impact on this group although there are not specific proposals.		
Women who are pregnant / on maternity leave	Ensuring that all services are fully accessible, as well as ensuring there are more services, accessing more facilities will have a positive impact on this group.		
Socio-economic impacts (Including impact on child poverty issues and deprivation)	Improved access to public transport and through those links, improved access to facilities and employment will have a positive impact on this group. Low income groups who do not have access to a car are likely to be impacted. The Plan seeks to make bus services more attractive, cheaper, easier to use, faster, more reliable, and greener.		
Public Health impacts (How will your proposal impact on the general health of the population of Torbay)	Supporting the community to be able to move around, not to be isolated, and to have the access to services/facilities they need and can benefit from for their health and wellbeing will have a positive impact on this group. The Plan seeks to make bus services more attractive, cheaper, easier to use, faster, more reliable, and greener.		

## 10. Cumulative Council Impact

- 10.1 The working relationship with SWISCO is critical for the 'highways' implementation aspects of the plan.
- 10.2 There is also a connection with Public Health, and with both Children's and Adult's services as representatives of key groups in the community who rely on the support of public transport.

## 11. Cumulative Community Impacts

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11.1 None

# Bus Service Improvement Plan

2024



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## Version control

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Date	Details	Updated by
October 2021	First Published	-
June 2024	Second Edition	AL

This plan is available online at [www.torbay.gov.uk/bus-network-improvements](http://www.torbay.gov.uk/bus-network-improvements)

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This document can be made available in other languages and formats.  
For more information please contact [future.planning@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:future.planning@torbay.gov.uk)

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# Introduction

Bus Service Improvement Plans (BSIPs) were introduced by the Department for Transport (DfT) in its National Bus Strategy, Bus Back Better, published in March 2021. This document provides the BSIP for Torbay and will embody the "Vision for Torbay" above and be an integral part of achieving the aims and ambitions of the Council's Plans.

The purpose of this BSIP is to describe the bus network as it currently is, and the vision for the improved bus service we want to see in Torbay.

The National Bus Strategy sets out an ambitious vision to dramatically improve bus services in England outside London through greater local leadership, to reverse the recent shift in journeys away from public transport and encourage passengers back to bus. This strategic document sets out how this will be achieved at a local level in Torbay. This is the second version of the Torbay BSIP, replacing the 2021 document.

## Torbay Profile

Torbay's population is around 139,300 (2021 Census). There are three main urban areas, Torquay (69,600), Paignton (52,900) and Brixham (16,800).

Overall, Torbay has an aging population with proportionately more older people compared to England as shown in Figure 1.

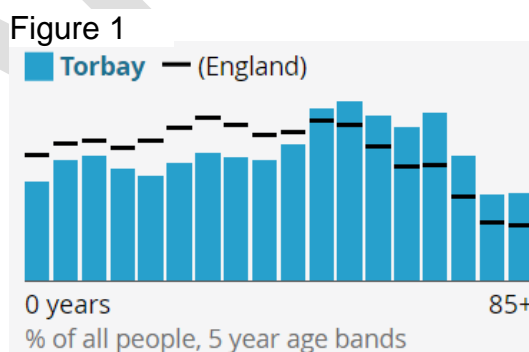
27% of the population is 65+ which is 9% higher than the rate for England. Conversely the 20-64 age group makes up 54% of the local population compared with 58% nationally. Population forecasts suggest the older age groups will continue to rise.

Nearly 24% of residents are disabled under the measure of the Equality Act which is around 6.5% higher than the national average.

36% of Torbay households are deprived in one dimension, with over 5% in three or more according to the 2021 census.

Torbay is ranked as the most deprived upper-tier local authority in the South West which has been the case since 2007. There is significant disparity across the area and within the towns.

50.4% of people over 15 years of age are in employment, around 7% below the national average. Of those in employment, a greater number (6.1% more) are in part time employment compared with national averages.



# Section 1: Our Bus Vision

The BSIP covers the single Local Transport Authority (LTA) area of Torbay. Figure 2 highlights Torbay set within the context of England, a 24 square mile area comprising of three towns, Torquay, Paignton and Brixham located around the east-facing natural harbour of Tor Bay in the South West of England.

A clearer map of the specific Torbay area and the extent of the BSIP geographical area is shown in Figure 3. This area is also covered by a single Enhanced Partnership scheme which will work to deliver this BSIP with partners working together.

To achieve all the aims we will also work in close partnership with our neighbouring authority Devon County Council with whom there is a joint Local Transport Plan in place. Some developments will also be proposed at a regional scale across the Peninsula Transport Sub-National Transport area.

Our corporate vision (as set out in the Community and Corporate Plan 2023-2043) is rightly at the heart of all of our work and is a key determining factor in our approach to bus enhancements and how we apply the objectives of the National Bus Strategy at a local level. **That vision is to achieve a healthy, happy and prosperous Torbay for all.**

We recognise the importance of stabilising the bus network following the impacts of 2020/21 and that recovery will only be possible with a solid foundation. In 2021 we set out highly ambitious proposals to development the bus offer across Torbay in terms of the level and quality of the service. We wanted to ensure the community and visitors had access to the services, facilities, and destinations that they needed and that the journey would be affordable and efficient. This is key to our transport aim of giving choice, allowing people to choose the way to make their journey that is right for them, with a realistic offer across modes.

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*Our ambition for buses in Torbay is for step change in the quality of service and infrastructure.*

*Bus travel will be more affordable, integrated with other forms of transport and accessible to all the community. We will strive for carbon neutrality and prioritise bus travel alongside active modes of transport in Torbay, giving genuine choice to our residents and visitors for how they can travel.*

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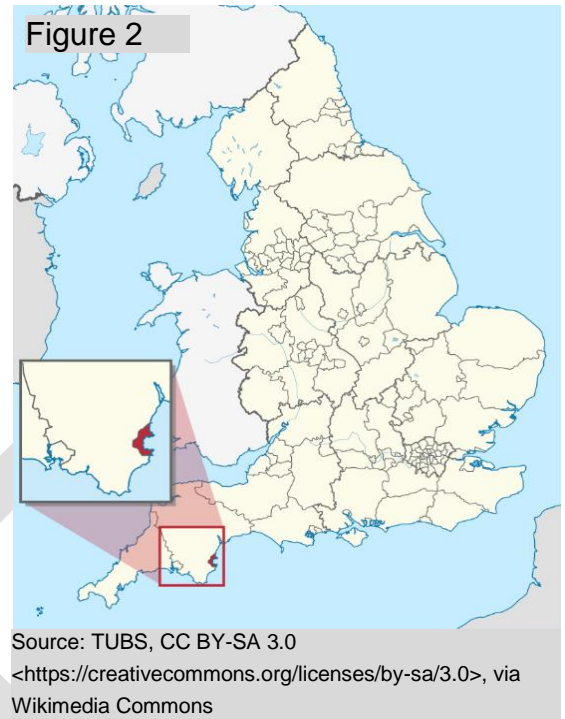
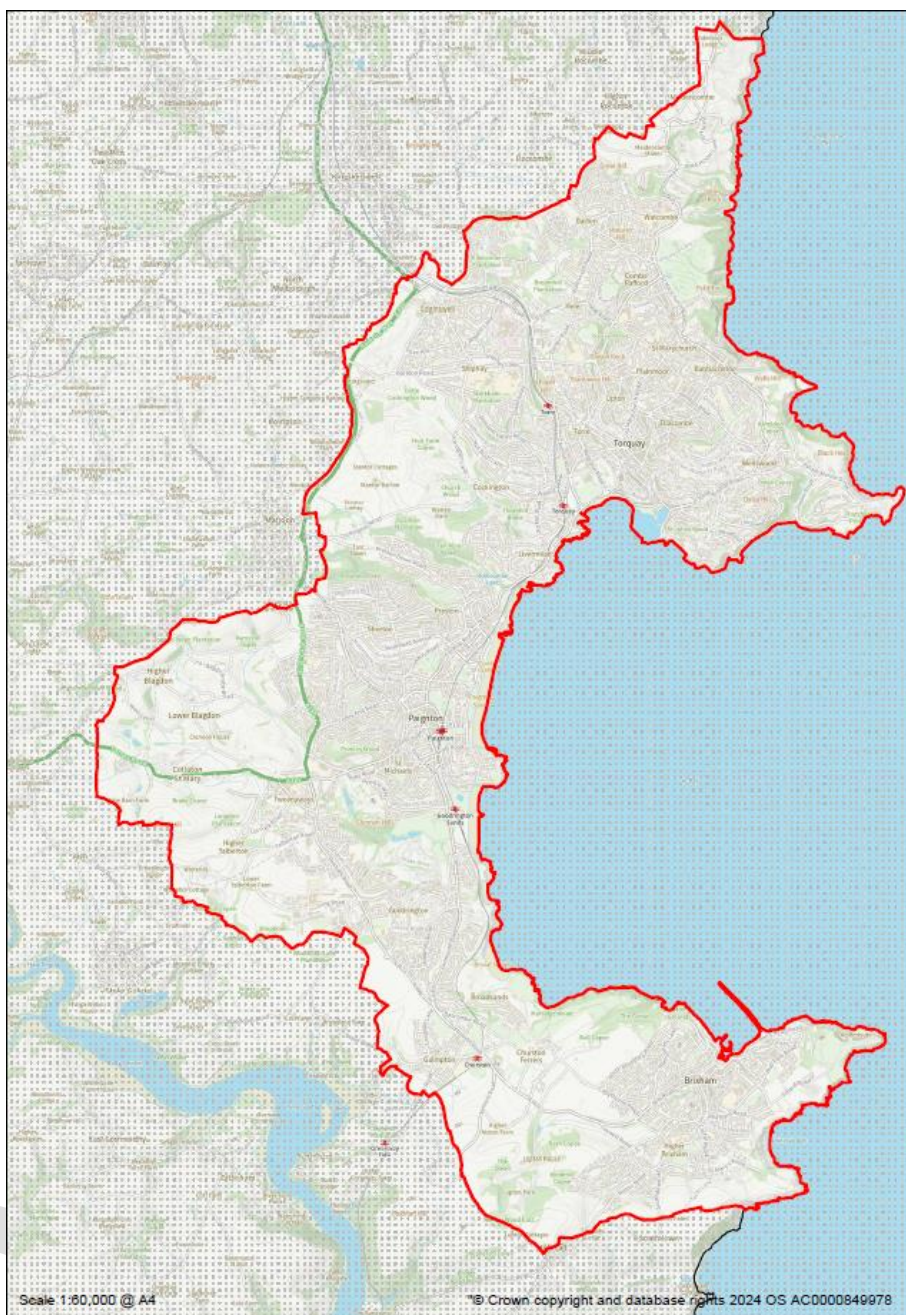




Figure 3 – Torbay BSIP Area



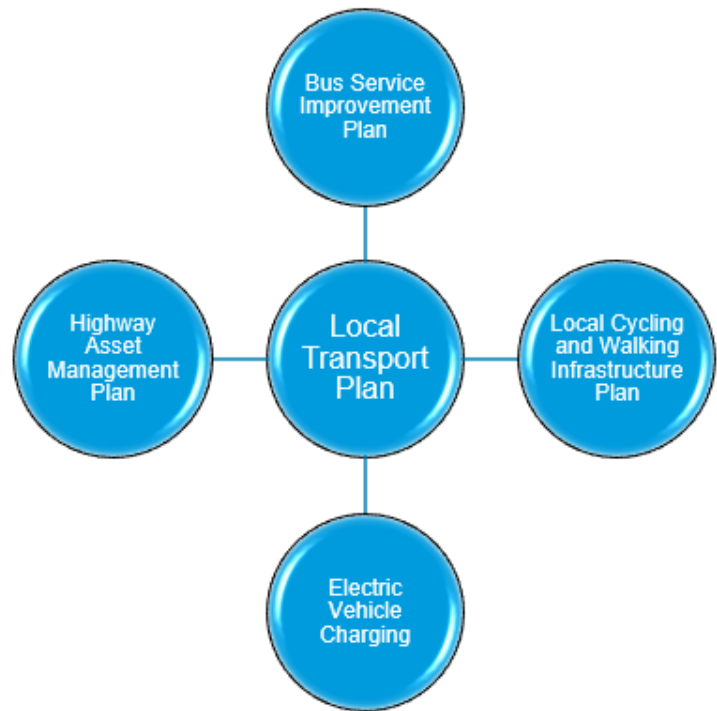
## Local Transport Plan

It is important that our bus vision for Torbay and Devon and Torbay (joint) Local Transport Plan align with each other. The existing local transport plan sets out priorities to:

- Enable Economic Growth and Development
- Enhance Torbay's Built and Natural Environment
- Improve Health and Activity Levels
- Improve Access to Education, employment and Services
- Make Big Connections

The BSIP also has to sit alongside plans and proposals for Electric Vehicles, Active Travel, Highway Management, and Rail Investment. This relationship is outlined in the diagram.

