

**Meeting:** Cabinet **Date:** 11 July 2024

**Wards affected:** [All wards](#)

**Report Title:** [Draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy \(public consultation\)](#)

**When does the decision need to be implemented?** [11 July 2024](#)

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## 1. Purpose of Report

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1.1 To launch the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy for public consultation. A 6-week public consultation will be launched, whereby views will be sought and considered prior to the final strategy being presented to Cabinet for recommendation to Council in December 2024.

## 2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

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- 2.1 The Homelessness Act 2002 requires local housing authorities to take strategic responsibility for tackling and preventing homelessness and consider the statutory guidance on homelessness strategies.
- 2.2 The Strategy is a legal requirement for the Council and is required to publish a strategy informed by a homeless review of its area, at least every 5 years.
- 2.3 The Strategy will better inform our communities, stakeholders and members about what the Council and its partners are doing about local homelessness priorities and issues.
- 2.4 The associated action plan, which will be developed following the public consultation on the Strategy, will give stakeholders and members a clear annual delivery plan on which performance can be monitored on a quarterly basis.
- 2.5 The proposals in this report help us to deliver our vision of a healthy, happy and prosperous Torbay through cross-organisational, collaborative working. It provides the structure against which the Council can develop other, more specific policies affecting its homelessness function.

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

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1. That the public consultation of the draft Torbay Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029, as set out in Appendix 1 be launched.

#### **Appendices**

**Appendix 1:** Draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

#### **Background Documents**

[Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Evidence Base 2024](#)

# Supporting Information

## 1. Introduction

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- 1.1 The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy is the over-arching strategic document focusing on the activities to address homeless in Torbay. It sits within the Council's policy framework and provides the context for other plans policies and strategies, such as the Housing Strategy and the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy.
- 1.2 The report will replace the existing Homeless and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025. Since the development of the current Strategy, produced before the pandemic, there have been significant changes within the landscape of housing and homelessness. As such the document reflects the current needs within Torbay and housing market.
- 1.3 An evidence review was undertaken to support the development of the strategy and is contained within a sperate document. This allows the strategy to be more focused and succinct.

## 2. Options under consideration

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- 2.1 There was no other option considered, the Homeless and Rough Sleeping Strategy is a policy framework document and therefore public consultation is a required.

## 3. Financial Opportunities and Implications

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- 3.1 There are no significant financial implications. Any financial commitments would be subject to further approval.

## 4. Legal Implications

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- 4.1 The document is a legal requirement with the current strategy due to be renewed in early 2025.

## 5. Engagement and Consultation

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- 5.1 The draft strategy has been developed in partnership with other interested parties and organisations though a series of workshops and discussions. These have been themed around youth homelessness, rough sleeping, and general homelessness, to enable focused conversations.
- 5.2 The workshops have included representatives from the voluntary sector, statutory organisation and other organisations with 67 people attending. Conversations have also

taken place with customers and pulled upon other engagement work that has been undertaken.

- 5.3 Following the sessions a proposed list of priorities and values were consulted upon to obtain further feedback.
- 5.4 Elected members were invited to all workshops and a dedicated session undertaken addressing all forms of homeless, to seek input into the development of the strategy.
- 5.5 With the production of the draft strategy wider public consultation will be undertaken between the 11 July to 30 August 2024.
- 5.6 The draft strategy will also be presented to the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Board on the 10 or 11 July.

## 6. Procurement Implications

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- 6.1 It is not anticipated that the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy itself will require the purchasing or hiring of goods and/or services. Should the Council wish to hire goods, or services to facilitate its strategic objectives, then more specific reports detailing this will be presented.

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

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- 7.1 There are no significant climate change implications. Any climate change implications would be subject review as part of the development of the associated action plan. Any resulting considerations are likely to result from the provision of accommodation.

## 8. Associated Risks

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- 8.1 Homelessness is a priority for Torbay Council and as such the strategy provides the framework for further development and coordination to achieve its ambitions.
- 8.2 The document is a legal requirement with the current strategy due to be renewed in early 2025.
- 8.3 The proposed timeframe for consultation between 11 July to 30 August 2024, enables the final document to be presented to Full Council in December 2024. This will enable the review to be concluded within the 5 year timeframe.

