

At a Special Meeting of the **WEST DEVON BOROUGH COUNCIL** held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER, KILWORTHY PARK, TAVISTOCK** on **TUESDAY** the **5th** day of **MARCH 2024** at **4.30pm** pursuant to Notice given and Summons duly served.

Members in attendance

- * Denotes attendance
- ∅ Denotes apology for absence
- ** Denotes attendance via Teams

* Cllr L Daniel – The Mayor (In The Chair)

∅ Cllr K Ball	∅ Cllr T Leech**
∅ Cllr A Blackman	* Cllr U Mann
∅ Cllr A Bridgewater	* Cllr J Moody
∅ Cllr M Calder**	* Cllr C Mott
∅ Cllr M Casbolt	* Cllr R Oxborough
* Cllr R Cheadle	* Cllr M Renders
* Cllr A Cunningham	* Cllr I Saxby
* Cllr G Dexter	* Cllr D Sellis (Deputy Mayor)
* Cllr C Edmonds	* Cllr T Southcott
* Cllr J Elliott	∅ Cllr P Squire
* Cllr M Ewings	∅ Cllr P Vachon**
∅ Cllr S Guthrie	* Cllr N Viney
* Cllr A Johnson	∅ Cllr S Wakeham
* Cllr N Jory	∅ Cllr L Watts**
∅ Cllr P Kimber**	* Cllr C West

Officers in attendance:

Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive; Assistant Director Strategy; Monitoring Officer; Head of Democratic Services; Head of Communications and Devon County Council Service Manager: Economic Inclusion; Skills and Knowledge Economy / Programme Lead, Devolution

CM 73/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Ball, Blackman, Bridgewater, Casbolt, Guthrie, Squire and Wakeham and also Cllrs Calder, Kimber, Leech, Vachon and Watts all of whom joined the meeting online via Teams in a non-voting capacity.

CM 74/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Mayor invited Members to declare any interests in the items of business to be considered during the course of the meeting but there were none made.

PROPOSED DEVON & TORBAY COMBINED COUNTY AUTHORITY AND DEVOLUTION DEAL

Members were presented with a report that set out the issues for the Council to consider in its response to the consultation on the proposed Devon and Torbay Combined County Authority and Devolution Deal.

In the ensuing debate, the following points were raised:

- (a) The impact on already stretched officer resources that would arise from the Combined County Authority (CCA) proposals was currently uncertain;
- (b) When questioned, it was noted that there was no information at this time regarding how the proposal would be funded beyond 2026. However, assurances had been received from Central Government that the establishment of a Combined County Authority (CCA) would lead to the further devolution of powers, services and grant funding;
- (c) By way of caution, a Member advised that he struggled to see any assurances in the proposal that would guarantee that the CCA did not end in ultimate failure. Furthermore, the Member felt that the CCA could simply represent a further layer of unwarranted bureaucracy;
- (d) It would be an intention of the proposals to formalise the arrangements in relation to the already existing Housing Task Force Partnership. For clarity, it was noted that the CCA would not replace the existing housing powers held by local authorities;
- (e) Officers confirmed that the partnership arrangements with Plymouth City Council in respect of the Joint Local Plan would not be impacted through the creation of the CCA. The lead officer also confirmed that the door would not be closed should Plymouth City Council wish to rejoin the discussions on the CCA;
- (f) Members felt that the transport section of the Council's response should be strengthened before being submitted. The following addition was therefore **PROPOSED** and **SECONDED** and, when put to the vote, was declared **CARRIED**:

2. *that the Council will respond to the consultation in line with the considerations set out in part 3 of the updated agenda report (as tabled to the meeting), subject to the Assistant Director Strategy being given delegated authority to strengthen the wording contained within the transport section of the response.*

(g) A number of Members repeated their disappointment that not all district councils would have full voting rights on the CCA. However, irrespective of their concerns, all Members recognised that it was for the best for the Council to be actively involved in the proposals as opposed to being on the outside looking in.

It was then proposed by Cllr M Ewings, seconded by Cllr M Renders and upon being submitted to the Meeting was declared to be **CARRIED** and **RESOLVED:**

1. that the intention of Devon County Council and Torbay Borough Council to enter into a devolution deal with Government and to form a Combined County Authority, be noted; and
2. that the Council will respond to the consultation in line with the considerations set out in part 3 of the updated agenda report (as tabled to the meeting), subject to the Assistant Director Strategy being given delegated authority to strengthen the wording contained within the transport section of the response.”

(The Meeting terminated at 5.35 pm)

Mayor