

# Torbay Strategic Partnership

## UPDATE

December 2008



## Torbay Family Intervention Project

Strong partnership working is at the heart of the Torbay Family Intervention Project (FIP). The project is based within Safer Communities Torbay and works in partnership with Torbay Council Children Services including the Youth Offending Team.

Torbay's FIP aims to reduce anti-social behaviour and offending behaviour in the most challenging families. The project provides an innovative and proactive response to tackling the small minority of families who cause a disproportionate amount of anti-social and offending behaviour in their community.

The team consists of one senior practitioner and six key workers who will work very closely with a small number of families, in a very intensive way, which can be daily if necessary. Each family will sign a contract that outlines the levels of change that is required from each family member and the support they will receive in return to help them achieve this.

The project started working with families in October and already the key workers have seen positive changes. One mum has attended the dentist for the first time in 30 years and has also registered her children who have all received a full check up. Education and assistance around household budgeting has now enabled another mum to get to grips with the family's finances.

One young person who was at risk of being excluded from school is now more settled and enjoying their education; another is now part of a re-integration plan to re-engage with mainstream education following a very positive engagement with the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU)

Consistency and routines for families is very important. One family has now booked consistent appointments with the hospital around one child's physical disability; another child now sleeps in his own bed for the first time in 3 years. A family suffering from a poor diet has now started weekly food shops and mum has begun cooking home made meals for the first time.

The impact of the Family Intervention Project cannot be underestimated. Families are now being helped to make changes to their behaviour and to once again be part of their community. Over time, they will develop the required skills and access the right support to tackle their problems so they are able to deal with the challenges we all face in family life.



L-R Maria Evans, Lisa Walker and Ann Donnelly

## Commissioning update

Sue Lewis, Executive Head, People & Corporate is currently working with Torbay Strategic Partnership to think about their role as a major strategic commissioning body, with some key commissioning partnerships underneath the TSP to help deliver better outcomes for the people of Torbay, in line with our Community Plan. This represents a really exciting opportunity and has the potential for groundbreaking developments. If you would like to contact Sue to discuss this please contact her on 208420; Sue reports back on progress to TSP in the new year.

# Comprehensive Area Assessment update

## Increased awareness of learning opportunities and participation across the Bay

Torbay is one of ten local authorities across the country to be selected by the Audit Commission to pilot the new assessment before the model is finalised in early 2009.

The pilot did not cover the full intended scope of the CAA but focused on three areas – working with the Adult Care Trust, Equality and Diversity; with emphasis on how people access our services and capturing the local voice, with emphasis on how we consulted as part of developing the Community Plan.

It is important to note that the pilot was as much intended to try out the inspectorates new way of working as how we, as a partnership, are working to improve the quality of life in the Bay.

Throughout the summer the Audit Commission has been gathering evidence and consulting with TSP partners and other stakeholders to form a collective view about how well-run local services are and how effectively they use taxpayers' money. They focused on issues that are important to local people and their community, including: How safe is the area? What are the economic prospects for the area? How well are families supported? How healthy and well cared for are people?

The Audit Commission has now fed back its findings. Amongst other things, they identified the following as positive:

- there is a good understanding of community needs
- there is a clear set of priorities and ambitions
- generally low crime area
- drugs work is excellent
- good homelessness outcomes
- provision of new and affordable homes has been good especially for rent
- good support for carers and parents
- good community safety initiatives in deprived areas
- in terms of cleanliness, Torbay is kept well.

However, the partnership faces some significant challenges and has, or is in the process of, agreed improvement plans to address them. The three most important are:

- 1) The number of teenage (under 18) conceptions. The partnership was clearly already aware that this is a significant issue for Torbay and already has an improvement plan in place.
- 2) The rate of improvement of the quality of life for the most deprived people in Torbay. Again the partnership was already working in addressing this serious issue and in particular the Care Trust and the council are considering how to best focus our efforts to bring about change in the most deprived areas.
- 3) The partnership is unlikely to achieve the tough green targets we have set ourselves unless we work better together and include the private sector.



The partnership's Vice Chairman and private sector representative, Simon Wilson, has willingly agreed to lead on improving our performance in this area. The report recognised that the council has already done some good work in the area.

Simon went on to say, 'Whilst the CAA does not start until April 2009, this pilot has given us an early opportunity to focus on our most serious challenges. We will be monitoring our progress against our improvement plans and we intend to demonstrate our success in improving the quality of life in the Bay by the time the CAA becomes a reality.'

## Working together to beat the Credit Crunch

Torbay Council and its partners organised a conference, community forums and roadshows during December to help tackle the economic downturn and its local implications.

Torbay's first Credit Crunch Conference brought together representatives from the business and voluntary sectors and included key note speeches from Peter Gripaios, Professor of Applied Economics at Plymouth Business School and Jon Bright, Regional Director of Government Office South West.

The conference programme drew experts into an arena for a discussion of how government, public, voluntary and private sector organisations and services can work together to help businesses and individuals who are struggling financially.

The Community Forums and roadshows were open to all residents and businesses, the forums included stands from local businesses and information services, offering practical advice on how to manage in the current economic climate and addressing questions and concerns from the community.

The findings from the events will be discussed at the next TSP meeting and then fed into an action plan.



## Torbay Strategic Partnership - next meeting date

**Thursday 19 February 2009 1pm - 5pm** - Devonshire Suite, Grand Hotel, Torquay.

The meeting will focus on two issues Credit Crunch- next steps and actions, and Learning and Skills for the Future.

For further information, visit our website at [www.torbay.gov.uk](http://www.torbay.gov.uk)

or contact Bernard Page, Policy and Partnership Manager, Torbay Council on **01803 207021**.

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For further information please contact 01803 207021.