



**Agenda for Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum  
(formerly LED Monitoring Forum)  
Tuesday, 9th April, 2024, 10.00 am**

**Members of Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum (formerly LED Monitoring Forum)**

Councillors: P Arnott, V Bonetta, M Hall, S Hawkins (Chair),  
P Hayward, N Hookway (Vice-Chair), J Loudoun, S Smith,  
A Toye and J Whibley

East Devon District Council  
Blackdown House  
Border Road  
Heathpark Industrial Estate  
Honiton  
EX14 1EJ

DX 48808 HONITON

Tel: 01404 515616

**[www.eastdevon.gov.uk](http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk)**

**Venue:** Online via Zoom app

**Contact:** Sarah James;

01395 519978 Email: [sjames@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:sjames@eastdevon.gov.uk)

(or group number 01395 517546)

Thursday, 28 March 2024; re-issued Tuesday 2 April 2024

- 1 Apologies
  - 2 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 January 2024 (Pages 3 - 7)
  - 3 Declarations of interest  
Guidance is available online to Councillors and co-opted members on making [declarations of interest](#)
  - 4 Public Speaking  
Information on [public speaking is available online](#)
  - 5 Matters of urgency
  - 6 Confidential/exempt item(s)  
To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the Press) have been excluded. There is **one** item which officers recommend should be dealt with in this way.
  - 7 **LED Facilities and Activities report April 2024** (Pages 8 - 10)
  - 8 **LED KPI Dashboard March 2023 - April 2024** (Page 11)
  - 9 **Leisure and Playing Pitch Requirements** (Pages 12 - 13)
  - 10 **Cranbrook Leisure Centre** (Pages 14 - 17)
- Part B**
- 11 **LED Service Management Fee 2024/25** (Pages 18 - 31)

Under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, any members of the public are now allowed to take photographs, film and audio record the proceedings and report on all public meetings (including on social media). No prior notification is needed but it would be helpful if you could let the democratic services team know you plan to film or record so that any necessary arrangements can be made to provide reasonable facilities for you to report on meetings. This permission does not extend to private meetings or parts of meetings which are not open to the public. You should take all recording and photography equipment with you if a public meeting moves into a session which is not open to the public.

If you are recording the meeting, you are asked to act in a reasonable manner and not disrupt the conduct of meetings for example by using intrusive lighting, flash photography or asking people to repeat statements for the benefit of the recording. You may not make an oral commentary during the meeting. The Chair has the power to control public recording and/or reporting so it does not disrupt the meeting.

Members of the public exercising their right to speak during Public Speaking will be recorded.

[Decision making and equalities](#)

**For a copy of this agenda in large print, please contact the Democratic Services Team on 01395 517546**

**EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL****Minutes of the meeting of LED Monitoring Forum held at Online via the Zoom app on 16 January 2024****Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.38 pm

**29 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 September 2023**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 September 2023 were noted as a true and accurate record.

**30 Declarations of interest**

There were none.

**31 Public Speaking**

One member of the public had registered to speak at the meeting.

Mr Stephen Beer spoke on behalf of Exmouth Stroke Survivors Club. He highlighted that funding for the Club was limited, and spoke of a need for more equipment to support a growing membership and increasing referrals. He thanked LED for their continued support.

**32 Matters of urgency**

There were no matters of urgency.

**33 Confidential/exempt item(s)**

There were two items to be considered in private session (minutes 38 and 39 refer).

**34 LED Facilities and Activities report January 2024**

The LED Facilities and Activities report for January 2024 was received and noted.

**35 Exmouth Pavilion report January 2024**

The LED CEO introduced this report which provided an update on operational delivery and buildings maintenance at the Exmouth Pavilion.

The Forum noted the report.

**36 LED KPI Dashboard Annual 2023**

The Forum received and noted key details of the performance of LED Community Leisure for 2023.

**37 LED Monitoring Forum Terms of Reference update**

The Assistant Director – Countryside and Leisure introduced this item which set out proposed changes to the name and terms of reference for the Forum, to reflect the wider Leisure Strategy focus whilst incorporating LED.

Discussion included the following points:

- It is appropriate to keep the same number of Cabinet members on the Forum's membership in order to maintain a sense that this is a Forum of the Council rather than of the Cabinet.
- The Forum's name needs to reflect its role in having an overarching view of the elements which sit within the Leisure Strategy and portfolio.
- There are currently no members from the Conservative group on the membership of the Forum, and the Forum's membership is agreed at Annual Council. Through the Constitutional Working Party, it would be appropriate to consider proportionality on the Forum's membership.