Torbay and Devon are currently developing a new Local Transport Plan as well as progressing the proposals for devolution which will result in the Devon and Torbay Combined County Authority (DT CCA) becoming the single combined Local Transport Authority. It will be necessary, once this is established, to reconsider the policy position and the geography of the Enhanced Partnership and BSIPs.



The need for economic growth has been identified as one of the key drivers for change in Torbay. The Local Transport Plan is fundamental to delivering the developments identified, and ensuring the transport network can accommodate the housing, jobs and services Torbay requires.

Improvements to local bus services linking town centres, residential and employment areas will be targeted to provide sustainable access. Torquay, Paignton and Brixham town centres will be supported in their function as successful retail and leisure centres.

Buses must contribute to maintaining Torbay as an attractive place to live, work and enjoy leisure time in a high quality environment. Promoting and sustaining a transport network that is flexible, sustainable and readily available to meet the needs of its residents is critical. This will benefit all by ensuring access to key services at a reasonable cost.

## Other Strategic Connections

It is not just the Local Transport Plan and transport policies to which this BSIP relates. It is important to recognise and ensure consistency with a number of other policy areas and funding streams. They have a role in applying the national policy position at a local level, considering the regional policy framework and working with non-transport policy documents at a local level such as the Local Plan, Economic Strategy, Health and Wellbeing Plan, and Destination Management Plan for example. Below is a wider list of policy areas and funds that are supported and that have an effect on the BSIP (this list is not exhaustive):

- Transport Decarbonisation Plan
- Greener Way for Our Bay
- Community and Corporate Plan
- Levelling Up
- Town Deal and Future High Streets
- Long Term Plan for Towns
- New Stations Fund
- Bus Needs and DRT Studies
- Zero Emission Bus Study
- Local Plan
- Economic Strategy
- Destination Management Plan

## Section 2: Current Offer to Bus Passengers

### Bus Back Better and the Torbay Bus Network

The National Bus Strategy (Bus Back Better) sets out key objectives for the buses across England. Table 1 shows how the Torbay network compares with these objectives.

Table 1 National Bus Strategy and the Torbay Bus Network

Bus Back Better	Torbay Network
<b>Frequent</b>	There is a clear north-to-south corridor through Torbay with 12 to 24 buses per hour, however, outside of service 12 frequencies are mixed.
<b>Fast and reliable</b>	All our key services suffer delays, and the overall performance is below expectations with customer satisfaction for punctuality only being 49%.
<b>Low fares</b>	All services are part of the National £2 Fare Cap. The largest operator provides period tickets but there are no multi-operator or bus/rail tickets.
<b>Comprehensive cover</b>	96% of Torbay's population are within 400m of a local bus service. New services have improved access to 'bus' and key trip attractors.
<b>Easy to understand and to use</b>	A network identity still needs establishing. At stop information needs updating and a variety of bus stop flags on the network lead to confusion.
<b>Comfortable and modern</b>	With an ageing bus fleet more work is required to ensure bus services feel modern with vehicles comfortable to use.
<b>Integrated with bus &amp; other modes</b>	There is currently no joint ticketing between bus companies or rail. We are adding Brixham to the rail-ticket network and promoting PlusBus.
<b>Low emissions</b>	Over a third of the bus fleet is more than 15-years old resulting in higher emissions. Only 22% of the 133 buses on the network are Euro VI.
<b>Accessible &amp; inclusive by design</b>	There is still improvement to be made to attain full satisfaction across all bus user groups, particularly those who are vulnerable and less mobile.
<b>Innovative solutions</b>	DRT was identified as a potential solution in 2021 but there is a lack of local support, and instead a focus on ticketing solutions and more buses.
<b>Better to ride in</b>	Driver standards are high across the network with bus passengers rating satisfaction at 72% (and at 63% for cleanliness).
<b>Greener</b>	Torbay has been awarded funding for [XX] electric buses and new service contract awards will seek to improve/reduce the emissions from vehicles.
<b>Safe to ride in</b>	Personal safety at bus stops had a 62% satisfaction score, and on bus 67% (2023). We will continue to work to improve these scores.

## The Torbay network

This section is text is reflective of the 2023/24 year. Some changes to the network have been introduced since April 1<sup>st</sup> 2024 but these are reflected in the planned section, rather than the the existing.

Torbay has a compact bus network operating across urban, suburban, and rural geographies. In total there are 53 local bus services, of which 24 operate wholly within the Torbay Council BSIP area. A further 29 services operate across the Torbay Council border into neighbouring Devon.

The market share across the bus network by service and distance operated is shown in Table 2.

**Table 2 Torbay Bus Market Share by Service and Distance**

Bus Operator	Services Operated		Annual Route Distance (km)
	Commercial	Supported	
Stagecoach	23	0	4.494m
CountryBus	3	2	0.085m
Torbay Minibuses	0	13	0.174m
Community Trust	0	2	Unknown
Others (school buses)	0	10	Unknown

Passenger numbers using data received from local bus operators show peaks in the seasonal months (May to September) and the network sees increases in buses used across the network to cope with the seasonal uplift in passengers (for example additional open-top buses operate across route 12 and service 122 is a purely seasonal service). As a result of the seasonal nature of the area there are two timetable changes each year, one typically covering October to Easter (April) and May-September (where service levels tend to increase).

Service 12 is the most frequent bus service in Torbay, linking the three main settlements of Brixham, Paignton and Torquay and running onwards to Newton Abbot with buses every 10 minutes during the daytime. Other frequent services include:

- Service 22 running every 20 minutes between St. Marychurch and South Devon College;
- Service 23 running every 30 minutes between South Devon College and Paignton;
- Service 31 running every 30 minutes between Torquay town centre and the Barton area;
- Service 35A/35C running from Torquay town centre via Torbay Hospital every 30 minutes;
- Stagecoach FOX running every 15 minutes between Paignton and Foxhole;
- Stagecoach GOLD up to every 30 minutes between Torquay, Paignton, Totnes and Plymouth.

Away from the core commercial network focussed on Torquay, services are less frequent, running hourly during the daytime. These include service 13 (Shiphay – Brixham); service 17 (Brixham – Furzeham); and service 18 (Brixham – Kingswear) all operated by Stagecoach. Country Bus operates services 15 and 16 (Brixham town circulars) with support from Torbay Council.

Several infrequent 'shopper buses' serve the Sainsbury's superstore at Paignton, operated by Torbay Minibuses and running different routes on each weekday. These are services provide up to four journeys each day to facilitate shopping trips and are supported by Sainsbury's.

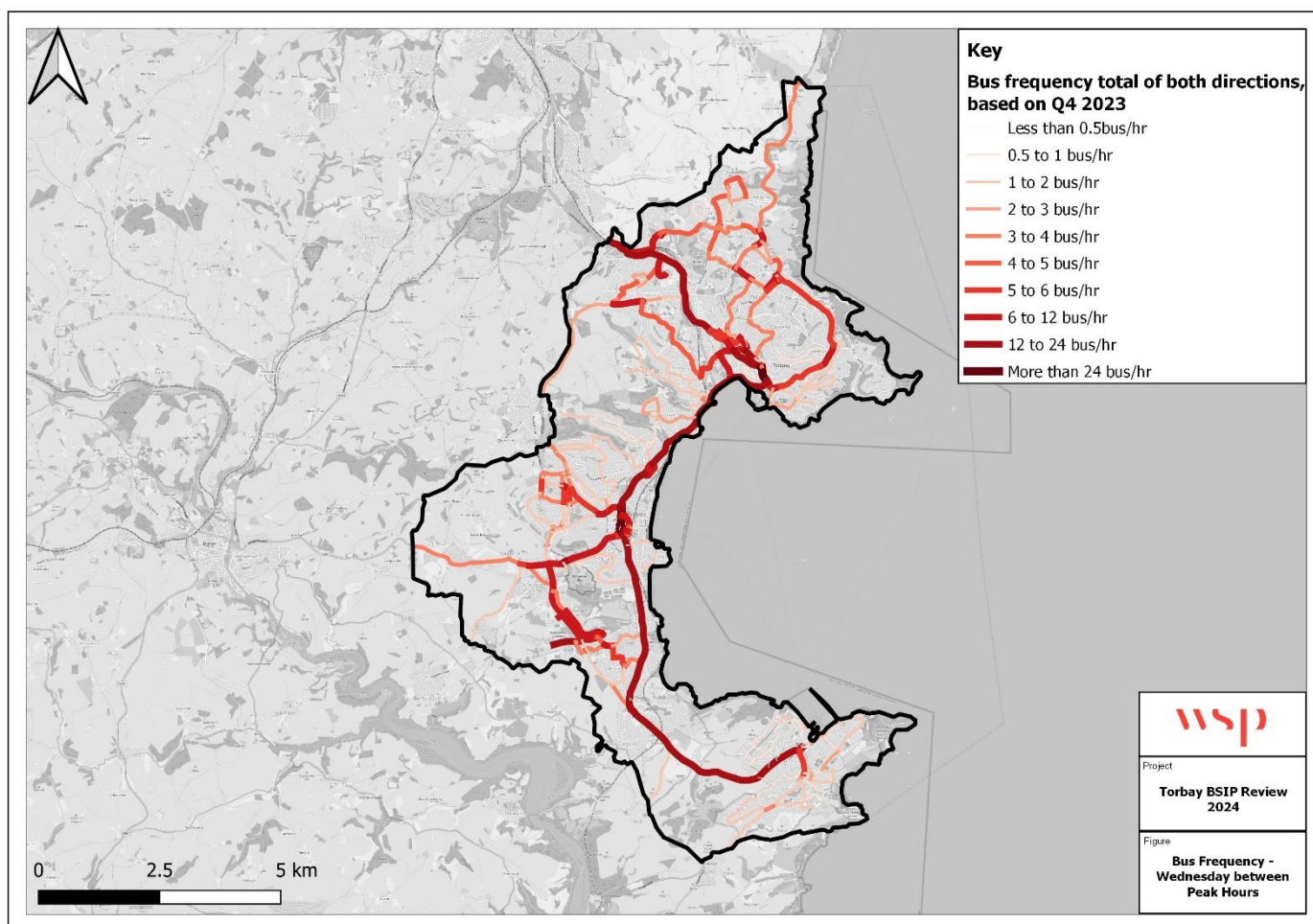
Torbay Minibuses also operate a small number of services that all run at Monday to Friday in Paignton and Torquay including service 108/109 (Paignton Circular), service 60 (Ocombe - Shorton – Paignton), service 62 (Cockington – Torquay), service 64 (Torquay Centre – Wellswood). Additionally, the Community Development Trust operate infrequent services 61 and 65.

Of the 53 services identified, 10 operate daily (Monday to Sunday), 20 operate Monday to Saturday, and 33 do run Monday to Friday.

Only nine services operate beyond 1900 (regarded as the latest time that a core network should operate). This summary suggests a significant disparity between service provision during evening and weekend periods.

Figure 4 shows the coverage of the Torbay route network and indicates the high frequencies around the town centres, and lower levels of provision in the southern and westernmost areas of Torbay in comparison to the central and northern areas. If comingled well, 24 buses per hour could translate to the core north-south corridor providing one bus every two and a half minutes.

