

Devon County CUA Board Meeting 4th June 2026

Notes and Actions

In attendance

Phill Adams (Chair), Cllr Simon Clist, Khristine Norton, Nick James, Stuart Brocklehurst, Louise Osborne, and Andrew Dean.

Apologies

Lisa Roberts, Donna Manson, Keri Denton, Mel Sealey

Welcome and Introductions

Attendees shared information on their roles and responsibilities.

DC CUA Video

- AD shared the high-quality set of videos produced to showcase joint work (including individual films for youth, housing, and skills).
- Board Members were pleased with the content and will work together to promote the content more widely.
- Strong support for wider use across DCC, University, and partners (including social media and internal comms).
- Opportunity to improve visibility of joint working activity.

Actions

1. Develop and implement joint comms plan for CUA videos (DCC, University, social media, newsletters). (Lead: Khristine/Nick/Andy)
2. Explore using the videos in a Member Development Session to showcase CUA activity. (Lead: Phill/Simon)

Organisational updates and priorities

- **University of Exeter:** Financial pressures sector-wide but stable locally; strong growth in partnerships (including French government collaboration); major climate forum planned; increasing activity in defence, innovation and health research.
- **DCC:** Stable financial position; new strategic plan prioritising young people, growth, and skills; significant opportunities in defence, green economy, and innovation but major workforce and skills gaps identified.

DC CUA Progress - Questions and Discussion relating to the progress report

- Young People Programme: Joint £30k fund attracted strong project pipeline (11 bids); focus on practical, applied interventions (e.g. NEETs, SEND, mental health).
- NEETs Challenge: Identified as a key priority with need for further joint action and innovative approaches to access and engagement.
- Education Alliance currently paused; appetite to reinvigorate with clearer focus.
- Skills & Innovation: Strong collaboration on labour market intelligence and strategy (LSIP/CCA); emerging opportunity around “skills escalators” and defence pathways; We continue to share a member of staff to help with labour market intelligence work for both organisations
- Housing: Work progressing; aligning with Strategic Development Plan under CCA.

- Ongoing system uncertainty due to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and devolution discussions.
- Torbay interested in joining CUA but timing dependent on LGR clarity.

Actions

YP/NEETS

3. Identify additional joint activity to address NEETs challenge and align with Milburn Review work. (Lead: Lindsey & Khristine)
4. Develop communications around funded youth projects once confirmed. (Lead: Khristine/Lindsey)

Skills & Innovation

5. Convene discussion on skills escalators and defence pathways across Devon, Plymouth, Cornwall partners. (Lead: Phill/Andy)
6. Continue joint evidence support for LSIP and skills strategy.

Education Alliance

7. Re-establish group with refreshed focus; schedule in-person meeting for late September. (Lead: Andy with, Lindsey, Nick James, Beth Seager and DCC support)

Housing

8. Align future work with CCA Strategic Development Plan and revisit next steps with partners. (Lead: Phill)

New Opportunities and potential expansion to include Torbay

- Strong shared ambition to:
 - o Improve retention of young people in Devon.
 - o Address skills shortages (30–40k workforce gap).
 - o Leverage strengths in green economy, defence, and innovation.
- Raise Devon's national profile (e.g. potential Westminster engagement event).

Actions

9. Progress planning for Westminster engagement event to promote Devon innovation strengths. (Lead: Phill/CCA partners)
10. Maintain Torbay Engagement and revisit inclusion once LGR position clearer. (Lead: Phill/Andy)

AOB

No AOB