

Devon County Council and Torbay Council have formally submitted our joint proposal for a Devon and Torbay Combined County Authority (CCA) to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, the Rt Hon Michael Gove MP.

It follows agreement by both councils for the formation of a Devon and Torbay CCA that, if agreed by the Secretary of State, would oversee a raft of new decision-making powers and funding devolved to Devon and Torbay from Whitehall.

Opportunities like this don't come around often, so it's seen by both councils as a major achievement to now submit the application to the government, and to be closer to having the CCA in place in the Autumn.

The CCA will deliver the devolution deal which will enable important decisions to be made locally on local priorities such as jobs and skills, housing, and the environment.

Councillors at Devon and Torbay councils were given an analysis of the feedback following recent consultation that drew responses from a broad cross-section of organisations including Devon's District councils, Town and Parish councils, and representatives from the business, education and skills, housing, transportation, health service providers and voluntary sectors.

Taking that analysis into account, Councillors at both councils agreed the next steps: to submit the proposal to the Secretary of State, and subject to receiving the approval and the making of the necessary Regulations, to draft a constitution for the Devon and Torbay CCA for consideration this September.

At Torbay Council's specially convened meeting, the vote to progress the CCA proposals was carried unanimously. But not all Councillors at Devon County Council were in agreement – Councillors Bailey, Brazil, Connett, Cox, Leaver, Letch, Roome, Thomas and Wrigley abstained from the vote.

The recommendations, however, were carried. In addition to the Devon and Torbay CCA, the County Council will begin the process of establishing the statutory Team Devon Joint Committee, to formalise the existing long-standing partnership between the eight District, City and Borough Councils, Devon Association of Local Councils (representing town and parish councils) and the two national park authorities.

Cllr Dan Thomas