**Figure 4 - Torbay Bus Frequency Map**



## Bus Network in Numbers

**53**

Public Bus Service Routes

**5.96**

Total network passengers (million)

**38%**

Proportion of Concessionary journeys to total

**60%**

Bus Fares Satisfaction

**58%**

Local Bus Services Satisfaction

**35%**

Provision of Public Transport Information

**168**

Bus Shelters

**71%**

Bus Service Punctuality

## Bus Passenger Journeys

Leading up to 2019/20 the number of passenger journeys was broadly static though concessionary journeys and the journeys per head of population was slowly declining. The most recent figures show that total passenger journeys are recovering from the 2.7m in 2020/21 (the height of the pandemic) to 6.0m in 2023/24. This is still 22% less than pre-covid figures, demonstrating the continued negative impact of the pandemic.

Table 3 shows the total number of passenger journeys in Torbay since 2016/17. This has been further split into concessionary and non-concessionary journeys, as well as including the journeys per head of population to highlight how reliant local people are on bus services. Below this, there is data on distance of services to offer a comparison for network running and passenger numbers.

**Table 3 - Passenger Journeys in Torbay**

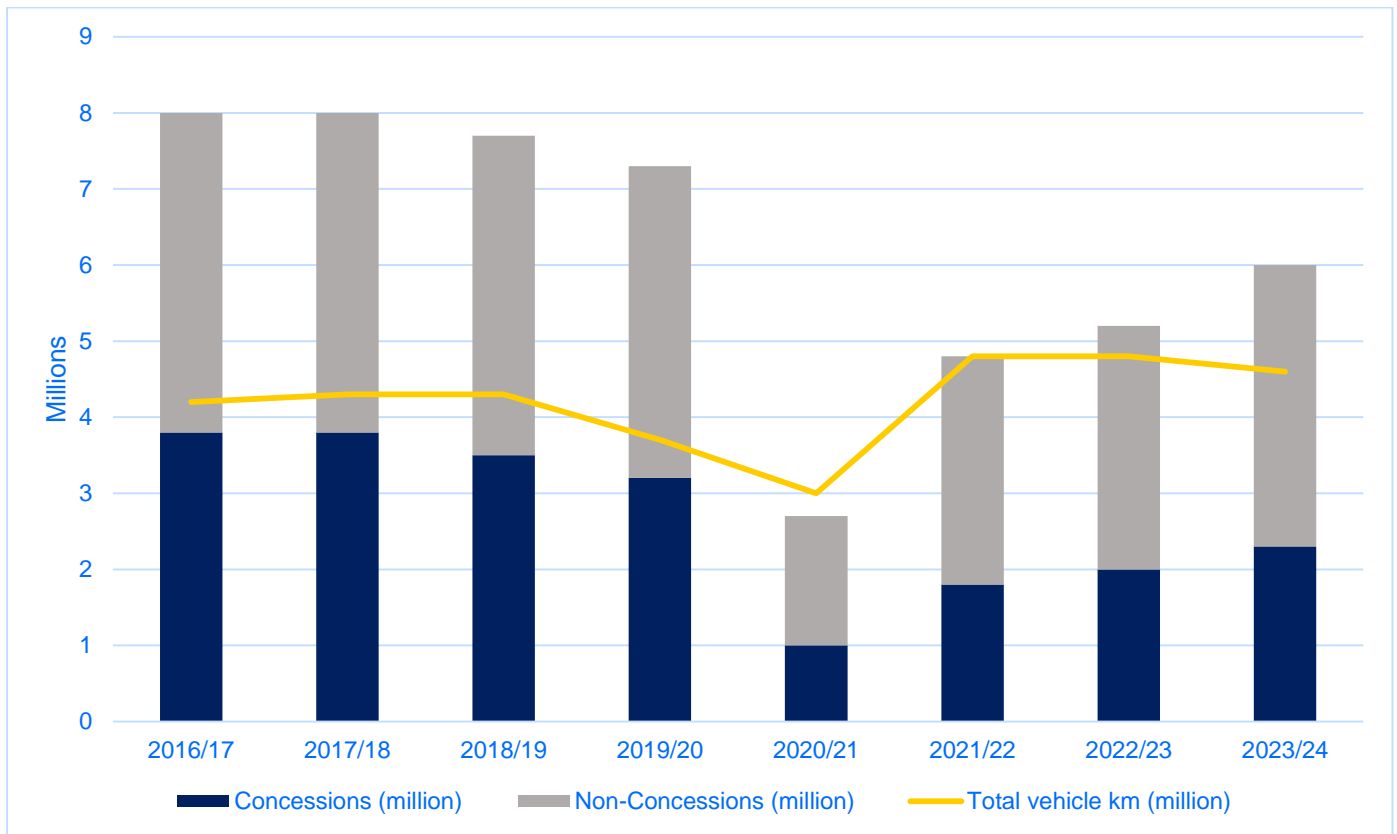
Year	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
<b>Total (million)</b>	7.9m	8.0m	7.7m	7.3m	2.7m	5.2m	5.7m	6.0m
<b>Concessions (million)</b>	3.8m	3.8m	3.5m	3.2m	1.0m	1.8m	2.0m	2.3m
<b>Concessions (%)</b>	47%	47%	45%	43%	36%	34%	35%	38%
<b>Non-Concessions (million)</b>	4.2m	4.2m	4.2m	4.1m	1.7m	3.4	3.7	3.7m
<b>Non-Concessions (%)</b>	52%	53%	55%	57%	64%	66%	65%	62%
<b>Journeys per head of population</b>	59	59	57	53	20	37	41	43

The total number of vehicle kilometres on local bus services within Torbay from 2015/16 to 2018/19 was on average 4.3 million km per year. During 2019/20 and 2020/21, due to national lockdowns and the knock-on effects of the COVID-19 pandemic there was a fall in total vehicle kms to 3.7 million km and 3.0 million km respectively. This is shown in Table 4 below.

**Table 4 – Vehicle kms (million) for Torbay services**

Year	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
<b>Total vehicle km (million)</b>	4.2	4.3	4.3	3.7	3.0	4.8	2.9

The thinning of frequencies across services post pandemic would have reduced confidence in the reliability of buses. This creates a vicious cycle between reduced passenger numbers and reduced service provision. Proposals within this BSIP look to address patronage as well as returning to a pre-covid service as a minimum benchmark. The graph below sets out the passenger numbers and vehicle kms.



## Bus Network Punctuality

The average on-time performance (punctuality) figures were downloaded from Analyse Bus Open Data Service (ABODs) in March 2023. The data included all timing points in Torbay and therefore represents most bus services within the BSIP area. Punctuality has reduced from 75.18% between April 2021 and September 2021 to 71.08% for the same period in 2023.

The Council continues to aspire to achieving better reliability across the network. The reliability of the journey should not depend on the route a passenger chooses or needs to take. Instead, it should be consistent, and delivering what the timetable says. We will work with operators to go 'back to basics' and look at the accuracy of the timetabling, the areas where delays are caused, and what can be done to overcome that. Bus priority measures are one approach outlined in this BSIP, but we will go further than that and look to understand the root causes of delays.

