MINUTES OF TORQUAY NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM
Steering Group

Tuesday 9th December 2025, 6.30pm
At Torbay Communities Office

Officers of the Steering Group: Present Rodney Horder (Chair), Nigel Goodman (Treasurer), Julie Brandon (Communications)
Steering Group Members: Cllr Nicole Amil, Pat Bishop, Chris Smith, June Pierce, Anthony King, Beth Huntley (part)
Other: David Pickhaver and Tracy Brooks, Torbay Council Strategic Planning, Tracey Cabache - Torbay Communities (Minutes)

Item	
1.	**Minute taker:** Tracey Cabache
2.	**Apologies**: Mike Cowdery (Vice Chair), Margaret Forbes-Hamilton, Cllr Hazel Foster, Darren Cowell, Rose Millard, Carolyn Drew, Sally Allen-Gerard, Roger Carter, Alan Griffey
3	**Minutes of meeting 04 November 2025** These were approved.
4	**Matters arising** From Nov meeting: **ACTION: Adam Billings to make enquiries re the new Bus Shelter design on Babbacombe Rd** **ACTION: The Forum to work with Adam on the planned removal of historical or perceived historical lamp posts** **ACTION: All to come up with identifiable district retail areas and amend the Wellswood Shopfront Design guidance for their area** **ACTION: Rodney and Tracey to look at the CIL decision-making process.** **Re:** Re: BT hubs – **ACTION: Put loopholes on a future agenda.** From Oct meeting: Re Appeals – usually 30% allowed at the appeal – Inspectors – last quarter this has increased to 50%

	Need to challenge some of this. **ACTION: David to send the appeal summary to Rodney** **ACTION: David to feedback comments on the Planning Committee to Martin Brook.** Historical • Hollicombe – Sam Irvin (Torbay Council Affordable Housing) knows who owns the site, but the cost of development is currently prohibitive. Re Hollicombe – there are a lot of theories as to why this has not progressed, we need to determine if it is deliverable. **ACTION: Rodney to ask strategic planning for a written view.** **ACTION: Create 2 lists – one on sites that have not complied with planning consent and the other for sites with Planning Consent that have been left derelict. Use these lists to chase the Council. All to send content to Rodney.** **ACTION: Tracey and Rodney to work up some social media guidelines**
5.	**Local Plan Reg 18 Review** David Pickhaver and Tracy Brooks from Torbay Council Strategic Planning dept presented the overview of the Local Plan process. We are currently in the Regulation 18 consultation period and this is a genuine consultation. Suggestions and solutions are preferred in terms of feedback. We need the final version of the plan by Summer 2026 and the plan has to be submitted to the Secretary of state in Dec 2026. If we do not hit this deadline new regulations kick in so we would have another 30 month Local Plan development period, putting Torbay in a very vulnerable position. Govt wants to increase housing numbers and also have full coverage of Local Plans. Once you have a plan in place it lasts for 5 years – so if we have LGR the plan would still be in place. David's personal view is that the LGR process could almost been seen as a disincentive to making a plan – what is the point? Our current Local Plan is from 2012 to 2030. There was a discussion about the length of plan needed. We need a 5 year land supply, but the plans are set for longer period as they are strategic. They are regularly refreshed as they starts to be out of date What will be the impact of devolution? Not currently clear but it will still be the Govt who sets the housing targets. We can make a case that we cannot make the numbers – but we do not have the chance to set the numbers. Key points re the draft Plan are: • Presumption is brownfield development

- 80,000 square metres of employment space is needed. 28 hectares allocated.
- Govt's Housing target for Torbay is 950 a year – Torquay would be 500 a year
- The draft plan has 400 dwellings a year – 180 in Torquay
- Major growth areas – Edginswell, Caravan sites at Barton, Maidencombe area carried over from the last plan.
- They plans takes into account the Local environment, Natural character and Climate Change

It includes policies on....