### **RECOMMENDED to Cabinet:**

The following changes to the Terms of Reference for the Forum:

1. The removal of the Portfolio Holder for Coast, Country and Environment and the inclusion of the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism as one of the identified Portfolio Holders within the membership of the Forum.
2. To change the name of the Forum to the Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum.
3. To update the Terms of Reference to reflect the changes in Officers job titles.
4. To formally note within the revised Terms of Reference that the Chair will be appointed at Annual Council.
5. To formally note within the revised Terms of Reference the quorum for the Forum of 4 Members.
6. To formally note within the revised Terms of Reference that the Forum will meet on a quarterly basis, with extra meetings where reasonably required to deal with urgent matters.
7. To note within the revised Terms of Reference that the Forum will have oversight of the Council's wider leisure strategy work as well as providing guidance and scrutiny of the Council's relationship and contract with LED.

The meeting then went into private session.

## **38 LED service management fee and SLA 2024**

The Assistant Director – Countryside and Leisure introduced this report which included the latest draft for a rolling two-year Service Level Agreement (SLA) with LED, and also a request being made by LED for its management service fee settlement for 2024/25.

Following discussion at length, the Forum:

1. Noted the request from LED to provide a budget allocation of £1,819,554 for its 2024/25 Service fee acknowledging that £1,463,924 is currently included in the Draft Revenue and Capital Budget 2024/25.
2. Considered the draft SLA framework document and management service fee settlement request as presented, with final versions to be brought to an extraordinary Forum meeting at the next opportunity for recommendation to Cabinet.

This ensured that the Forum was able to consider in detail the management fee proposal by LED for the 2024/25 financial year with a view to ensuring that LED can remain a viable leisure provider for this council.

### **RECOMMENDED to Cabinet:**

1. That the Council's draft budget remains unaltered at £1,463,924 until a detailed breakdown of the LED service fee payment request is received by the Forum, accompanied by officers recommendations having undertaken appropriate due diligence. This may require an additional budget being agreed at a later stage in the year.

39 **BSCAP 7th Dec 2023 referrals to LED Monitoring Forum - supported in principle but referred to the LED Monitoring Forum for further consideration before recommending for inclusion in the Capital Programme:**

The Assistant Director – Place, Assets and Commercialisation introduced this item, inviting Members to consider referrals from the Budget Setting and Capital Allocations Panel (BSCAP), before recommendation or not for inclusion in the Capital Programme.

BSCAP had referred these proposals to the Forum so that they could be considered in relation to the Leisure Strategy and the wider position with LED.

Members had received the Initial Project Proposal Documents as presented to BSCAP for the following proposals:

1. Exmouth Pavilion Flytower and Auditorium works for £335,100 in 2024/25 and £444,900 in 2025/26
2. Exmouth Pavilion Roof works for £5,000 in 2024/25 and £504,000 in 2025/26
3. East Devon Tennis Centre Roof works for £791,095 in 2024/25 and £21,405 in 2025/26.

The Assistant Director and the Principal Building Surveyor presented the business cases, outlining why the works were necessary and the implications for the sites in the eventuality that the works are not progressed.

Questions, clarification and discussion included the following points:

- The works to the Exmouth Pavilion Flytower and Auditorium are mainly related to health and safety.
- The Exmouth Pavilion Roof works are to reroof the whole of the Pavilion building.
- The Tennis Centre roof is 25 years old and in need of replacement.
- These are community facilities that are very well used with a large catchment area, and the Leisure Strategy identifies the Tennis Centre as the only indoor tennis facility in East Devon.
- The facilities are part of the Leisure Strategy and the Exmouth Pavilion is part of the Cultural Strategy. Both facilities tie into the Tourism Strategy and bring people into the town, supporting the local economy.
- Whilst the facilities are popular, more needs to be done by LED to maximise patronage in order to get best value from the assets and ensure they are used at all times, and this was identified during the Cultural Strategy consultation work.
- The focus is on the capital cost for material significant works, to keep the facilities going and protect the longevity of the sites.
- There will be a revenue implication for the council due to the cost of borrowing from the Public Works Loans Board, and this cost has been allowed for.
- Whilst the sites are in exposed locations, flat roofs and metal roofs should last for 25 years, with pitch and slate roofs expected to last considerably longer. Loans for the repairs will be repaid over a 40 year term. The Finance Director indicated that total borrowings across the authority are worked out as an average.
- Whilst these assets are on the council's portfolio and until a decision is taken to dispose any of them, the council needs to ensure that they are well maintained and fit for purpose. Maintaining them in good condition in some instances will also mean that they will fetch a better price should the council ever need to dispose of them.