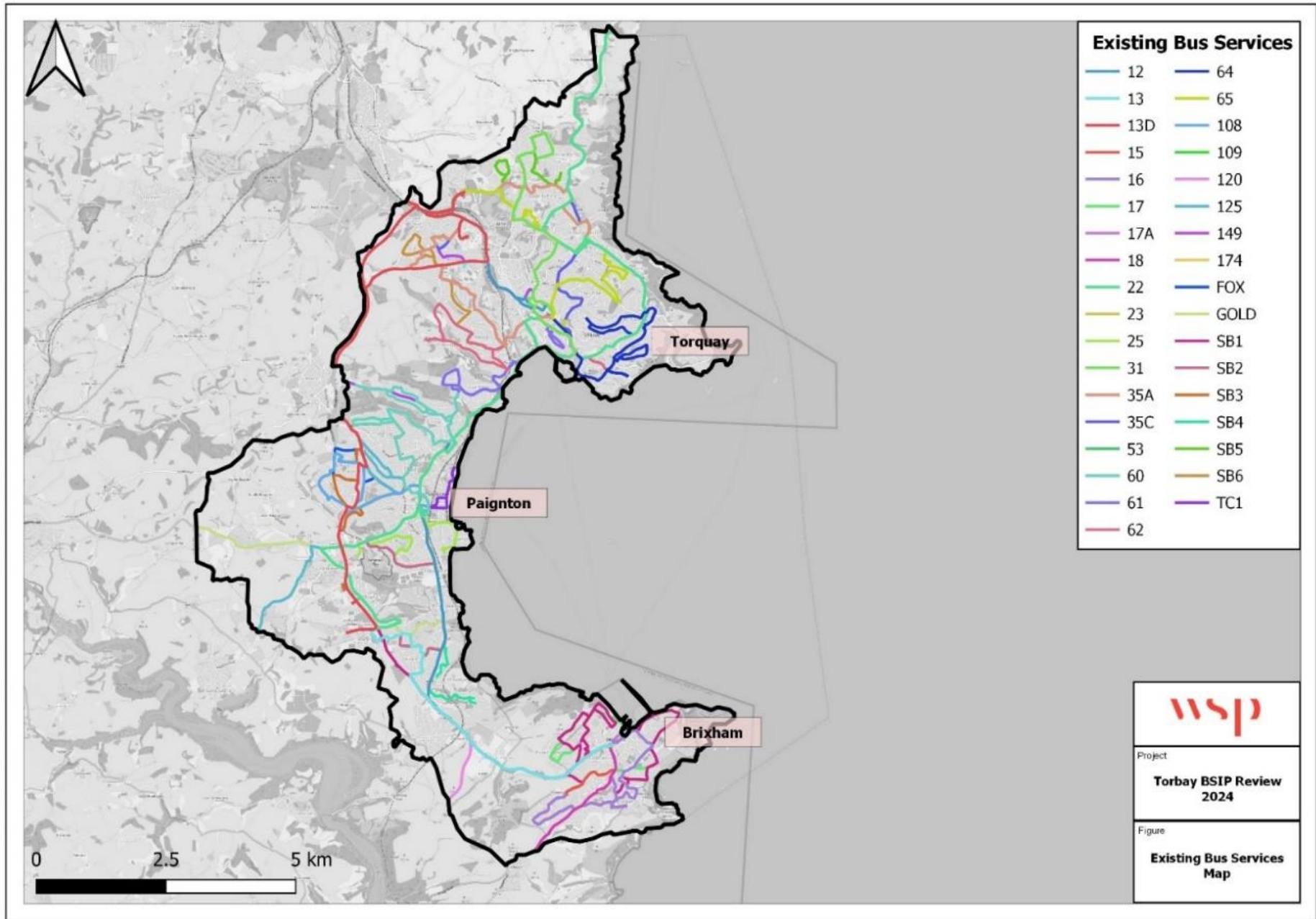
## Bus Support Budgets

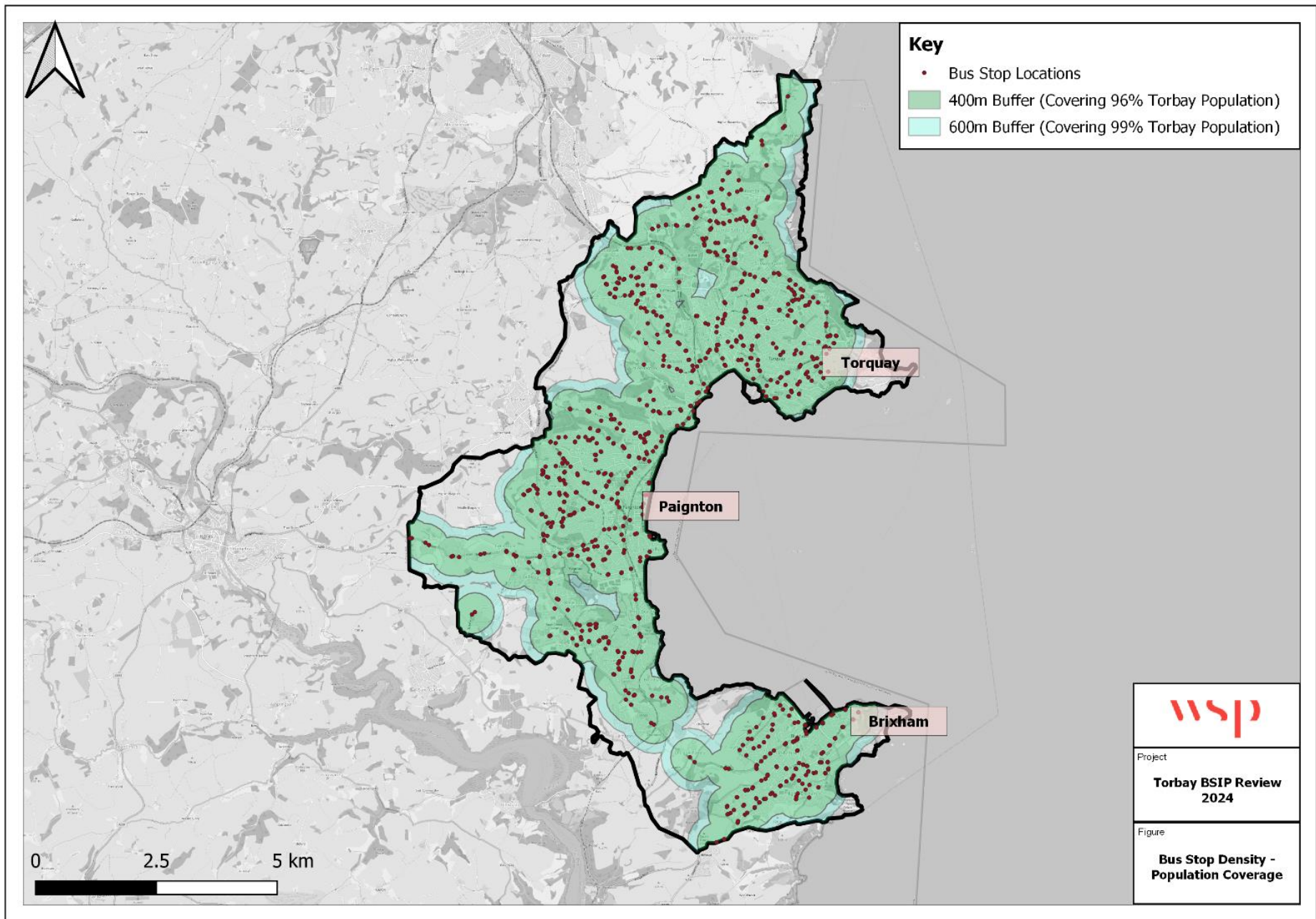
Table 6 – Budget

Budget Areas	2022/23	2023/24
Supported Bus Services	£150,000	£150,000
Other bus	£41,577	£43,806
Concessionary Reimbursement	£3,852,500	£3,486,500
Other concessionary	£65,000	£67,600
Capital	£0	£0

These budgets are further supported by developer contributions (Section 106) and grant funded but this is not budgeted for within the base and therefore not included in the table above.







## Section 3: Improvements Programme to 2025

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Since 2021, Torbay have invested in new waiting shelters and have undertaken an audit of all bus stops in preparation for a programme of flag replacements and information updates beginning in 2024/25.

Building on the identified need for a stable network as the foundation for future development and funding decisions, operators and the Council have worked collectively to ensure that services are retained and in almost all cases this has been possible, utilising funding from the Council and Government grants where there have been challenges to commercial viability following the reduction in passenger numbers. April 2024 was the start of a group of new contracts for supported bus services where commercial viability was not currently possible. This enhances the stability in the network, with 8-year contract commitments, and supports investment in those routes from the vehicles to the customer information and fare offerings.

The BSIP+ funding is primarily funding the establishment and initial implementation of the bus contracts. These deliver on several of the ambitions proposed within the 2021 BSIP and this is considered to be a very effective way to deliver on those.

The new contracts have seen improvements to services across Torbay, addressing several key points in the 2021 BSIP but also enabling progression of others.

Through investment from Section 106 Planning Contributions there have been some minor service enhancements on an identified core route connecting across Torbay, including South Devon College and Torbay Hospital.

Working with Stagecoach, the Council has also been successful in securing funding for Zero Emission Buses. This delivery programme has just commenced.

Further work on bus stop facilities and information, as well as bus marketing and ticket arrangements are also all proposed during 2024. This will include replacement of bus flags with a new, consistent, design alongside decluttering of information at bus stops to help users to understand the bus network.

As an area, the level of concessionary journeys on the network is substantial at just under 50% pre-covid, putting Torbay in the top 5 nationally for Local Authority areas (at times in the past 10 years it has been the highest in the country as a proportion of total journeys). Following the impact to services in 2020, there has been a drop in concessionary journeys with Torbay now 9<sup>th</sup> nationally with a rate of around 35%. This significant reduction not only impacts the viability and wider provision of services, but also has social and economic consequences in relation to accessibility for older and disabled persons and use of services. As such, a priority for 2024 is to boost the marketing and public awareness around concessionary travel, using the DfT guidance.

It is noted that there is a requirement for 2024 BSIPs to consider steps needed to address bus driver and other key staff shortages. The Council is pleased that currently, in relation to the

Torbay network and the depots affecting that, there is not a significant issue to address. This will be continually monitored through the Enhanced Partnership.

Table XXX below highlights the priorities identified in the 2021 BSIP and how they have been supported and delivered since then, the level of progress made, and the work still required.

Table 1 – BSIP priorities, progress and next steps

Identified Priority	Progress to date	Work required
<b>Buses to serve the wider community</b>	Enhancements to the Service 13 and improvements in the times of service operation across the supported network have significantly improved access to the wider community.	There remain pockets of the community who are either not well served by the bus network or do not have efficient or suitable connection points to enable improved journey access to key facilities
<b>Buses to link with facilities</b>	Enhancements to the Service 13 have provided improved connectivity to Torbay Hospital, South Devon College and key employment areas	The frequency and timing of the Service 13 still requires further development in order to better meet the needs of the community and give viable accessibility opportunities. Extending the service to broaden the reach within the community and/or to serve retail facilities would be of greater benefit.  Providing the connections or greater direct links at certain times of the day would assist in making facilities well served for those who need it.
<b>Lower fares</b>	The continuation of the £2 fare cap is important.	A plan and proposal to ensure best value for the community
<b>Accessibility</b>	Following the award of new contracts, the new vehicles provided with some of those services greatly enhances the accessibility of those routes.  New shelters in some locations have helped too.	Work on broadening the next stop audio/visual announcements on board services, and improving those that are already in place is the priority.
<b>Decarbonisation</b>	Following the award of new contracts, the new vehicles provided with some of those services greatly reduces the emissions levels of those routes.	Implementation of the Zero Emission Bus Funding and the consideration for broadening of that to other services and operators is the next step.

## Section 4: Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

A fundamental part of a solid foundation is consistency and as such the Council and Bus Partnership have continuing to prioritise the ambitions previously set out in the 2021 BSIP. Below is a table containing the full list of ambitions, and the progress and delivery necessary against each of those. These are listed here for consistency under the same headings as the 2021 BSIP but may appear presented differently within the BSIP summary table due to the required template format for that.

Table 2 – Ambitions and Delivery Programme.

	Ambitions	Progress and Delivery
<b>Intensive Services and Investment on Key Corridors, including Bus Priority</b>	Increase the frequency of the 13 and 22 to focus on three core corridors (East, West, and East/West Link) alongside the 12 and to re-instate the night service 12 with extended provision to develop a 24-7 route alongside a night service 22	Saturday services have been introduced on the 13 but there remains an opportunity to increase the frequency of the service. The 22 has also not been increased in frequency. The night services have been reintroduced on the 12 but a better understanding is needed of the commercial viability and business case before broadening the offer to other routes.
	Increase frequency and amended route planning of ‘town’ services with extended service operation times for all routes to cover evenings and weekends across Brixham, Paignton and Torquay to better connect the communities to the core corridors and improve ‘sub-corridors’ to Town Centres, health facilities, education facilities, employment areas, and shopping destinations.	Many of the supported bus services have seen an increase to their operational hours. As a partnership work is still needed to consider the opportunities for wider expansion of this and ensure the retention of weekend and evening services on commercial routes.
	Provide bus priority at all key signalised junctions on those core corridors and review other opportunities	This work needs to integrate with a wider signal replacement programme and is currently in the design phase. Delivery of the first junction is likely to be in 2025.

**Lower Fares  
with  
Integrated  
Local  
Ticketing**

Enhance hub points, including Real Time Information, along the corridors including Brixham Town Centre, Brixham Park and Ride, South Devon College, Paignton Bus Station, and Torquay Town Centre, Torbay Hospital, and district shopping centres.

Focus has been around Torquay Harbourside, integrating Town Deal Public Realm improvements with the bus 'hub' improvements. For 2025 and beyond, improvements to the quality and range of real time information will be a focus, as well as ensuring other information and facilities such as clear flags and comfortable shelters are provided at the key locations.

Review on-street parking layouts on all routes to improve efficiency of bus services

This aim is yet to have commenced but remains an ambition.

East of Exeter Bus Service (Exeter Corridor)

Some progress has been made around timetable development and optioneering. It is likely that this will be delivered as part of the combined transport authority proposals following the implementation of devolution and necessary transition phase. Consideration is being given to funding streams as an enabler.

Have an affordable multi-operator (bus only) ticket

This was not possible before the bus contract arrangements as there was only one commercial operator in Torbay. With the stable network in place, this is a top priority for 2024.

Reduced price ticketing for families

Ticketing opportunities are on hold until further information on the bus contracts and national ticketing schemes have been determined.

Reduced price young person's ticketing

Ticketing opportunities are on hold until further information on the bus contracts and national ticketing schemes have been determined.

	Multi-modal tickets including sales of through tickets to/from national rail	Some work has been progressed with Great Western Railway and this will be continued. It is the intention that this will be in place before 2025.
<b>Service Patterns Integrated with Other Modes</b>	Increased service frequencies at railway stations with services timed to connect with train services where achievable	Service frequency increases on the 12 and 22 will support this (see above) but also those on some of the town services. The timing of buses to serve trains more directly is more applicable to the extension of a service to Torquay Railway Station (see below)
	Extension of service to Torquay Railway Station	Some timetable development work has progressed around this but more work is needed on enablement funding
	Night service 12 timed to meet sleeper train at Newton Abbot with direct ticketing options	As noted above, work on the business case and viability of the night services need to be considered
	Improved wayfinding between bus and rail at all railway stations	This task is expected in 2024 and 2025.
	New stop infrastructure for Edginswell Station	Subject to delivery programme for the station
	First steps towards redevelopment of Paignton Bus Station as hub	Further work as part of the regeneration of Paignton Town Centre being considered.
	Walking and Cycling connectivity, in particular the South West Coast Path and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	This task is expected in 2024 and 2025 but will be ongoing.
<b>Bus Network Presented as a Single System with Clear</b>	Marketing campaigns	This task is expected in 2024 and 2025 but will be ongoing.
	Replacement bus stop flags with consistent design	This task will commence in 2024 but will be a programme over at least 2 years.
	Enhanced maintenance programme for bus stops	This will be put in place alongside the new flag and other infrastructure provision.

