

Torbay Council
Corporate Plan 2013 – 2015

Working together for a Healthy, Prosperous and Happy Bay

Foreword

It was a privilege to be elected Mayor of Torbay in May 2011 and the time since has proved to be an exceptionally challenging period as the UK copes with austerity measures. However, we have still been able to make good progress in turning around the fortunes of this truly wonderful part of the country. We can look back with pride on what we have achieved through positive work that has been undertaken by fellow elected members, council staff and partner organisations for the benefit of Torbay.

Perhaps the most significant announcement during 2012 was the Government's green light for the building of the South Devon Link Road, which will play such a crucial part in driving forward Torbay's economic prosperity.

To say that this £110 million road, which will bypass Kingskerswell, has been a long-awaited scheme is something of an understatement, as it was around half a century ago that its need was first identified. Work is already well underway with completion expected in 2015.

The highly congested road from Newton Abbot has hampered our economic prospects over the years, but the new road, which is expected to lead to the creation of nearly 8,000 jobs, 3,600 of them in Torbay, will enable us to attract new businesses to Torbay.

The past year also saw the completion of the main phase of the £4.8 million improvement scheme at Tweenaway Cross in Paignton, another area that had previously suffered from traffic congestion with an adverse effect on the area's economy.

The physical environment of Torbay continues to be a source of pride for residents and visitors. Torbay's regeneration projects combined with our commitment to maintaining our high cleaning standards will further develop that civic pride. We have been able to fund repairs to the promenade to enable it to be open for all to enjoy in the season; to plant new iconic palm trees and invest a further £250,000 into marketing the Bay.

Torbay is a vibrant and forward thinking resort, attracting visitors of all interests, from people looking for art and culture to marine enthusiasts. We host numerous maritime events throughout the year, from powerboat racing to cruise ships, and we are looking forward to building on this success to attract events of all kinds that have a positive direct economic impact on local businesses, reinforcing the message that the English Riviera is a great place to live, work, visit and invest in.

There is no doubt that the coming years will continue to be difficult ones. We are re-examining everything we do and how we do it to ensure that the work we do for the Torbay community is focused on their priorities and provides value for money.

Gordon Oliver
Mayor of Torbay

Introduction

The Corporate Plan sets out the main strategic challenges facing Torbay Council and our plans for addressing them. In a difficult economic climate, there are difficult decisions to make. By 2015 we will have up to 30% less funding from central government, but at the same time we have increasing demand for some of our core services. As a Council we are setting clear priorities for the future and we are determined to prioritise our spending where it has the greatest impact. So far we have sought to protect funding to the front line with approximately £2 million of our savings for 2013/14 coming from efficiencies in the delivery of existing services.

Against this background the Council continues to deliver good services to residents:

- Princess Promenade is now open to the public for the first time since 2006.
- Torbay has benefited from a variety of flagship affordable housing schemes with thirty-five new homes delivered through partnership working with housing associations and many more in the pipeline.
- Torbay Development Agency, through its ongoing support of businesses housed in its South West Innovation Centres, has created over 100 new jobs over the last 12 months for residents of Torbay.
- Parkfield, Torbay's flagship youth and activities centre, has been completed following a successful bid for £4.8 million from the Government's MyPlace programme.
- Through support from the European Development Fund, Torbay Council and the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, a £2.85 million sensitive regeneration and restoration of Cockington Court has been carried out.

Torbay Council will continue to support the most vulnerable, for example providing better support for families with complex needs.

By supporting inward investment, we have secured government funding for the building of the South Devon Link Road and to ensure that Torbay continues to prosper we will focus on developing skills and employment programmes for young people, support enterprise and provide opportunities for residents to acquire skills.

Across three themes we are ensuring that services are targeted in securing a healthy, prosperous and happy Torbay.