- An Asset Management Plan will enable the council to forward plan, with assets scored according to financial and non-financial performance. This will help to inform decisions regarding the assets, going forward.
- Funding is constrained and the council must research every grant that is available.

**RECOMMENDED to Cabinet:**

1. That the following bids be included in the Capital Programme:
  - a. Exmouth Pavilion Flytower and Auditorium works for £335,100 in 2024/25 and £444,900 in 2025/26
  - b. Exmouth Pavilion Roof works for £5,000 in 2024/25 and £504,000 in 2025/26
  - c. East Devon Tennis Centre Roof works for £791,095 in 2024/25 and £21,405 in 2025/26.

**Attendance List**

**Councillors present:**

P Arnott  
S Hawkins (Chair)  
P Hayward  
N Hookway (Vice-Chair)  
J Loudoun  
S Smith  
A Toye  
J Whibley

**Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)**

C Brown  
P Faithfull  
M Rixson

**Representatives of LED Community Leisure in attendance:**

Karen Best, LED Finance Director  
Andrew Dare, LED Fitness and Wellbeing Manager  
Lottie Edwards, LED Community Engagement Manager  
Peter Gilpin, LED CEO  
Richard Purchase, Chairman of LED Board

**Officers in attendance:**

Tim Child, Assistant Director Place, Assets & Commercialisation  
Simon Davey, Director of Finance  
Sarah James, Democratic Services Officer  
Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer  
Jorge Pineda-Langford, Principal Building Surveyor, Property & FM  
Charles Plowden, Assistant Director Countryside and Leisure  
Tracy Hendren, Director of Housing, Health and Environment

**Councillor apologies:**

M Hall  
G Jung

Chair .....

Date: .....



**Report to:** Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum  
**Subject:** Facilities and Activities Update  
**From:** LED Delivery Team  
**Date:** April 2024

**Operational Delivery**

Over the past three months, our leisure teams have been bustling with activity. We've achieved 1,563 sales and welcomed 1,260 new members, resulting in a robust Club Live community of 10,247 members by the end of March. The improved weather has contributed to the busy atmosphere, with fun splash sessions and pitch bookings keeping the team busy. Axminster has implemented a self-access model for the artificial turf pitch, allowing increased bookings to support local clubs.

Seaton Fitness Centre has reached a milestone of 800 members, and The Hangar boasts an impressive 600 members despite competitive conditions. Exmouth Leisure Centre stands out with an outstanding membership number of 4,300. This achievement is attributed to our hard work with swim programmes, health referrals, and junior activities.

In March, we launched Free Health Checks, benefiting 103 individuals, followed by 5 days of complimentary exercise to support their overall health and well-being.

In early 2024 we saw the rebranding of our app and the launch of our new website. These digital enhancements will provide a more flexible booking system and an improved overall experience for our valued members.

Group exercise is on the rise, especially with the support of virtual classes. These virtual offerings allow more members to exercise frequently from the comfort of their homes. In February 2024, there were 1,120 monthly indoor classes, attended by a whopping 15,700 people. Additionally, 1,003 participants engaged in virtual classes.

The gyms were bustling in February 2024, with a total of 20,651 visits. The Exmouth gym, in particular, experienced high demand during peak hours, leading to capacity concerns. The gym teams delivered 202 Personal Training sessions and 374 appointments. The health referral program is thriving, forging connections with health partners, and a total of 1,588 people participated.



The swimming pools saw a significant influx of visitors, with 24,285 visits in February 2024. The Swim School program has 2,665 participants, and there were 240 private swim lessons with the pools supporting 24 schools. In March, the teams organised 3 primary school galas, allowing different schools to compete against each other. The participants had an amazing time.



These numbers reflect the growing enthusiasm for fitness and well-being among the community. It's heartening to see people prioritising their health and actively participating in various exercise programs.