<b>Passenger Information</b>	Single network branding	This remains under consideration and the inclusion of the Torbay Story branding is part of this. This is unlikely to be developed too far until devolved arrangements are in place as it may influence any branding.
	Real Time Information	The existing system remains in place and future improvements and system expansions are envisaged but not currently planned for.
	Simple effective passenger information at stops	This will be a rolling programme of initial information replacement, followed by regular updating.
	Clear online information	A new 'single source' destination website will be developed for 2025.
<b>Modern Buses and a Decarbonised Network</b>	On board audio-visual equipment	
	Accessible vehicles for the community	This is completed following the award of new contracts. New vehicles are awaiting delivery.
	All vehicles on core routes to have CCTV, WI-FI & USB Charging	This will be delivered through the vehicle improvements programme associated with the zero emission roll out.
	Green roof shelters	This is an ongoing programme, only shelters requiring replacement are programmed
	Charging infrastructure to support a zero-emission network (Tranche 1)	The Council have been successful in securing funding and the programme for delivery has commenced with vehicles being introduced to service during 2025/26
	A minimum of 17 zero emission electric buses (Tranche 1)	The Council have been successful in securing funding and the programme for delivery has commenced with vehicles being introduced to service during 2025/26



	Transitional fleet changes to modernise and reduce emissions	This is being delivered through the zero emission bus fleet roll out and the new contracts.
<b>Giving Passengers a Voice and Making Buses Safe</b>	Develop a passenger charter	This is in place.
	Set up and administer a bus forum, partnership, delivery of this BSIP, and overview of passenger charter	This is in place.
	Improve the customer information, person to person, online, and hard copies as appropriate	This will be improved during 2024 and 2025.
	Provide REAL disability and Equality training	This is intended for 2024.
	Improve waiting facilities at stops with safe boarding areas as appropriate	This is part of an ongoing programme.
<b>Demand Responsive and Socially Necessary Transport</b>	Increase provision and hours of socially necessary services	This has been delivered through the new supported bus service contracts.
	Increase accessibility of socially necessary services	This has been delivered through the new supported bus service contracts.
	Modifying the Concessionary Fares offer	This is currently under review.
	Fare Car and Demand Responsive Transport	A study has shown that there is potential for some areas where bus services are currently contracted to operate. Further work will take place to review other areas that may be less well served.
	Community Transport	No further work has been undertaken for this at the current time but the Council continues to support the community transport operators in the area.

## Section 5: Targets Performance Monitoring and Reporting

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The below sets out the broad headline targets for this BSIP that will be incorporated and refined into the Enhanced Partnership. The targets will be more specifically set after further discussions with the operators and when more information about funding is known.

### Targets

#### JOURNEY TIMES

**TARGET** – A decrease in journey times and improvement of accessibility to each of the Town Centres and Torbay Hospital

**BASELINE** – Assessment of Accessibility “Torbay Bus Support Phase 2” report by WSP on behalf of Torbay Council August 2021

#### RELIABILITY

**TARGET** – A decrease in journey delay with an increase in ‘on-time’ services.

**BASELINE** – DfT ‘Analyse Bus Open Data’. 2mins 46sec journey delay and 75.18% on time 6 months April to September 2021.

#### PASSENGER GROWTH

**TARGET** – An increase in patronage and journeys per head population

**BASELINE** – Operator reported figures, verified annually DfT tables bus0109 and bus0110.

#### CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

**TARGET** – An increase in passenger satisfaction and decrease in number of complaints

**BASELINE** – NHTN survey result 63%, 3% above average; Wider survey data to follow

#### AVERAGE FARES

**TARGET** – A decrease in overall average fare cost

**BASELINE** – 2021 Fare Structure

#### NUMBER OF ZERO EMISSION BUSES IN FLEET

**TARGET** – An increase in number of zero emission vehicles operating as a percentage of fleet

**BASELINE** – October 2021 – 0

### Reporting

The partnership will work together to report on the performance of the BSIP targets.

We anticipate that updates will be published at [www.torbay.gov.uk/bus-network-improvements](http://www.torbay.gov.uk/bus-network-improvements).

## Section 6: BSIP Overview Table

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### Summary Information

<b>Name of Local Authority</b>	Torbay Council
<b>Enhanced Partnership(s) and/or Franchising Scheme(s) covered by the BSIP</b>	Torbay Bus Enhanced Partnership
<b>Date of publication:</b>	June 2024
<b>Web address (URL) of the published BSIP:</b>	<a href="http://www.torbay.gov.uk/bus-network-improvements">www.torbay.gov.uk/bus-network-improvements</a>

DRAFT

**Meeting:** Cabinet

**Date:** 11 June 2024

**Wards affected:** All Wards

**Report Title:** Productivity Plan

**When does the decision need to be implemented?** In time for submission to Government by 19 July 2024

**Cabinet Member Contact Details:** Councillor Jacqueline Thomas, Cabinet Member for Tourism, Culture, Events and Corporate Services; [jacqueline.thomas@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:jacqueline.thomas@torbay.gov.uk)

**Director Contact Details:** [Matthew Fairclough-Kay](mailto:matthew.fairclough-kay@torbay.gov.uk), Director of Corporate Services; [matthew.fairclough-kay@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:matthew.fairclough-kay@torbay.gov.uk)

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## 1. Purpose of Report

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- 1.1 This report seeks Cabinet endorsement of the Council's Productivity Plan ahead of submission to the Government.

## 2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

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- 2.1 The proposals in this report help us to deliver our vision of a healthy, happy and prosperous Torbay by demonstrating to the Government and our community the work that we are doing to:
- Transform the way that we design and deliver services to make better use of resources;
  - Take advantage of technology and make better use of data to improve decision making, service design and use of resources; and
  - Reduce wasteful spend within our organisation and systems.
- 2.2 It also describes the barriers that we have identified as preventing our progress which the Government could help to reduce or remove.

- 2.3 The reasons for the proposal and need for the decision are the requirement placed on Councils as part of the Local Government Finance Settlement to prepare a Productivity Plan and submit it by 19 July 2024.

### 3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

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1. That the Council's Productivity Plan be:
  - Approved for submission to the Government
  - Published on the Council's website
2. That the Chief Executive ensures that the actions identified within the Productivity Plan are implemented as part of the Council's day to day activity.

### Appendices

Appendix 1: Draft Productivity Plan

### Background Documents

Not applicable

### 1. Introduction

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- 1.1 As part of the Local Government Finance Settlement in December 2023, the Government announced that councils would be asked to produce productivity plans. The Government recognises that local government has already done a huge amount of work in recent years to improve productivity and efficiency. In going further, the aim of the productivity plans is to understand what is working well and what more the Government can do to unlock future opportunities.
- 1.2 The Government did not issue a formal template or a detailed list of criteria to meet. The expectation is that the Plans should set out what we have done in recent years, alongside our current plans, to transform the Council and our services. The Plans should describe what Torbay Council has done, or is doing, to:
- Transform the way that we design and deliver services to make better use of resources;
  - Take advantage of technology and make better use of data to improve decision making, service design and use of resources; and
  - Reduce wasteful spend within our organisation and systems.

The Government also asks that the Plan identifies the barriers preventing our progress which the Government can help to reduce or remove.

### 2. Options under consideration

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- 2.1 The Plan could have answered all of the specific questions which the Government suggested we may wish to consider in preparing the Productivity Plan. It is felt that, by focussing on the four key areas, the proposed Plan provides a rounded view of activity in place across the Council.
- 2.2 The suggestion was that the Plan should be three or four pages in length but it is not felt that this would provide the opportunity to explain the range of information which was requested by the Government.

### 3. Financial Opportunities and Implications

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- 3.1 The Plan describes, at a high level, how we have transformed the design and deliver of services over recent years to make better use of resources. It also sets out how we will make better use of resources and reduce wasteful spend. The Council already has plans in place through its Transformation Programme and Revenue Saving Plans to ensure that the Council is as efficient and sustainable as possible.

- 3.2 In terms of the barriers preventing our progress, the lack of a multi-year spending settlement and a long-term funding solution for adult social care have been identified as issues for the Council (and local government generally) for at least the past three years. Similarly, the introduction of new burdens on local government without appropriate funding is also an ongoing issue. These points have been identified within the proposed Productivity Plan.

## 4. Legal Implications

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- 4.1 The Government requirement is that Productivity Plans are submitted to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities by 19 July 2024. Council's must ensure that there is "member oversight and endorsement" of the Plan before it is submitted. We must then upload a copy on our website and report progress on a regular basis. It is suggested that this is done as part of our existing Performance Management framework.

## 5. Engagement and Consultation

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- 5.1 There is no requirement to engage with the public on the contents of the Plan. We will upload a copy on our website and provide updates on the progress against the Plan through our regular performance reports.

## 6. Procurement Implications

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- 6.1 Not applicable

## 7. Protecting our naturally inspiring Bay and tackling Climate Change

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- 7.1 Not applicable

## 8. Associated Risks

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- 8.1 If the recommendation is not agreed, we will not be completing a task that has been requested by the Government as part of the Local Government Finance Settlement.

## 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>No adverse impacts are anticipated by the adoption of the Council's Productivity Plan.</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>
Carers	<p>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.</p>	<p>No adverse impacts are anticipated by the adoption of the Council's Productivity Plan.</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>
Disability	<p>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.</p>	<p>No adverse impacts are anticipated by the adoption of the Council's Productivity Plan.</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>



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 by the adoption of the Council's Productivity Plan.	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 by the adoption of the Council's Productivity Plan.	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 by the adoption of the Council's Productivity Plan.	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	No adverse impacts are anticipated by the adoption of the Council's Productivity Plan.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.

	the 20% most deprived areas in England.			
Religion and belief	64.8% of Torbay residents who stated that they have a religion in the 2021 census.	No adverse impacts are anticipated by the adoption of the Council's Productivity Plan.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
Sex	51.3% of Torbay's population are female and 48.7% are male	No adverse impacts are anticipated by the adoption of the Council's Productivity Plan.	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 by the adoption of the Council's Productivity Plan.	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, 5.9 per cent of the population have previously serviced in the UK armed forces.	No adverse impacts are anticipated by the adoption of the Council's Productivity Plan.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
<b>Additional considerations</b>				
Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child poverty and deprivation)		No adverse socio-economic impacts are anticipated by the adoption of the Council's Productivity Plan.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.

Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay)		No adverse public health impacts are anticipated by the adoption of the Council's Productivity Plan.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
Human Rights impacts		No adverse human rights impacts are anticipated by the adoption of the Council's Productivity Plan.	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 for children are anticipated by the adoption of the Council's Productivity Plan.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.

## 10. Cumulative Council Impact

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10.1 None

## 11. Cumulative Community Impacts

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11.1 None

## Productivity Plan 2024 - DRAFT

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### Introduction

As part of the Local Government Finance Settlement in December 2023, the Government announced that councils would be asked to produce productivity plans. The Government recognises that local government has already done a huge amount of work in recent years to improve productivity and efficiency. In going further, the aim of the productivity plans is to understand what is working well and what more the Government can do to unlock future opportunities.

This Productivity Plan describes what Torbay Council has done, or is doing, to:

- Transform the way that we design and deliver services to make better use of resources;
- Take advantage of technology and make better use of data to improve decision making, service design and use of resources; and
- Reduce wasteful spend within our organisation and systems.

It also identifies the barriers preventing our progress which the Government can help to reduce or remove.

Through our performance framework we will report on our progress against our Productivity Plan on a regular basis, keeping the Plan up to date as necessary.

### Torbay – the place

Torbay is a glorious part of Devon with a compelling natural environment. We're a magnet for tourists and known as the English Riviera. We are home to globally significant technology businesses and have a rich leisure and cultural scene.

Despite everything that is fantastic about Torbay, we know that we face challenges and that some parts of the Bay suffer from nationally significant levels of poverty. There is huge potential, and we have high aspirations. We are investing in our economy and our people. By continuing to work closely with our communities and partners and capitalising on our strengths, we want to make Torbay a happy, healthy and prosperous place for our whole community.

Through re-establishing our Torbay Strategic Partnership in 2017 we had the aim of delivering financial and social benefits for Torbay's residents. Creating a partnership across the whole of Torbay, Torbay Together formalised and strengthened the good relationships that were already in place with our public sector partners and significantly strengthened our relationship with the private, community and voluntary sectors.

In January 2022, the partnership launched our Torbay Story which articulates the distinctiveness, character and opportunities of the area, highlights what make it special, what there is on offer and why it should be on people's list. It sets out what needs to be focussed on for Torbay to prosper – combining elements that were already important in the area alongside the potential of the place and lesser-known ingredients of the Torbay experience.

Torbay Together, now re-named the Torbay Place Leadership Board, are the guardians of the Torbay story and brand. The Board and its members (including Council representatives) provide strategic place leadership locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. They champion the place to attract investment, tourism, talent and relocators. They facilitate collaboration and harness and align the power of the anchor institutions in Torbay.

We are using our Story to drive investment and make positive change. Our Levelling Up statistics as well as how we are positioning ourselves on as a regional and national player has led to investment from Government and the private sector.

We have an ambitious capital programme with projects at varying stages of delivery – we are part of the Town Deal initiative, we have received Future High Streets funding and we working with the Government in a Levelling Up Partnership. We have received Levelling Up Fund monies and are working with Devon County Council on the creation of a Combined County Authority for Devon and Torbay to deliver the Level 2 devolution deal offered to us by Government.