- **Investing in the future**
 - Develop a successful economy and improve job prospects
 - Ensure that every child has access to a good school, and target support to ensure all young people reach their potential
 - Invest to improve quality of life and reduce long term costs to the community

- **Protecting the Vulnerable**
 - Invest in early intervention and prevention to reduce the number of children and families experiencing complex problems
 - Protect the most vulnerable people from avoidable harm or abuse
 - In adult social care, offer greater personalisation for service users and support residents to live healthy and independent lives

- **Spending less money to greater effect**
 - Target resources on our priorities
 - Increase efficiencies
 - Make tough choices through disinvestment in low priority areas

As we look forward to 2014 and beyond, with further reductions in funding and the need to make larger cuts, the opportunities to make budget reductions across the board diminishes. The Council will need to make choices about what to fund and what not to fund. Other options and completely new ways of working will need to be considered as changes in operational productivity or efficiency alone are unlikely to provide the level of savings required. To meet the challenges ahead we will need to make difficult choices about what to invest in and what to cut in order to achieve the radical efficiencies required.

Financial Assumptions

Local government has experienced a disproportionate share of the spending cuts in comparison with other public sector organisations. The cuts to local government funding will carry on as the Government continues with its deficit reduction plan.

The publication of a two year funding settlement for local government in December 2012 will enable the Council to develop its plans for the future with a degree of certainty.

Significant changes in government policy such as welfare reform, the collection of business rates and the implications of the Localism Act and the ongoing pressures placed on us due to an ageing population will put additional strain on Council finances.

Involving the public

We recognise that some of the choices will result in closing down or reducing services that we currently provide, but it also provides an opportunity to redefine what and how services are provided. To do this we need to ensure that the public generally and users of specific services are informed and involved in re-shaping services. In order to support this we will:

- Make more information available about the services we currently provide, including our arms length organisations, contracted services, and the financial support we give to organisations in Torbay.
- Ensure that service users are consulted at the stage when proposals for services are being developed.
- Ensure that members of the public and service users have sufficient time to consider proposals for changes in services and they can feedback their views in a number of ways.
- Encourage and support members of the public to engage with the political decision making process.

Investing in the future

Develop a successful economy and improve job prospects

We will achieve this through:

- Jobs-led regeneration focusing on specific sectors
- Creating the right environment for inward investment
- Continuing to work towards completion of the South Devon Link Road
- Lobbying to improve rail services
- Continuing to support town centres Business Improvement Districts
- Revitalising the retail offer in the town centres
- Working towards creating a sustainable and flourishing leisure, culture and tourism sector that is open to residents and visitors
- Making it easier to get around the Bay by developing integrated transport where feasible

Measures for success:

- Completion of Torre Abbey Phase Two
- Keeping our key public spaces clean
- Outline business cases prepared for further investment in innovation centres.
- Completion of a feasibility study for a third harbour
- An adopted Local Plan by September 2013
- Adopted Neighbourhood Plans for Torquay, Paignton and Brixham by September 2013
- Completion of highways capital projects – including South Devon Link road by the end of 2015
- Increased investment from businesses, Government and the European Union
- An increase in new business start ups
- Increasing business in our three towns
- Maximise opportunities for job creation including through joint planning with neighbouring authorities, and investing in a “Jobs Fund”

Investing in the future

Ensure that every child has access to a good school and target support to ensure all young people reach their potential

We will achieve this through:

- Raising skills levels by working with schools, South Devon College and Universities to meet the standards set by Department for Education for attainment and attendance
- Working with partners, encourage public and private sectors to develop employment of apprentices
- Supporting early years settings and schools to improve standards
- Providing support to children and young people who are at risk of underachievement
- Supporting schools to become academies where they choose to do so

Measures for success;

- Improvements in the attainment of children and young people at Key Stage 2 and GCSE
- Improvement in the attainment of vulnerable children and young people
- After statutory school age, young people are either in further education, training or employment

Investing in the future

Invest to improve quality of life and reduce long term costs to the community

We will achieve this through;