## **Customer Engagement**

Member Experience Awards to reward and recognise operators who consistently deliver a high standard of member experience as measured by their Net Promoter Score.

The National 2023 awards were open to all TRP customers who have been sending relational surveys:

LED were the winners of the below:

### **Most Improved Member Experience – Leisure Trusts UK:**

#### **Best Swimming Pool Member Experience**

Sidmouth Swimming Pool

#### **Most Improved Leisure Centre Member Experience**

Honiton Leisure Centre

#### **Most Improved Swimming Pool Member Experience**

Sidmouth Swimming Pool

LED achieved an overall NPS of 63 in 10 months between 1<sup>st</sup> November 2022 and 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023.

The feedback is essential for us to improve as a business, and we are using the data even more now to help develop our programs on-site and drive better performance. We have developed a good system with internal verbal comments along with NPS surveys targeting customers and products. The data gives us some great feedback quickly on how we can improve our products and services.

## **Health & Safety**

We had 65 accidents or incidents over the last 3 months. Three were reportable under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR), namely a swimmer who passed out whilst swimming at Honiton Swimming Pool, a Pickleball player who slipped and broke their wrist at Exmouth Leisure Centre and a spectator watching their grandchildren swim at the same centre had a suspected heart attack. All were dealt with extremely well by the respective teams. All other incidents were minor and not reportable. The Leisure Team is working on continuing the high standards of practice across the group with quarterly H&S committee meetings to review systems and processes. One key element is moving over to a digital H&S compliance system to help drive efficiency and best practices across the group.

## **Project Update**

The access gates were delayed at Exmouth Leisure Centre, and we are hoping this will be completed in April 2024. At peak times the demand is too much for the front-of-house team and therefore the customer journey is affected. The gates should allow for a better flow for our members and improve their experience.

## **Community Projects Update**

Gentle Circuits began in February at the Masonic Hall, Axminster which emerged from collaboration with local physiotherapists.

Taster sessions were specifically designed for Millwater School, a special educational school, where a group of 16-year-olds got a taste of what Exmouth Leisure Centre has to offer which included circuits, spinning, and a tour.

Six weeks of swim sessions were provided to children with autism from Sidmouth Primary School.

The team participated in a Community Partnership Workshop, organised by the Head of Exmouth Community College. The workshop explored collaborative opportunities between various agencies and the school.



A funding application has been put forward for the Move More group in Cranbrook aiming to secure additional sessions for St. Martin's Primary School. Work continues with the Move More Cranbrook group, and we are looking at ways our team can support the colour run.

Continuing our commitment to deliver school sessions at Sidmouth and Honiton Community College, Cranbrook Education Campus, and several primary schools including Littleham, Exeter Road, Brixington, and St. Mary's.

After the success of our Fibromyalgia project in Axminster, we partnered with Seaton Jurassic on a further project "Soothing Yoga" this took place in Uplyme and 9 people attended each week. Again, targeting those with chronic pain with a regular session is now taking place at the Scout Hut.

We have recruited 4 new volunteer walk leaders who have undertaken the Wellbeing Walk Training and will be volunteering in our regular Wellbeing Walk program.

We have linked with CAWS to train 10 members of the team to undertake Battle Cancer training. This will then lead to a regular class for those post-cancer recovery across East Devon.

This community-driven effort demonstrates the team's dedication to promoting well-being and inclusivity across East Devon.

LED Leisure Delivery Team  
26<sup>th</sup> March 2024



# LED Community Leisure

## Performance Dashboard - EDDC 2023/2024

Date  
Multiple selections

Broadclyst Leisure Centre	Colyton Leisure Centre	Exmouth Leisure Centre	Exmouth Tennis Centre	Honiton Leisure Centre	Ottery Leisure Centre	Seaton Fitness Centre	Sidmouth Leisure Centre	Sidmouth Swimming Pool	The Hangar
---------------------------	------------------------	------------------------	-----------------------	------------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-------------------------	------------------------	------------