## Torbay – the organisation

### Ambitions and priorities

We want to see a healthy, happy and prosperous Torbay.

The Council's [Community and Corporate Plan](#), which covers the period through to 2043, reflects and drives this ambition. Based on local evidence, it brings together interlinked priorities under three strategic themes:

- Community and People
- Pride in Place
- Economic Growth

The outcomes which we want to see, definitions of how we will measure progress and the links to other parts of the Council's Policy Framework are identified.

The Community and Corporate Plan also describes our mission of putting our residents at the heart of everything we do. We will ensure a strong grip on finance, working with our communities and partners, to deliver a sustainable future. We will deliver quality services, improve our economy and protect and enhance our built and natural environments, so that we are all proud of our Bay.

In delivering the Plan and in our day-to-day activity, we will work to make sure we are:

- Evidence based
- Making the most of our assets
- Working together
- An efficient and enabling council
- Keeping a strong grip on finance

### Structures

As a unitary authority we are responsible for delivering over 1,000 local services including children's and adult social care, road maintenance, leisure facilities and refuse collection.

We have operated a Leader and Cabinet governance system since the Local Elections in May 2019. The Council is currently in no overall control with the Conservative Group operating as a minority administration. The Council's management structure is based around six directorates:

Adults and Community Services, Children's Services, Corporate Services, Finance, Pride in Place and Public Health.

Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust deliver adult social care services on behalf of Torbay Council which ensures that adult residents receive seamless health and social care.

Our waste, recycling, highways, street scene and parks services are provided by SWISCo, a company wholly owned by Torbay Council.

We know that we cannot deliver the outcomes we want for our residents without working closely with our partners and with our communities. Alongside our partners in the public sector, we understand and value the importance of a strong and vibrant voluntary sector in developing and maintaining a thriving Torbay. We also value that people and communities want to be more involved, work together, improve our relationships, and have better on-going conversations with us. In talking about Torbay's communities, we recognise that the private sector is also a vital part of our community.

## Finance

We have worked hard over many years to find sustainable, innovative solutions to the financial challenges that we, and many other local authorities, have faced. Our funding from central government has reduced dramatically whilst at the same time the demands on our high cost, statutory services have increased. However, the decisions which have been taken over recent years have meant that Torbay Council is not in the position of needing to identify substantial savings to balance its books.

Some examples of those solutions include the creation of our Learning Academy within Children's Services to help secure our workforce and therefore reduce the reliance on agency staff, the introduction of garden waste collection service, the move to paperless billing for Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates and agreeing different delivery arrangements for services such as leisure, toilets, cemeteries and trading standards.

In setting the budget for 2024/25, the Council was able to focus on addressing ongoing revenue budget pressures, including identifying longer-term saving plans for the future, and providing improved clarity within our Capital Investment Plan. The aim was to take a longer term, strategic approach that looked beyond a single financial year. A direction of travel has been set for the next four years with [revenue savings plans](#) in place for:

- Children's social care placements
- Home to school transport
- Integrated adult social care contract
- Focus on prevention and relief of homelessness
- SWISCo contract fee
- Optimisation of Council assets
- Events
- Legal services
- Streaming of Council meetings

Since the Revenue Budget for 2024/2025 was agreed, the Council has agreed a new Section 75 agreement with the NHS for the delivery of adult social care services. This provides stability for the Council over the next five years which addresses the biggest identified risk within the Council's Medium Term Financial Forecast.

Our Medium Term Resource Plan shows that revenue budget for 2024/25 places no reliance on having to deliver material short term savings from our nine savings plans. Moreover, tangible progress delivered against these plans, over the coming months, will address the forecasted financial gap in future financial years – placing the Council on a more sustainable financial footing.

Revenue Savings Plans provide the focus and control of significant areas of budget spend and pressures, where action will make the biggest difference both in terms of outcomes and financial impact. Oversight of the milestones set out in the Revenue Savings Plans will be undertaken alongside quarterly monitoring of the revenue budget.

Our Capital Investment Programme is being utilised to regenerate Torbay creating aspiration as well as the assets to strengthen our economy. Providing the right environment for our businesses to establish and grow will ultimately stimulate wealth creation, provide homes, tackle poverty and improve health outcomes. The Programme also seeks to ensure that our residents are supported to live independent, healthy and active lives through the creation of extra care housing and the delivery of affordable housing. Through capital investment we have stabilised the costs of temporary accommodation with the purchase of properties across Torbay.

## Our transformation journey

Emerging from the Covid lockdowns in 2021, Torbay Council had already made considerable strides in our whole council transformation programme. Having identified that we needed a wider focus than we had previously taken, the programme is built using learning from other local authorities and a systems approach – putting our communities, our residents and our customers at the heart of everything we do.

Our target operating model is built on the principle of consistency, rather than uniformity, to standardise and simplify our operations whilst increasing data sharing to deliver better services.

In 2021 we set out to review every service, with a firm focus on sustainable outcomes. Whilst this programme continues, we have concurrently embedded new customer service standards to ensure our staff and customers have clear expectations, something that was never articulated before. With a focus on our tone of voice being approachable, friendly and always professional, we are working hard to make sure our information, advice and guidance is accessible to our whole community.

We have invested in a new customer relationship management system, which will reduce our virtual front doors from many to just two. Where operations have been traditionally siloed and processes isolated, inefficient and inwardly focused, we are working towards our digital-by-default operating model with the majority of customers enabled to self-serve.

The achievements we have made through this programme also include:

- A new customer portal to our revenue and benefits system (which is fully integrated into our customer relationship management system)
- Implemented a service improvement plan within our Planning Service
- Embedded a robust, well-understood and well-used whole council approach to performance and risk management
- Roll-out of Microsoft 365 enabling a shift to flexible and hybrid working which is aiding the recruitment and retention of staff
- The development of our new recruitment website with associated applicant tracking system, recruitment strategy and induction programme



- Review the workforce information that we capture across the organisation to enable us to work with service areas on creating a meaningful and effective people plan
- Developed and implemented a Community Engagement and Empowerment Strategy
- Consolidated existing grants available for the Community and Voluntary Sector and established new grant funds

## Continuous improvement

Whilst the previous section describes the outcomes to date from our Whole Council Transformation programme, there are further achievements that we have made over recent years. However, we recognise that, in many cases, we remain on our improvement journey and we have plans in place to help ensure that we remain a sustainable council.

Within Children's Services, against the backdrop of consecutive inadequate Ofsted judgments we have had to devise the complete re-birth of the service in order to focus on delivering a high-quality service.

A cornerstone of our re-birth was our workforce. We had experienced social work vacancy rates in excess of 40% - resulting in considerable use of agency staff, with variable practice and no commitment to the Torbay improvement journey, and we knew we had to focus on this.

We engaged our workforce, agreeing with them to adopt Restorative Practice as the 'Torbay way', from which we developed our whole recruitment and retention strategy, including our commitment to grow our own through our Learning Academy. Our success in recruiting newly qualified social workers, as well as training and developing existing staff, has achieved outstanding results, with talented individuals rising through the ranks, and delivering a seismic reduction in our vacancy rate.

With our workforce engaged, trained and focussed we gained real traction on improvement, culminating in our inspection findings in 2022 of good across all judgment areas. This was the first time in the Council's existence that we had not been inadequate or requiring improvement.

We are now absolutely focussed on becoming outstanding and in February 2023 were awarded Registered Restorative Organisation status by the Restorative Justice Council, the first local authority within the UK to receive this award.

In November 2021, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission conducted a joint inspection of Torbay to judge the effectiveness of the area in implementing the special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) reforms as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014. As a result of the findings of this inspection, HM's Chief Inspector determined that a Written Statement of Action was required because of significant areas of weakness in the area's practice.

In addition, the Council has been working with the Schools' Forum over recent years to address the pressures on the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Block. In February 2022, the Council was invited to take part in the Safety Valve intervention programme with the Department for Education (DfE). As part of the programme, we and our partners have produced, and achieved thus far, a deficit recovery plan that leads to a balanced High Needs Block by 2026/2027. The DfE have agreed to fund the cumulative deficit of up to £12.91m as long as milestones are met during the process. To date we have received £6.193m from DfE towards the deficit.

We have revised our governance arrangements in this area to ensure that the agreed improvements identified in the Written Statement of Action are delivered whilst embedding the recommendations from the new SEND reforms, Inspection Framework and Safety Valve. These

new arrangements provide us with the mechanism to further implement our ambition as set out in our SEND Strategy over the next three years.

Starting with the creation of Torbay NHS Care Trust, Torbay Council and the NHS have spent the last nineteen years pioneering collaboration between health and adult social care leading to the establishment of the integrated care organisation (ICO) in October 2015.

A new five-year commitment to our joint working arrangements, through a new Section 75 agreement, was agreed by the Council and NHS partners in March 2024. Whilst the wide-ranging benefits of integration are accepted, the health and care system in Torbay, and nationally, finds itself operating in challenging financial circumstances. The ICO is forecasting a £12m deficit attributed to adult social care spend for the 2023/2024 financial year, which could rise to as much as to £36m in five years.

As a joint senior leadership team, we are actively engaged in addressing these challenges and, as part of our new agreement are taking forward an extensive transformation programme that aims to improve financial sustainability whilst maintaining, and improving, the quality of care delivered in Torbay. This programme will focus on three key areas:

- Service transformation
- Financial grip and control
- High performing integrated care organisation

The level of homelessness and the need for temporary accommodation was particularly impacted by the pandemic and continues to be impacted by the pressures on the cost of living. Current levels of demand and costs are still far greater than pre-covid levels. Since 2020, there has been a 64% increase in people presenting to the local authority as homeless and a 66% increase in those being provided with temporary accommodation. Increasingly, families are approaching the service, and overall complexity is increasing.

Throughout 2023/24 we focussed on directly purchasing and leasing property to reduce the costs associated with spot purchasing of temporary accommodation whilst increasing the stability of accommodation options available to the Housing Team. 37 properties have been purchased by Torbay Council, with all but one occupied (and the last one undergoing the final renovations and due to be completed imminently). This is helping to stabilise costs and allow more work to be done to prevent homelessness and support households to find more permanent housing.

The Council's insourcing of the Homeless Hostel contract to improve throughput and availability of cost neutral accommodation for single people is also having a positive impact through reducing wider expenditure and placements.

Despite all of the positive progress being made by the Council, the level of increased demand and costs incurred far outweigh the associated funding provided by Government. The 2024/25 revenue budget includes an additional £900k to meet the increased costs of temporary accommodation, operational costs for the Hostel and to provide support for the prevention of homelessness.

To further manage budget pressures that emerge in year, the service will continue their strategic work to improve accommodation pathways and commissioning plans. This will include reviewing homelessness preventative work, arrangements around Housing Management subsidy and opportunities to lever in further grant funding from Homes England.

Our Pride of Place directorate's approach to making Torbay a brighter bay and a premier resort means that there are now better working relationships across the directorate and we are making

better links better heritage, place and culture. Across all parts of the Council we are taking a more collaborative approach with our partners and communities, but recognise that this is more advanced in some parts of the Council to others.

In July 2020 (in the midst of the pandemic), the contract for the provision of waste, recycling, highways, street scene and parks services provided through a joint venture company (Tor2) was ended. The Council created a new wholly-owned company called SWISCo with the aim of providing new, improved services for Torbay. Since then, we have invested in our people, our technology and our plant. We have driven our average residual waste down by 10kg per household (well over 2500 tonnes a year) and for the first time in living memory our rounds are finishing early for both waste and recycling.

The teams are now motivated with new terms and conditions that give them clear roles and the Council better staff retention as we have become an employer of choice. We are significantly more efficient and our streets are cleaner.

The focus on community engagement continues with co-design and co-production being used across the Council – from sea defence schemes to our Big Plan for learning disabilities. Our Engagement and Communications Team is supporting directorates across the Council to engage earlier and more effectively with our communities. Quarterly engagement events are held in locations across Torbay enabling residents to discuss issues of concern with councillors and senior officers. Our weekly e-newsletter reaches almost 10,000 people and during 2023 we held our first Residents' Satisfaction Survey.

