**Transition Tavistock response to consultation on the proposal for a Devon and Torbay Combined County Authority (March 2024)**

**Rating for each objective**
*(5 point scale - strongly agree to strongly disagree + don't know)*

Maximising our economic potential: We will make sure we have the skilled workforce our local economy needs for the future. We'll work to secure new investment to help create additional high value jobs. AGREE

Addressing our housing pressures: In partnership, we will deliver additional investment in affordable housing schemes for local people, reducing homelessness. Greater Community Land Trust-led delivery will support rural and coastal affordable housing delivery. AGREE

Improving local transport: We will strengthen our joined-up approach as equal partners, helping to improve the efficiency and co-ordination of public transport. Shared responsibility for strategic transport will support economic growth. NEUTRAL

Meeting our net zero ambitions: We will unlock Devon and Torbay's huge green economic potential, with more investment in green business growth and attracting inward investment to the area. Our transition to a net-zero economy will be accelerated, capitalising on our area's world-leading expertise in green science and technology. AGREE

Delivering investment in Devon and Torbay: There will be local democratic accountability for big investment decision in the local economy. Business and skills representatives will have a strong voice and a direct route to locally-elected decision-makers. DON'T KNOW

Creating a strong and sustainable local economy: We will support high growth business sectors such as marine engineering, defence, photonics and digital, as well as our traditional strengths of tourism, agritech and food production. Through creating a strong and sustainable local economy, we can increase productivity and pay across Devon and Torbay. AGREE

Governance arrangements
DON'T KNOW

**Comments**

Re **economy**: skills in sustainable farming and renewable energy are particularly important to our area. Digital connectivity in rural areas is important in enabling innovative shared transport solutions and enabling remote working.

Re **housing**: we support the objectives of enabling Community Land Trusts and small site Green Homes investment.

Re **transport**: We are disappointed that Plymouth opted not to joint the CCA, as it is the primary travel destination by bus and the nearest mainline station to Tavistock. Bus connections to Cornwall are also important across much of West Devon. While appreciating the benefits to Exeter and eastern Devon of better integration with Torbay, we are concerned that this could dilute attention to public transport in rural areas, particularly those in the west where collaboration with neighbouring authorities is needed. Inclusion of Torbay in bus planning could bring further improvement in cross-Dartmoor services, which help support tourism, and we hope this will be recognised.
We are represented as a user group on the Devon BUS Forum and have found this helpful in understanding the context and building contacts with whom we can take up local issues. We have also had occasion to take up transport planning issues with ward County Councillors, and think it important that this channel remains open. We urge the CCA to build on and enhance current engagement with community groups, rather than becoming more remote. In this context we are surprised that, unlike the other main priority areas, there appears to be no Advisory Board proposed for transport. It may be the intention that Peninsula Transport covers this gap? We have taken part in some of their engagement events and welcome their whole-peninsula viewpoint.
We are pleased to see the objective that the CCA will work with Active Travel England to improve the design quality of all active travel schemes funded both by the Government and locally, and hope this will increase the ability of Active Travel England to promote good practice in rural as well as urban contexts.

Re **net zero ambitions:** We are pleased to see energy system planning, place-based retrofit and green skills development within the objectives. It is important to public support for net zero goals that investment attracted has a visibly positive impact on places and livelihoods across the area.

Re **investment delivery:** We support in principle local democratic accountability on this, but are concerned that wording re direct business influence, combined with the limited role for district councils in the CCA governance arrangements, will mean that rural towns and parishes have no practical way of exercising this accountability on behalf of their residents.

Re **sustainable economy:** Pleased to see attention to low carbon shipping in this. Re visitor economy - while valuing increased year-round spending by visitors from UK, and overseas visitors already holidaying in the UK, we would be concerned at any investment in or promotion of air travel. We hope that the operation of the CCA will ensure that commitment to net zero runs through the detail of all the priority areas.