- Transit sites
- Affordable housing
- Supported housing for older people
- Core Tourism Investment Areas – there was a discussion about reducing these but members felt these need to stay – but outside of these areas there are more flexible policies for change of use
- Shift the retail towards the Harbour areas. Freeing up top of town for residential.
- Healthy and Sustainable Communities – avoid a worsening areas of deprivation. Green spaces sports, need a new cemetery
- Sustainable transport – railway station at Edginswell back.
- Infrastructure - significant issue with flooding and Climate Change.
- Sewers/foul water in shared sewers – can lead to overflows esp at Hope's Nose. Surface water flooding into the sewers is the main issue.
- Net Zero by 2050.
- Trying to introduce higher than average building standards. Higher than legally required reduction of carbon omissions and solar panels.
- Landscape and natural environment, biodiversity eg Walls Hill which is SSSI, the sea etc
- Historic environment
- Design Policies (mostly rolling forward previous policies)
- Waste and minerals – trying to focus in Yalberton

Re: Consultation
Online Portal – create an account – this has more weight (only online)
Drop in events in January
Quick questionnaire – for people want to say one thing
Strength of the argument is as important as the number of objectors
We are happy to talk to the Community Partnerships – but less keen to present at a large public meeting as these can be dominated by single voices.

	End date 26th January. Suggest a webinar – agreed. Will be a challenge to fit in CP public meetings. This is the 3rd consultation we have done – and we are trying to deliver Community and Corporate Plan and the Town Centre Regeneration Plans all of which have also gone out for consultation. Put up signs on all of the sites would engage the community. What about Facebook live? Engagement at community centres etc. Need to make this come alive for people. If people want to make objections they need to look at NPPF Paragraph 11 – objections have to meet these terms – have to be a sustainable development Footnote 7 – key important interests eg CA, Habitats, Flood issues are the show stoppers Or a case can be made that the harm created outweighs the benefits? That is test we have to apply. **ACTION: Each Community Partnership area should look at the draft.** **ACTION: It was agreed the Forum summarised their responses but submit this through an online account.** The content of the draft Local Plan is a member decision. Not an Officer decision. If the officers have done that piece of work and sites cannot be excluded how can we influence this? There will be some sites – green, yellow, amber, red rag rated. It would be good for the Forum to particularly look at the amber sites. Material constraints – might need further investigation. Current rag ratings are on the Council website. Planning judgement – it is a consultative exercise. Preferred option is the next stage in July. Then Regulation 19 consultation – more formal re the tests and compliance. **General Comments from the Forum** Disappointment expressed that the Forums were not involved in this drafting.

	Torquay also has a rural hinterland - major green field developments will be avoided. Policy L1 – envelopes should be extended to Maidencombe, Edginswell and Cockington Why are we putting in the same sites that have not developed from the last plan eg the caravan sites. If they are not commercially viable now why put them in. Best to leave it in if they pass the test. Plan is going to 2045 – things can change dramatically. Question – have we considered building housing on top of industrial units. Can we go higher? More than 18 metres (6 stories) in height additional fire requirements due to Grenfell Tower fire, which can reduce viability. Empty properties? What is the Council doing about this in the Town Centre? We need more people to engage with this. Suggest we could focus on what has changed from the last plan and communicate this. Update on the NPPF due on the 18th December. The Forum then reviewed the proposed housing sites – comments are attached as Appendix 1. ACTIONS are embedded in the Appendix. **ACTION: All to look at the following and report back to Rodney** a. Table 8 Confirm Employment land E1.T1 to 6) b. Policy TO2 Confirm CTIAs on Policies Map c. Table 10 Confirm Shopping Centre Hierarchy d. Table 11 Confirm Neighbourhood Centres e. Policy ER4 – SuDS and slopes? f. Table 14 – Confirm ULPAs Policy L1 – no Village Envelope for Edginswell and Cockington – these are in the Neighbourhood Plan so agreed to be in the Local Plan also. Policy L6 – Greenspaces not on Policies Map – to be allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan
6.	**CIL** **a. Torquay Tennis Club**

	It was agreed that we need the CIL application process to focus on delivering aspirations from the Neighbourhood Plan as the funds currently available are now only £46,487. There are some additional funds coming shortly - £117,707.78 over a number of tranches. **ACTION: Rodney to communicate to the Tennis Club that we cannot consider their application currently**
7.	**Any other business** i) Maycliffe Julie has reported the windows, air con units, cladding none of which have planning consent. It was agreed the Forum should request some enforcement action. **ACTION: Rodney to write to enforcement** Julie has also reported the light pollution to Dave Parsons. ii) Singleton Gardens Rodney requested responses by Thursday. iii) Daleside Rodney to respond iv) Meadfoot shelter is now to be repaired by SWISCO which is good news.
	Next meetings - 06 January (avoid Cabinet clash), 04 February (*NB Revised from 10)* **, 10 March 2026**