Within our transformation programme work is continuing including on the next phase of the CRM system implementation, the roll-out of Microsoft Power BI to develop our use of available data for performance management, implementing our People Strategy, undertaking workforce planning across the organisation and the creation of a centralised data hub.

## Barriers preventing progress

The lack of a multi-year funding settlement to local government makes it more difficult for the Council to plan its future financial position with our Medium Term Resource Plan being based on assumptions. In providing a multi-year settlement the Council would wish to see:

- A long term sustainable approach to the funding of adult social care
- Recognition of the demand for services, and the increased costs of those services, within local authorities and, in particular, coastal, unitary authorities
- An increase in the Public Health Grant to take account of the health and wellbeing needs in coastal communities
- An end to “cliff edge” funding whereby expectations are raised and services need to be ceased as funding ends.

In considering the funding of local government, Torbay Council would also ask that new burdens are appropriately resourced. Examples include “Stable Homes, Built on Love” and the National Transfer Scheme for unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC). As a Council we are ambitious for our children and families. However there needs to be adequate funding and resources made available for us to deliver against the requirements placed on us by Government.

An end to bidding for funding from different pots would help to ensure that services and projects are less fragmented and that interdependencies can be managed better. The continued flux

between political imperatives, legal duties and short deadlines means that councils are less able to focus on the things that matter to our residents, businesses and communities.

## Conclusion

As a confident and proactive Council, we maintain tight control of our budgets as an overspend in one area can have hugely detrimental effects across the Council when it is required to compensate.

As an agile Council we have been able to respond to the short term funding horizons of recent years and ensure that we have achieved the required savings across the organisation to not only give a balanced budget, but also maintain our reserves so that we continue to provide the insurance we need for that rainy day. The balance of our ambition with prudence has been politically supported through concerted officer leadership, where we have painted the picture so that tough decisions can be made clearly.

Over the past four years we have worked hard to put in place the governance “building blocks” to provide the foundation for our improvement journey. Articulating the Torbay Way within our emerging Assurance Framework will serve as a reminder that good governance is essential. Those building blocks – our frameworks, protocols and policies – all supported the smooth transfer of administrative control and the move to no overall control.

## Appendix 1: Actions

We will:	Through:
Measure productivity in the organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Quarterly performance reports considered by Directors, Cabinet Members and the Overview and Scrutiny Board</li> <li>▪ Undertaking our Annual Value for Money assessment</li> </ul>
Measure the effect of our transformation plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consideration of highlight reports and end project reports at our project and programme boards</li> <li>▪ Measuring the benefits of projects (both financial and non-financial) throughout the life of the project</li> <li>▪ Customer satisfaction surveys and bi-annual residents satisfaction surveys</li> </ul>
Improve the quality of the data we collect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Agreeing a Data Quality Policy</li> </ul>
Monitor the implementation of our revenue savings plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Quarterly budget monitoring reports considered by Directors, Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Board</li> </ul>
Consider the value for money of our services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A central review of our annual service plans</li> <li>▪ Undertaking our Annual Value for Money assessment</li> </ul>
Assure ourselves that our plans are being delivered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Implementation of our Performance Framework including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Quarterly performance reports considered by Director, Cabinet Members and Overview and Scrutiny Board</li> <li>○ Discussion of performance at regular team meetings</li> <li>○ Annual appraisals for all staff</li> <li>○ Regular one-to-ones for all staff to discuss progress against targets</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**Officer Scheme of Delegation  
Urgent decision taken by the Chief Executive**

**Paragraph 1.21 of Schedule 6 to Part 3 (Responsibility of Functions) of the Council’s Constitution**

**Report to the Meeting of the Cabinet to be held on 11 June 2024**

The Officer Scheme of Delegation states that the Chief Executive may take an urgent decision in relation to a cabinet function (in consultation with the Leader of the Council) that as a matter of urgency any decision in relation to an Executive function shall be taken by him/her in the best interests of either the Council or the inhabitants of the Borough, as he/she considers necessary.

A report detailing the action taken in accordance with the Officer Scheme of Delegation must be submitted to the Cabinet. The table below sets out the details of the action taken:

<b>Matter for decision</b>	<b>Decision taken by</b>	<b>Decision and Alternative Options Considered</b>	<b>Reasons for urgency</b>	<b>Date of decision</b>
<p>PA, Hybrid and Live Streaming Services for Meetings - Award of Contract</p>	<p>Chief Executive of Torbay Council</p>	<p><b>Decision:</b></p> <p>That a ten month contract (plus a further two months) commencing on 1 June 2024, to provide PA, hybrid and live streaming services for Council, Planning Committee and Cabinet meetings be awarded to the preferred supplier for the contract value as set out in the Exempt Appendix to this Record of Decision.</p> <p><b>Alternative Options Considered:</b></p> <p>None</p>	<p>The decision was very time constrained and in the best in the best interests of the Council and the inhabitants of the Borough.</p>	<p>29 May 2024</p>

**Anne-Marie Bond  
Chief Executive**

**31 May 2024**

**Meeting:** Cabinet **Date:** 11 June 2024

**Wards affected:** Churston with Galmpton

**Report Title:** Brokenbury Solar Farm

**When does the decision need to be implemented?** Immediately

**Cabinet Member Contact Details:** Cllr Chris Lewis, Cabinet Member for Place Development and Economic Growth and Deputy Leader, [chris.lewis@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:chris.lewis@torbay.gov.uk)

**Director Contact Details:** Alan Denby, Director of Pride in Place, [alan.denby@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:alan.denby@torbay.gov.uk)

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## 1. Purpose of Report

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- 1.1 To provide an update as considerable time has passed since the original decision (May 2020) and to seek updated authorisation for prudential borrowing to bring the project forward, subject to the income generating a positive margin. The margin will be defined on completion of procurement and a final refinement of project costs.
- 1.3 An overall scheme budget of £2,750,000 has previously been approved by Cabinet in May 2020 subject to conditions set out below (6.1, 6.2 & 6.3 within the Introduction section). The latest project costs remain within budget.
- 1.4 For background reading the previous cabinet papers (May 2020) can be found in appendix 2.

## 2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

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- 2.1 On 24 June 2019, Torbay Council declared a 'Climate Emergency'. Torbay Council is a partner of and supports the work of the Devon Climate Emergency Response Group, which is aiming to produce a collaborative Devon-wide response to the climate emergency to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050 and prepare Devon for the necessary adaptation to infrastructure and services required to respond to climate change.
- 2.2 Torbay Council's current Energy and Climate Change Strategy describes how the Council will help minimize the economic, social and environmental costs of climate change by demonstrating leadership and providing encouragement in working toward emission reductions and resilience to our changing climate.
- 2.3 The UK government also has a net zero strategy "Build Back Greener". This strategy sets out policies and proposals for decarbonising all sectors of the UK economy to meet Central Governments net zero target by 2050. Renewable energy including solar power forms part of this strategy.
- 2.4 The proposed solar farm would allow the end user to buy and use sustainable electricity generated on Torbay Council owned land to power the end users site. The identified end users' site serves residents throughout Torbay. Delivery of the solar farm would be a positive step towards meeting the targets set out in the Climate Change Strategy.
- 2.5 The objective is to provide a 2MWP solar farm to generate renewable energy over a 25-year period which will:
- Contribute to Torbay's net zero target by reducing our carbon footprint by 458.75 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> a year or 11,468.75 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> over a 25-year period. These figures are approximate based on average sunlight.
  - Generate a surplus for Torbay Council. The detail of which is available within exempt appendix 1
- 2.6 The business case has been considered by Capital and Growth Board and is now recommended to Cabinet for approval.

## 3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

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- 3.1 That subject to 3.2. below the Director of Pride in Place be authorised to proceed with the project to deliver a solar farm at Brokenbury.
- 3.2 That Cabinet recommends to Council that up to £2,750,000 of prudential borrowing be approved subject to securing a unit rate per MWh that exceeds the loan repayments, covers projected maintenance and other operational and equipment replacement costs and provides an appropriate surplus per annum over the life of the scheme commensurate with level of risk.



- 3.3 That the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council, Finance Director and Cabinet Member for Finance should review and agree the final business plan after the EPC tender and PPA stage are complete and subject to that agreement is then authorised to agree and finalise the detailed terms and enter into contract with SWW or another purchaser of the electricity.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1: Exempt appendix – financial summary

Appendix 2: Exempt - The previous May 2020 Cabinet papers with appendices.

## **Background Documents**

Cabinet Paper 19<sup>th</sup> May 2020 *“Briefing Document for creation of solar farm on land at Brokenbury funded from the Economic Growth Fund to assist with the Council’s Climate Change Strategy.”*

### 1. Introduction

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- 1.1 On 19 May 2020 the cabinet approved funding for a solar farm at Brokenbury. The title of the report that went to cabinet is *Briefing Document for creation of solar farm on land at Brokenbury funded from the Economic Growth Fund to assist with the Council's Climate Change Strategy*.

The cabinet approved the following:

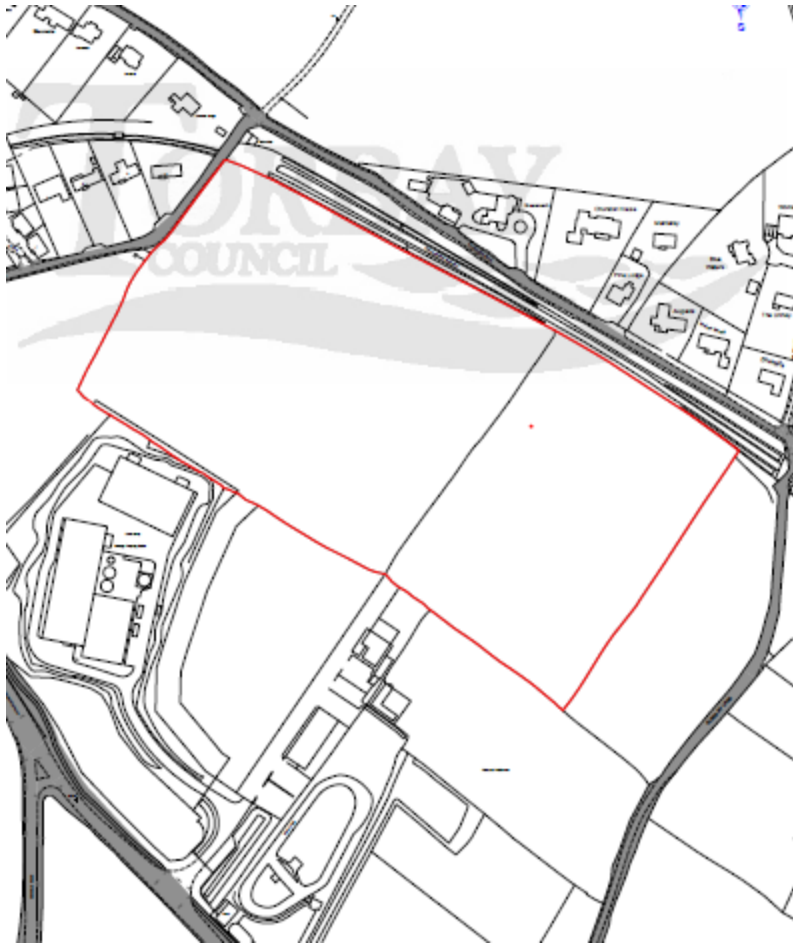
*6.1 That the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Chief Finance Officer be authorised to approve the detailed business case once the design and due diligence phase has been complete and in any event must meet the financial criteria set for the Economic Growth Fund*

*6.2 That, subject to 6.1 is approved that up to £2,750,000 from the Economic Growth Fund be allocated to develop a solar farm on either the 10acre or 16.66acrea site at Brokenbury Farm. Any development is subject to due diligence.*

*6.3 That the Chief Executive be authorised to agree and finalise the detailed terms with SWW, or another purchaser of the electricity.*

Since the original approval the Economic Growth Fund is no longer in existence and due to the high level of existing Council borrowing, and viability and affordability issues across a number of approved capital projects, the Council has renewed its approach to setting a Capital Investment Plan for 2024/25, only detailing the specific stages, (gateways), of individual projects based on the corresponding funding available. To provide a greater understanding of the deliverability, and timing, of progressing key work, the Council has adopted an approach whereby initial funding is only allocated to projects to progress them to either Outline, or Final Business Case stage. This approach is intended to provide greater control over the Capital Programme.