- Adhering to sympathetic regeneration
- Continuing to work on the Closing the Gap Strategy and roll out to other areas by involving communities
- Reducing the negative impact of alcohol, obesity, tobacco and drugs on our communities
- Reducing teenage pregnancy
- Promoting sport and outdoor activity to improve health and wellbeing.
- Working towards keeping crime low by:
 - Maintaining focus on the night-time economy
 - Working with the Police Commissioner for resources to ensure crime levels remain low and people feel safe
 - Jointly engaging and involving communities to resolve local issues in neighbourhoods
- Planning for the future supply and demand of energy for the Bay
- Reducing local greenhouse gas emissions
- Ensuring an appropriate supply of quality housing within communities
- Continuing to create a safe environment for all residents and visitors
- Continuing to work with our partner agencies to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities
- Improving opportunities for people with dependency issues and maintaining timely and effective access to services

Measures for success;

- Increasing numbers of people taking part in physical activity, including walking and cycling
- Sports clubs and voluntary organisations are able to manage their own facilities and access external funding

We will also play our part in working with other agencies to;

- Keep levels of crime low to enable people to feel safe in their homes and in public places
- Ensure fatalities and serious injuries from road traffic accidents remain low
- Increase in healthy life expectancy, particularly in our most deprived wards
- Reduce smoking during pregnancy
- Provide drug users with access effective treatment
- Reduce alcohol related admissions to hospital
- Reduce levels of obesity

Protecting the vulnerable

Invest in early intervention and prevention to reduce the number of children and families experiencing complex problems

We will achieve this through;

- With partners, using the principles of Early Intervention and Early Prevention in supporting communities
- Engaging with communities in rolling out locality working and community budgets as part of localism
- Supporting families with young children through universal services such as children's centres
- Continuing to work with our partner agencies to support families in need
- Developing of an Intensive Family Support Service (IFSS) to support families with complex needs
- Providing targeted support to families through the Family Intervention Project (FIP)
- Implementing Community Budgets to support families with complex needs
- Supporting people to improve their skills and confidence to gain employment

Measures of success;

- Improved school attendance
- Successful delivery of payments by results for families with complex needs

We will also play our part in working with other agencies to;

- Reduce the teenage conception rate
- Keep levels of crime and anti-social behaviour low
- Reduce the number of people claiming out of work benefit payments
- Deliver reductions in the cost of families with complex problems to the public purse

Protecting the vulnerable

Protect the most vulnerable people from avoidable harm or abuse

We will achieve this through;

- Continuing to improve Children and Adults Safeguarding
- Improving our support for vulnerable children
- Improving our assessment processes for children at risk
- Ensuring staff are clear about what to do when faced with an incident of abuse or where they suspect that a vulnerable adult is being abused or neglected
- Implementing evidence based programmes that have been proved to work in tackling the causes of social problems rather than simply dealing with their consequences
- Working effectively with key partners in information sharing and delivery

Measures for success;

- Continue to improve the timeliness of initial and core assessments for children and young people referred to Children's Services
- Reduce the number of children and young people who are subject to a Child Protection Plan or become Looked After
- Continue to increase in the timeliness of placements for children in care who were placed for adoption
- Reduce the numbers of children subject to a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time

Protecting the vulnerable

In adult social care, offer greater personalisation for service users and support residents to live healthy and independent lives

We will achieve this through;

- 'Self Directed Support' enabling individuals who are assessed as having social care support needs to have a clear, up front allocation of money that they can use to design and purchase the support they need
- Supporting people to retain their independence, allowing them to live in their own homes for longer.
- Through short term intervention, helping people recover the skills and confidence they need to stay in their home longer

Measures for success;

- A reduction in the number of people placed in residential and nursing homes
- People feel involved in the delivery of their own care
- An improvement in the quality of people's lives
- Carers feel they are supported

Spending less money to greater effect

Target resources on our priorities

We will achieve this through;

- Monitoring the TOR2 contract for improved recycling, waste and clean streets
- Generating income to support the delivery of priority services
- Carrying out an urgent review of grants and loans to businesses and voluntary sector organisations
- Ensuring that funding is subject to service level agreements supporting the delivery of Council priorities
- Ensuring that sustainable business plans are developed for Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust and the Riviera International Conference Centre

Measures for success;

- Achieving reductions in expenditure and continuing to provide services in our priority areas

Spending less money to greater effect

Increase efficiencies

We will achieve this through;

- Continuing to provide value for money for our communities by:
 - Reducing costs/increasing income/improving productivity so increases in council tax are kept low
 - Reviewing the structures of the council so they are still fit for purpose.
- Promoting democracy, transparency and civic engagement, and when able to, re-look at the Mayoral System of Governance.
- Reviewing contractual arrangements to ensure that they are being delivered effectively in our priority areas as well as providing value for money
- Reviewing our own operating structure to reduce back office costs, avoid duplication and increase efficiencies
- Promoting and encouraging greater use of online access to Council services by the community
- Making effective use of the Council's assets
- Where assets are no longer required by the Council, finding alternative uses through sale or lease

Measures for success;

- Reducing the number of offices that the Council operates from
- Income from Council assets is maximised
- Savings are generated from all our services, including those that are contracted out
- Increase in the number of online transactions

Spending less money to greater effect

Make tough choices through disinvestment in low priority areas

We will achieve this through;

- Ensuring that our priority areas are supported by evidence from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Reviewing all of our services to ensure they are focusing on the Council's priorities
- Continuously reviewing of services and business plans
- Where a service or parts of a service do not support delivery of our priorities, engaging with the community with a view to making changes to service delivery, or to stop that activity

Measures for success;

- An up to date Joint Strategic Needs Assessment published annually
- Members of the community, including service users are involved in re-shaping and delivery of services

Glossary:

- **Child Protection Plan** - Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. Effective child protection is essential as part of wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- **Community Budgets** - Are a new way for local public service providers to work more effectively together. Community Budgets allow providers of local services to contribute to a shared fund, so they can co-ordinate their work more effectively and efficiently
- **Family Intervention Project** – The Family Intervention Project provides targeted support to those families that cause a disproportionate amount of issues (such as anti-social behaviour) in their neighbourhoods
- **Initial and Core Assessments** - An 'initial assessment' is defined as a brief assessment of any child who has been referred to social services with a request that services be provided whilst a 'core assessment' is defined as an in-depth assessment which addresses the central or most important aspects of the child's needs.
- **Intensive Family Support Service** – Time limited support to protect children and to maintain and strengthen family bonds, to stabilize a crisis situation, to increase the family's skills and competences, to facilitate the family's use of a variety of formal and informal helping resources
- **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment** – describes a process that identifies current and future health and wellbeing needs in light of existing services and informs future service planning taking into account evidence of effectiveness. Joint Strategic Needs Assessment identifies 'the big picture', in terms of the health and wellbeing needs and inequalities of a local population.
- **Local Plan** - The document sets out key issues, aspirations for the future, and policies for delivering and managing change over the next 20 years. The Local Plan will form the statutory basis for decisions on spatial planning within Torbay when Adopted. This Plan takes into account comments made on the Core Strategy Regulation 25 Consultation – Vision, Objectives and Growth in Torbay' (September 2009), which forms the basis of the Plan. It also builds on the ongoing engagement with Torbay's three Neighbourhood Forums.
- **Looked After Children** - The term 'looked after children and young people' means those looked after by the state, according to relevant national legislation. This includes those who are subject to a care order or temporarily classed as looked after on a planned basis for short breaks or respite care. The term is also used to describe 'accommodated' children and young people who are looked after on a voluntary basis at the request of, or by agreement with, their parents. We refer to these children as "children in care".

- **Neighbourhood Plan** - The Localism Act 2011 introduced new powers for people to make neighbourhood plans and neighbourhood planning orders, with reduced interference from central government. These new powers are in addition to existing opportunities for community involvement, which are already part of the planning system.
- **Self Directed Support** - Self-directed support is about people being in control of the support they need to live the life they choose. This is often referred to as 'personalisation' or 'personal budgets', it's about giving people real power and control over their lives.