

RADIO 1 BIG WEEKEND: How Torbay missed out

TORBAY could have hosted Radio 1's money-spinning and star-studded Big Weekend event — but missed out, it was claimed today.

And the same goes for concerts for music legends Elton John and Rod Stewart with their promoter also being turned away.

The claim that Torbay lost out was made by Cllr Richard Haddock (pictured), right hand man to [mayor Gordon Oliver](#) and the executive lead for business.

[Radio 1 Breakfast Show](#) host Nick Grimshaw announced on Monday that Europe's largest free music festival is coming to Powderham Castle on May 28 and 29 which left [Teignbridge Council](#) and Exeter City Council jumping for joy. Both councils contributed £100,000 to bring the event to South Devon and say it will be a huge showcase and boost for the area.

More than 50,000 people are expected over the two days and all the tickets are given free to local people with [world-famous acts](#) Coldplay and Ellie Goulding already lined up.

Cllr Haddock claimed Radio 1 approached the council five or six months ago but 'junior council officers' said they were unable to help because there was no licensed venue in the Bay able to accommodate 25,000 people.

Cllr Haddock was adamant an approach was made to a council officer.

"100 per cent guaranteed. No ifs and buts," he said adding that neither the mayor nor councillors were made aware of the approach until after the radio representatives were sent away.

According to Cllr Haddock, the same thing happened after a promoter looking after Elton John and Rod Stewart made an approach to stage two concerts in the Bay, with Clennon Valley in Paignton, being highlighted as a possible venue. That never came to anything either.

Rod Stewart is now performing at Plymouth Argyle's Home Park ground on Tuesday June 7 and Elton John will be at Exeter's Westpoint arena on Sunday, June 19.

Cllr Haddock claimed: "I understand there were approaches from the Radio 1 roadshow team.

"I also understand a big promoter who manages Elton John and people like Rod Stewart was interested in Torbay, but mysteriously some of the staff did not seem to be interested.

"The councillors found out after they had been turned away. The mayor was not happy. I understand he was not informed until afterwards."

He said the local authority could have obtained a licence for Clennon Valley and estimates it could have made £500,000 from the concerts alone.

The Churston farmer also revealed the promoters approached him to see if he owned land suitable to host a concert.

Cllr Haddock said: "I had to turn them away because I was not ready. I would prefer that Torbay did it and got the money."

The Big Weekend will put Teignbridge and South Devon on the map. Council leader Jeremy Christophers said: "I'm still getting over the excitement of the announcement. We are sure this will be a weekend to remember.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for the young people of Teignbridge to enjoy a festival right on their doorstep. It will showcase Powderham Castle and put this part of Devon on the map."

Charlie Courtenay, the new Earl of Devon, said: "It is awesome that Radio 1 has chosen Powderham for the Big Weekend 2016. The Castle has entertained a lot over the centuries, but it has never seen a weekend like this."

Sarah Stride, acting general manager for Visit South Devon, said: "This is fantastic news for the profile of Teignbridge and South Devon, putting the local area firmly on the map."

The first five acts announced on Monday were Coldplay, Ellie Goulding, Craig David, Chase and Status and Bring Me the Horizon.

Coldplay star Chris Martin said: "I was born and raised in a cottage next door to Powderham Castle, so being part of Radio 1's Big Weekend this year means a huge amount to me personally. I lived the first few years of my life less than 500 yards from where we'll be performing so this couldn't be more of a homecoming for me."