Club Live 31st March 2023

Club Live 29th Feb 2024

9,507

10,330

Joiners

5,380

Leavers

4,624

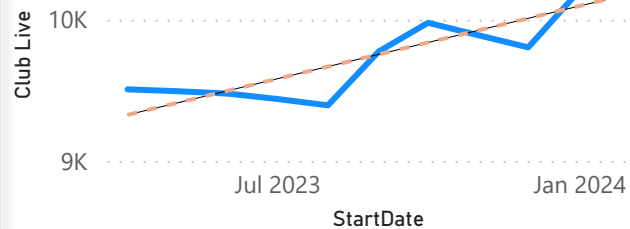
Memberships

£3,722.05K

Yield

£31.69

Club Live by Month



Swimming

248,786



Gym

190,323



Group Exercise

145,331

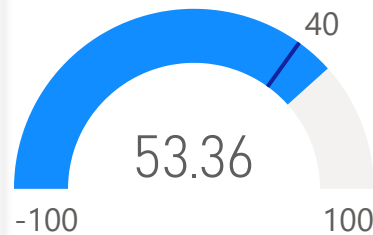


Sports

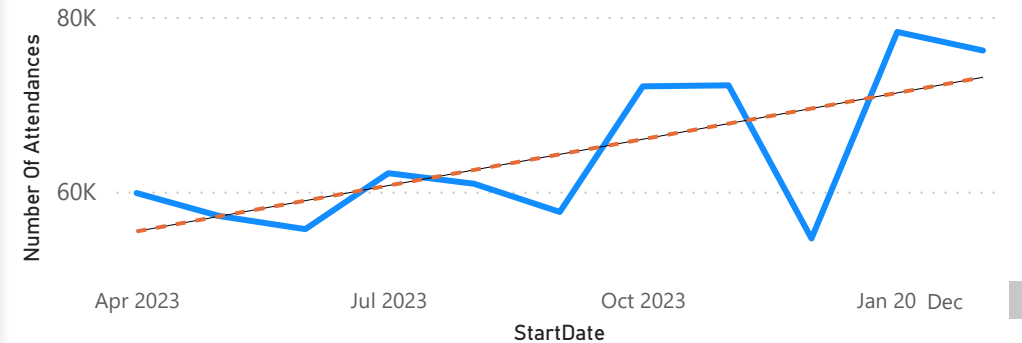
117,285

Total Attendances

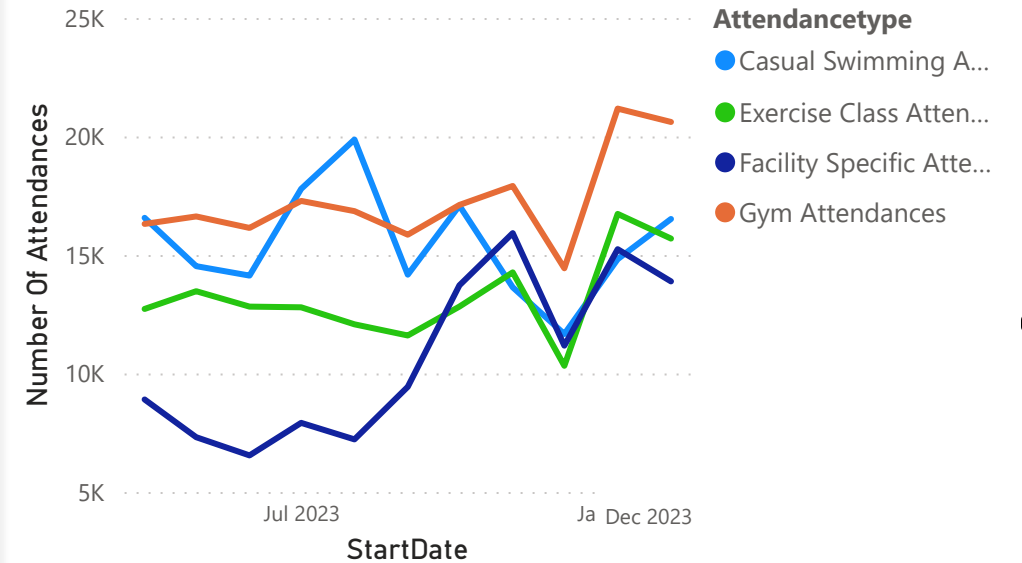
NPS Score



Total Attendance Trend over Previous



Attendance by type Previous (excluding swim school)



Agenda Item 8

Report to: Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum



Date of Meeting 9<sup>th</sup> April 2024

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

## Leisure and playing pitch requirements

### Report summary:

Cabinet have formally considered the recommendations in the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2024 report that outlined the significant challenges in meeting the completion deadlines for each priority within the Leisure Strategy Action Plan, delivering the demands arising from the Playing Pitch Strategy 2024, resourcing the request for three posts within the Sport England LDP programme in Cranbrook and also funding requests to carry out stock condition survey assessments on our leisure facilities and creating a senior level Leisure role to help enable the delivery of the Council's leisure work programme. To help the Council better understand the affordability of the leisure programme a high level options appraisal of the actions within the Leisure Strategy was also considered to develop a costed Implementation Plan with possible options for affordable delivery. This will provide the Council with the necessary financial information to make strategic decisions on what we may wish to deliver from the Strategy going forward. This was one of the recommendations from the recent Peer Review undertaken on the Council.