- 1.2 Up to date financial projections which include total scheme cost (currently estimated at £2,275,000) confirm that the project remains within the previously approved £2,750,000 and subject to the agreed unit price a surplus can be made.
- 1.3 The two fields at Brokenbury (edged red below) are located off Bridge Road and to the north and east of the Southwest Water (SWW) treatment plant in Churston. The fields extend to 16.66 acres.



- 1.4 The previous cabinet paper (Appendix 2) from May 2020 explains that a private wire solar scheme at the pair of fields at Brokenbury can provide power to the adjacent Southwest Water treatment plant.
- 1.5 Planning consent has been obtained on 18.11.22 reference P/2021/0658. This is for a 2MWp solar farm. The consent has been granted for a 3-year time period whereby work must have started (but not completed). The below plan forms part of the planning consent and shows the location of the solar panels in blue.



- 1.6 A grid connection to export power up to 499kv has been accepted in December 2021. This allows the private wire from the solar farm to connect to the water treatment works whilst

using the existing grid connection for any export of excess power into the national grid capped at 499kv. The solar farm has been designed to meet the power requirements of the treatment works but at times there may be excess power that the treatment works cannot use which can be exported into the national grid.

- 1.7 The Heads of Terms (HoTs) for the Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) have been signed by both parties. They are not legally binding but do show a commitment toward the project and enable the Power Purchase Agreement discussions to proceed. Legal advice received in relation to the next phase is that the Power Purchase Agreement should only be signed in tandem with the EPC and O&M contract. One should not be signed without the other and both must accord with the obligations of the other. Solicitors are advising on the commercial EPC contract and the Power Purchase Agreement.
- 1.8 As the HOTS have developed it is clear that the end user wants confidence of delivery and there will be performance expectations set out in the agreement which will include matters such as the performance of the solar panels and the power output provided, commissioning of the installation within an agreed period with potential for termination if not achieved by a set date, and losses if the agreement is terminated
- 1.9 The financial appraisals to date have been produced to test different unit prices for the solar power to be sold. The unit price will be agreed through the Power Purchase Agreement. The Power Purchase Agreement can progress now the HOTS are signed. In principle the terms upon which the power would be sold to the end user are:
  1. A 25-year power purchase agreement (PPA). This is confirmed in the signed HOTS.
  2. The end user will buy 100% of all power generated from the planning approved site. A unit price of £ per MWh is stated within the HOTS although once the procurement is complete and the final build costs are known there may be a need to revisit this.
  3. Torbay Council will develop the solar array at its own cost, estimated at £2,275,000 (the EPC and O&M tender has not been run yet which will constitute the biggest cost to the scheme).
  4. Based on the planning consented scheme the end user would pay Torbay Council for the power the solar farm would generate, over a 25-year period. The unit price will be index linked over the 25 years. The unit price has not been agreed yet and would need to be agreed through the Power Purchase Agreement (PPA). Before the PPA can be drafted for a final time and signed, a successful EPC and O&M tender process must be completed with a final tender price agreed which will demonstrate the viability of the project.
- 1.10 The end user will be contractually obliged to purchase 100% of the power produced by the solar farm at the rate agreed.

- 1.11 The solar panels typically have a useable life span of up to 40 years. The efficiency of the panels reduces with their age. Typically, they are guaranteed to achieve 80 to 85% efficiency after 25 years. Degradation will be fully modelled as part of the due diligence during the tender stage with the EPC and O&M contractor.
- 1.12 After 25 years the PPA with the end user could be renegotiated but this not guaranteed. As such a full repayment model is set over the 25 yr contract period.
- 1.13 All of the capital required to develop the solar farm will be repaid over the 25yr term, matching the length of the agreement and therefore if there is a new agreement post yr 25 then the surplus to the Council from year 26 will be higher as the loan will have been repaid.

## 2. Options under consideration

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- 2.1 Build out the planning consented scheme after negotiating the Power Purchase Agreement and receiving EPC and O&M tender responses which confirm that the scheme is viable.
- 2.2 As an alternative to the private wire connection with an end user there is the potential to sell the renewable power direct to the national grid.

The wider grid network has limited capacity. The earliest possible connection may not be until 2028 but this is likely to extend out to 2036 when more capacity within the network is expected. The issue with the wider network is that it needs upgrading to be able to handle significant extra capacity. Such upgrades delay the timeframe for a connection to be made. In addition to the programme delays there are also financial considerations. To connect to the grid will cost at least £250k (Sep 21 estimate – this is likely to be more now). Furthermore the unit price when feeding into the national grid is likely to be considerably less when compared to a private wire end user scenario which would make the project unviable.

## 3. Financial Opportunities and Implications

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- 3.1 The Council had previously earmarked £2,750,000 from the Economic Growth Development Fund, however this was some years ago and following Council approval of the Capital budget prudential borrowing is now required as opposed to the use of the growth fund.
- 3.2 The next phase of work will consist of procurement EPC and O&M contractor and is estimated to require a budget of £42,900. This will include a period of technical design with the selected preferred supplier. Following this technical stage a Full Business Case (FBC) will be submitted and approved by CGB as a final viability check before committing to a contract.

- 3.3 The project and all its remaining phases are within the previously approved budget. The money will be borrowed on the Public Works Loan Board. The capital cost summary and ongoing revenue costs are detailed at exempt Appendix 1
- 3.4 The financial loans costs are repaid over the 25 year PPA period. The unit price charged for the electricity will cover the Councils loan repayment costs and further details of this can be found in the exempt financial summary appendix 1.

## 4. Legal Implications

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- 4.1 The first draft of the Power Purchase Agreement is currently being drafted by the end user. In principle the terms upon which the power would be sold to the end user are:
- A 25-year power purchase agreement (PPA). This is confirmed in the HOTS.
  - The end user will buy 100% of all power generated from the planning approved site. A unit price of is stated within the HOTS.
  - Torbay Council will develop the solar array at its own cost, estimated at £2,275,000 (the EPC and O&M tender has not been run yet which will constitute the biggest cost to the scheme).
  - Based on the planning consented scheme end user will pay Torbay Council for the power the solar farm would generate. The unit price has not yet been finalised but the amount charged will be in excess of the Councils loan repayments and running costs.

## 5. Engagement and Consultation

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- 5.1 Public consultation for the project has been carried out in line with the usual planning application process.
- 5.2 The key stakeholder and end user of the renewable energy, has been closely engaged with both during the strategic work up of the project which is ongoing.
- 5.3 A comms plans will be produced by Torbay Council comms team once a committed start on site date is defined. This will likely include local news and social media messages which will be updated as we progress through key stages of delivery.

## 6. Purchasing or Hiring of Goods and/or Services

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- 6.1 The solar project is at a stage where an EPC and O&M contractor must be appointed through a tender process in order to progress but can only be appointed in tandem to the signing of the Power Purchase Agreement.
- 6.2 These contractors would then be responsible for acquiring the various components and delivering the scheme. .

### Market analysis

- 6.3 The solar consultant has looked at comparable solar scheme costs that are reflected in the financial appraisal. The comparable solar farms are of a similar MW rating to the Councils to 2MWp scheme. The comparable schemes are either live or recently completed.
- 6.4 The costs from the comparable schemes provided by the solar consultant have informed the build costs contained within the financial appraisal.
- 6.5 The operating costs have been discussed with the solar consultant who has provided advice on comparable sized schemes. The O&M contract will be initially provided by the EPC contractor for a period of 2 years. After 2 years should the council be happy it could reappoint the same contractor or look to appoint another contractor.

### Route to market

- 6.6 The Councils procurement team have identified the CCS framework as having a lot specific for EPC and O&M contractors. The solar consultant has reviewed the list of contractors on the CCS Framework. The CCS Framework has been approved as a compliant and appropriate route to market by the procurement team. There is no cost for the Council to use the framework. The cost is passed on to the contractor which will be reflected in the contractor's tender response.
- 6.7 Using the framework ensures there has already been an element of pre selection using robust quality and price criteria and furthermore reduces the number of potential bidders to a more manageable amount.
- 6.8 Using this framework is more likely to produce more committed responses from providers on the framework than in an open competition procedure where it is common to receive interest with no real potential behind them. As we will know the details of potential bidders in advance of the procurement process commencing targeted market engagement activities can be undertaken to establish the potential level of respondents.

## 7. Tackling Climate Change

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- 7.1 The following text is an extract from the Council's Climate Change Strategy which remains in force:

*Climate change is having a major impact on our planet. On 24 June 2019, Torbay Council declared a 'Climate Emergency'. Torbay Council is a partner of and supports the work of the Devon Climate Emergency Response Group, which is aiming to produce a collaborative Devon-wide response to the climate emergency to help us get to net zero carbon emissions by 2050 at the latest and also prepare Devon for the necessary adaptation to infrastructure and services required to respond to climate change.*

- 7.2 Torbay Council's current Energy and Climate Change Strategy for Torbay describes how we aim to help minimize the economic, social and environmental costs of climate change in the Bay by demonstrating leadership and providing encouragement in working toward emission reductions and resilience to our changing climate.
- 7.3 The UK central government also has its net zero commitments called: Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener. This strategy sets out policies and proposals for decarbonising all sectors of the UK economy to meet Central Governments net zero target by 2050. Renewable energy including solar power forms part of this strategy.
- 7.4 The solar farm would allow the end user to buy and use sustainable electricity generated on Torbay Council owned land to power its site. Its site serves residents throughout Torbay. It would be a positive step, towards meeting the targets set out in the Climate Change Strategy.
- 7.5 The project will contribute to Torbay's net zero target by reducing our carbon footprint by 458.75 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> a year or 11,468.75 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> over a 25-year period. These figures are approximate based on average sunlight.

## 8. Associated Risks

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- 8.1 If the end user does not sign the PPA there will be abortive costs. To date £212,240.87 has been spent with a further £25,417.49 committed. The next phase is estimated to cost £42,900 leading to potential overall abortive costs of £280,557. There are no competing private wire schemes in the area. Negotiations have been positive throughout and it is considered that this scenario is unlikely.
- 8.2 The EPC contract and PPA contract must be signed in tandem to ensure the obligations within each can be met when viewed in the round. This will involve some co-ordination internally and externally and potentially could add time to the programme. Progress has been slow during the HOTS discussion.



- 8.3 Inflation has meant that the longer it has taken to deliver the solar farm the higher the build costs, further prolongation of the programme will increase the scheme costs further.
- 8.4 The end user has made obligations within the HOTS that need to be reflected in any unit price agreement. The figures (£) will be negotiated through the Power Purchase Agreement. The greater the requested obligations the greater the unit price requested by the Council to cover the associated risks. The Council has considered fire risk. The transformer station design will be robust in consideration of fire suppression. A fire detection system (sprinklers) can be incorporated into the transformer station. The EPC contractor when carrying out the detailed design work will look at the overall design to reduce fire risk. The O&M contractor will ensure regular inspections are made on site. These actions will reduce fire risk and the likelihood of liquidated damages on the basis of the solar farm not being operational.

## 9. Equality Impacts - Identify the potential positive and negative impacts on specific groups

	Positive Impact	Negative Impact & Mitigating Actions	Neutral Impact
Older or younger people			x
People with caring Responsibilities			x
People with a disability			x
Women or men			x
People who are black or from a minority ethnic background (BME) (Please note Gypsies / Roma are within this community)			x
Religion or belief (including lack of belief)			x
People who are lesbian, gay or bisexual			x
People who are transgendered			x
People who are in a marriage or civil partnership			x

Women who are pregnant / on maternity leave			x
Socio-economic impacts (Including impact on child poverty issues and deprivation)			x
Public Health impacts (How will your proposal impact on the general health of the population of Torbay)	Clean energy will prevent the use of fossil fuel alternative and help to sustain a cleaner atmosphere and environment for all in the local area.		

## 10. Cumulative Council Impact

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10.1 None

## 11. Cumulative Community Impacts

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11.1 None

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted