

Meeting: Cabinet **Date:** 19 March 2024

Wards affected: All Wards in Torbay

Report Title: Serious Violence Strategy

When does the decision need to be implemented? 20 March 2024

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1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The Police Crime Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 introduced the serious violence duty which requires specified authorities to work together to understand and address serious violence in their local area. One of the key elements of the Duty is to create and publish a Serious Violence Strategy that is shared by the specified authorities. This report sets out the proposed Serious Violence Strategy (as set out at Appendix 1).
- 1.2 The Serious Violence Strategy is a partnership document owned by the Community Safety Partnership (Safer Torbay) and agreed and delivered on by all the specified authorities (Councils, Police, Integrated Care Boards, Probation, Youth Justice Services and Fire).
- 1.3 The Strategy has been developed using collated data, information and feedback from services and communities across Torbay. It has been written in collaboration with the other specified authorities and Community Safety Partnerships across the peninsula to ensure a consistent commitment and approach to serious violence both in Torbay and across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly as a whole.
- 1.4 At the point of writing the other five specified authorities have agreed the Serious Violence Strategy.

2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

- 2.1 The proposals in this report help us to deliver this ambition by providing an agreed framework including principles and priorities to understand and reduce violence across Torbay and improve outcomes for individuals, families and communities as well as supporting Torbay to be and feel safer.
- 2.2 Having an area that is safer and feels safer will support people and the economy to thrive and by tackling the drivers of violence we will address challenges such as poverty, deprivation and vulnerability.

3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

1. That the Serious Violence Strategy, as set out at appendix 1, be approved.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Serious Violence Strategy

Background Documents

Serious Violence Duty Guidance - [Serious Violence Duty - Statutory Guidance](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/671442/Serious_Violence_Duty_-_Statutory_Guidance.pdf)
([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk))

Supporting Information

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Serious Violence Duty is a new Duty placed on specified authorities, including Councils to understand the profile and causes of serious violence locally and to implement a strategy and plan to tackle and reduce violence.
- 1.2 The Serious Violence Strategy is the overarching framework under which specified authorities will come together with other key stakeholders including businesses and communities to develop clear delivery plans aimed at developing and delivering an evidence-based response to reducing serious violence in Torbay.
- 1.3 Currently we do not have a collective strategy or plan in relation to approaching serious violence and the strategy and supporting strategic needs assessment provide this, enabling a co-ordinated response which keeps communities at the centre.
- 1.4 There is no additional cost to implementation. The Strategy focuses on working differently to address violence. It does however (along with the delivery plan that will be developed once agreed) give clarity on needs and evidence-based approaches that can inform effective commissioning as and when funding becomes available.

2. Options under consideration

- 2.1 The Strategy has been developed using collated data, information and feedback from services and communities across Torbay. As such, we are able to develop a locally informed approach that has sustainable impact.
- 2.2 The Strategy has been agreed by all of the other specified authorities and in principle by Safer Torbay (pending agreement by all specified authorities).
- 2.3 Under the Duty the Strategy must be agreed and published by the 31st January 2024. Unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances this has already not been met.
- 2.4 If the Strategy is not agreed, reasons will have to be given to Safer Torbay and the other specified authorities. Agreement will then need to be reached on the required changes for the Strategy to be re-drafted and go back through each specified authority's decision-making process for approval.
- 2.5 Once the Strategy is fully agreed by all specified authorities Safer Torbay will formally adopt the document as a partnership document and a delivery plan will be developed.

3. Financial Opportunities and Implications

- 3.1 There is no additional cost to agreeing the Strategy. As outlined above the work on the Strategy and plan will assist evidence-based commissioning when funding is available /identified.
- 3.2 Each specified authority has a Serious Violence Lead who works with partners on serious violence. For Torbay Council this resource sits in the Safer Communities Team in Community Safety.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 This Duty was introduced by the Police Crime Sentencing, and Courts Act 2022. Due to not meeting timescales Torbay Council is currently in breach of a statutory Duty. To not sign up to the Strategy would mean a continuation of the breach.

5. Engagement and Consultation

- 5.1 The following pieces of work have been undertaken in the last 12-18 months to understand crime and violence in Torbay and have been used to inform the Strategy:
- Safer Torbay commissioned Peopletoo to undertake an audit and mapping exercise in relation to youth violence in Torbay. Part of this involved engaging key stakeholders including statutory and non-statutory services, community groups and young people to seek their views on what are the challenges and drivers that lead to violence in the local area and what works locally to overcome these.
 - For Safer Streets 4 Torbay Council and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner undertook a Resident's Survey to understand how people felt about their safety in Torquay and what improvements were required.
 - Safer Communities have attended community partnership events and meetings to gain residents view on the challenges I relation to crime and violence in their areas and how these can be overcome.

6. Purchasing or Hiring of Goods and/or Services

- 6.1 Not applicable

7. Tackling Climate Change

- 7.1 Not applicable

8. Associated Risks

- 8.1 To not implement the Strategy would mean Torbay Council is breaching a statutory duty.
- 8.2 It would also hinder the partnerships work in gaining a collective understanding and delivering a consistent approach to violence, negatively impacting the partnership's ability to address violence in Torbay, having an adverse impact individuals, families and communities.

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	Yes		
People with caring Responsibilities	Yes		
People with a disability	Yes		
Women or men	Yes		
People who are black or from a minority ethnic background (BME) (Please note Gypsies / Roma are within this community)	Yes		
Religion or belief (including lack of belief)	Yes		
People who are lesbian, gay or bisexual	Yes		
People who are transgendered	Yes		
People who are in a marriage or civil partnership	Yes		
Women who are pregnant / on maternity leave	Yes		
Socio-economic impacts (Including impact on child poverty issues and deprivation)	Yes		

Public Health impacts (How will your proposal impact on the general health of the population of Torbay)	Yes		
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10. Cumulative Council Impact

10.1 None

11. Cumulative Community Impacts

11.1 None