

## County Councillor's Report 18<sup>th</sup> June - Coffinswell

Devon are leading a new organisation which will ensure that all children in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay will have the chance to play a musical instrument, learn to sing and create music

Devon are already responsible for the existing Music Hubs for Devon and Torbay, and from September will work with Plymouth Youth Music Service to lead music education provision across the region.

It follows the recent announcement by Arts Council England and the Department for Education for a new generation of Music Hubs, covering every part of England – and following a competitive application process, Devon have now been confirmed as one of 43 new Hub Lead Organisations.

The new Devon Music Educational Hub will provide high-quality music education and teacher training and give children the opportunity to pursue their musical interests and develop their skills. They will work with schools, music educators and a range of local, regional and national partner organisations.

The new Hubs will also help to deliver the Arts Council's strategy, Let's Create, which aims to improve access to creativity and culture for all children.

Last Month I reported that Devon County Council and Torbay Council have formally submitted a joint proposal for a Combined County Authority (CCA) to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

It was expected that Government would make the legislative regulations to create the CCA over the summer months, with a view to the Devon and Torbay CCA holding its first meeting in the Autumn.

But the General Election in July changes that timetable. Speaking at Devon County Council's Full Council, the new Leader, Cllr James McInnes, said: "We are seeking clarity from Government officials on how the legislative process for setting up the Devon and Torbay Combined County Authority will be affected following the announcement of the General Election.

"We met with Torbay Council and both organisations remain committed to bringing forward our agreed devolution arrangement as soon as possible, and we collectively await clarity from Government officials. We have already been in touch with Government colleagues within DLUHC (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) to secure the £16m capital investment agreed with Government.

"The Leader of Torbay Council, the nominated District Council Leader, and I unanimously approved 16 excellent projects this week which will be recommended to the County Council as the accountable body.

"These schemes span housing, skills, business support and green infrastructure and can have an immediate impact on our local economy.

"There would be schemes in each district area with the potential to bring forward affordable homes, decarbonise existing properties, support more than 1000 learners in green and net zero skills and creation of jobs and apprenticeships.

"Working with District Councils, Dartmoor National Park, Exmoor National Park and the Devon Association of Local Councils we are progressing the establishment of the Team Devon Joint Committee. This will support joint working on a number of areas including economic development."

A new series of the highly successful 'Let's Talk' webinars has launched, and this time it is specifically for parents and carers of neurodivergent young people and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

The free, open access online programme provides a space for parents and carers to discuss the challenges facing young people today and understand the tools and techniques that they can use to support them.

The sessions have been developed with parents and carers of neurodivergent young people and those with SEND, and will cover topics including mental health and emotional wellbeing, anger and challenging behaviour, healthy relationships and online safety.

The tickets are free, and you can sign up now using the links below:

[Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing](#) at 7pm on Tuesday 2 July 2024; [Anger and Challenging Behaviour](#) at 7pm on Thursday 4 July 2024; [Healthy Relationships](#) at 7pm on Tuesday 9 July 2024; [Online Safety and Exploitation](#) at 7pm on Thursday 11 July 2024.

Alistair Dewhirst - [alistair.dewhirst@devon.gov.uk](mailto:alistair.dewhirst@devon.gov.uk) / Tel 07836 704127