## 9. Equality Impact Assessment (DRAFT)

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>Torbay experiences above the England average for people who are homeless above 45-year-old.</p>	<p>The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy recognises that people tend to experience increased fragility as they age, and that safe secure accommodation is vital to ensure wellbeing.</p> <p>Age can also impact on the extent of life skills to maintain a tenancy and differential impact of Housing Benefit on affordability.</p>	<p>Equality implications will be continuously reviewed through the delivery of the strategy. Specific actions have been considered addressing youth homelessness.</p>	<p>To be confirmed in the development of the associated action plan.</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>It also recognises that good quality and safe accommodation is vital to ensure wellbeing for people who are already facing additional pressures.</p>	<p>Equality implications will be continuously reviewed through the delivery of the strategy.</p>	<p>To be confirmed in the development of the associated action plan.</p>
Disability	<p>In the 2021 Census, 23.8% of Torbay residents answered</p>	<p>The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy recognises that people with</p>	<p>Equality implications will be continuously</p>	<p>To be confirmed in</p>

	that their day-to-day activities were limited a little or a lot by a physical or mental health condition or illness.	disabilities and in particular learning disabilities face increased vulnerabilities when compared to the wider population. Safe secure, accessible accommodation is vital to ensure wellbeing when alleviating homelessness.	reviewed through the delivery of the strategy. Accessibility temporary accommodation for those with mobility issues will be included with the strategy.	the development of the associated action plan.
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.	Limited information exists about the number of transgender people experiencing homelessness, national data however suggests that trans people are more likely to experience rough sleeping and homelessness and experience wider safety concerns.	Services will work in a person centred and trauma informed manner to ensure that individual needs are met	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.	There is no differential impact anticipated.	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). Approx 11% of households that are homeless are single females with a child. A small proportion will be pregnant.	Pregnant women at risk of or experiencing homelessness that are not in appropriate or settled accommodation can face significantly greater health risks while unstably housed.	Services will work in a person centred and trauma informed manner to ensure that individual needs are met and that appropriate accommodation is provided.	To be confirmed in the development of the associated action plan.

Race	In the 2021 Census, 96.1% of Torbay residents described their ethnicity as white. This is a higher proportion than the Southwest and England. Black, Asian and minority ethnic individuals are more likely to live in areas of Torbay classified as being amongst the 20% most deprived areas in England.	The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy recognises that people who are from black, Asian or minority ethnic backgrounds are more likely to experience financial hardship.	Services will work in a person centred and trauma informed manner to ensure that individual needs are met	Not applicable.
Religion and belief	64.8% of Torbay residents who stated that they have a religion in the 2021 census.	There is no differential impact anticipated.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
Sex	51.3% of Torbay's population are female and 48.7% are male. Single males represent the highest general grouping of homeless applicants owed a relief duty at 54% and 22% for single females.	The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy recognises that families and households headed by females are more likely to experience financial hardship and be on lower income and thus, experience homelessness. Single females experiencing rough sleeping are also more vulnerable to wider exploitation.	Services will work in a person centred and trauma informed manner to ensure that individual needs are met.	To be confirmed in the development of the associated action plan.
Sexual orientation	In the 2021 Census, 3.4% of those in Torbay aged over 16 identified their sexuality as either Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or, used another term to describe their sexual orientation.	There is no differential impact.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Veterans	In 2021, 3.8% of residents in England reported that they had previously served in the	Veterans are recognised specifically within the Housing Act.	Services will work in a person centred and trauma informed manner	To be confirmed in the

	UK armed forces. In Torbay, 5.9 per cent of the population have previously serviced in the UK armed forces.		to ensure that individual needs are met and meet the requirements within the concordat.	development of the associated action plan.
<b>Additional considerations</b>				
Socio-economic impacts (Including impacts on child poverty and deprivation)	32% of Torbay residents living in an area amongst the 20% most deprived areas in England.	Approximately 27% of residents in Torbay live in private rented accommodation with loss of tenancy being the main reason for homelessness.	The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy recognises that socioeconomic factors are a key determinant in shaping an individual's housing situation and accessibility and therefore refers to the Housing Strategy.	To be confirmed in the development of the associated action plan.
Public Health impacts (Including impacts on the general health of the population of Torbay)	There is significant variation in health and wellbeing across the bay. In our most affluent areas residents can expect to live on average over eight years longer than those living in our more deprived communities.	The correlation between poor quality housing and health are well documented. A review of the evidence shows that Torbay has a higher than national average support for associated mental health assistance.	Services will work in a person centred and trauma informed manner to ensure that individual needs are met.	To be confirmed in the development of the associated action plan.
Human Rights impacts		The Council recognises that good quality housing and accommodation is vital to upholding human rights. Nobody should be criminalised for simply having nowhere to live.	Services will work in a person centred and trauma informed manner to ensure that individual needs are met.	To be confirmed in the development of the associated action plan.



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.	Young people, care experienced and those in families can all become homeless.	Specific actions have been considered addressing homelessness experienced by care experienced and young people. The provision of family temporary accommodation has also been address.	To be confirmed in the development of the associated action plan.
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## 10. Cumulative Council Impact

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- 10.1 Housing is integral to wellbeing, health and the economy. Effectively addressing homelessness is therefore instrumental in mitigating the impacts on other service delivery and seen as a preventative tool.
- 10.2 The strategy requires an integrated and holist implementation across the organisation both internally and with partners.

## 11. Cumulative Community Impacts

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- 11.1 The impact of homeless of our communities is significant. An effective strategy will have long last impacts.
- 11.2 The delivery also needs to be owned by external organisation both statutory and voluntary sector.