The urgency of the issues identified within the Cabinet report on leisure meant that it had to be taken to Cabinet before coming to the Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum due to the timetabling of meetings being out of the normal synchronisation. However the work to be undertaken on a higher level options appraisal of the affordability of the Council's leisure programme will require steering and oversight of the Forum leading to recommendations to Cabinet.

### Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### Recommendation:

That the Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum notes the leisure and playing pitch requirements report and will oversee and steer the options appraisal work led by Strategic Leisure.

### Reason for recommendation:

To enable the Forum to agree a position on what and where to prioritise its future investment in its leisure facilities and activities that are identified within the Leisure and Built Facilities Strategy 2021 -2031

Officer: Charlie Plowden, Assistant Director – Leisure & Countryside;  
[cplowden@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:cplowden@eastdevon.gov.uk)

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Communications and Democracy
- Economy
- Finance and Assets
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism

**Equalities impact** Low Impact

**Climate change** Low Impact

**Risk:** Medium Risk; The Leisure Strategy 2021-2031 identifies significant areas of work and specific recommendations to action which, if resources are not agreed and put in place, will limit the ability of the Council to make progress in delivering the Strategy's action plans

**Links to background information** [Cabinet report 27.03.24: Delivering leisure and sports playing pitch requirements](#)

**Link to [Council Plan](#)**

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
- A greener East Devon
- A resilient economy

---

## Report in full

### Summary

The Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum to consider, discuss and agree to lead the oversight and steering of the options appraisal work as set out in the attached report that went to Cabinet on the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2024. The necessity for the report to have gone to Cabinet before it was considered by the Forum was due to the many pressing matters identified within the report linked to resources, understanding the Council's role in these matters and identifying if Cabinet were in agreement for undertaking the Peer Review's suggestion for a higher level options appraisal on the affordability of the Council's overall leisure programme.

The details of this work and the challenges being faced for delivering our leisure programme are all detailed in the attached report that went to Cabinet and are therefore attached for further comment and consideration by the Forum.

---

## Financial implications:

## Legal implications:

Report to: Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum



Date of Meeting 9<sup>th</sup> April 2024

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

## Cranbrook Leisure Centre

### Report summary:

A community consultation carried out in late 2023 identified that the community of Cranbrook views the delivery of a leisure centre with swimming pool as its top priority for the delivery of community facilities. The council is progressing with production of a masterplan for the town centre, which will include identifying locations for key facilities, including a leisure centre.

To keep momentum and put the council in the best possible position to progress with delivery of a leisure centre and to seek external funding toward it, it is recommended that a project and project team is established for a leisure centre in Cranbrook. This will enable work to be done to establish matters such as a specification, input into a location in the town centre and look at costs and avenues for external funding.

### Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### Recommendation:

1. That the Forum notes the outcome of the Cranbrook town centre community consultation and the progression of the Cranbrook town centre masterplan.
2. That the Forum notes the establishment of a project for a Cranbrook Leisure Centre.

### Reason for recommendation:

To enable progress to be made on the delivery of a leisure centre for Cranbrook in order to provide the services and facilities necessary to support the growing town and its community.

Officer: Andy Wood, Assistant Director – Growth, Development and Prosperity,  
[adwood@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:adwood@eastdevon.gov.uk); Thea Billeter, Cranbrook New Community Manager,  
[tbilleter@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:tbilleter@eastdevon.gov.uk)

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Communications and Democracy
- Economy
- Finance and Assets
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities

Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism

## Equalities impact Low Impact

Any new Leisure Centre needs to be designed to be accessible for all people and groups, careful consideration of accessibility and the scope and range of services and facilities provided will need to be made. A full equalities impact assessment will be completed as part of the Leisure Centre project initiation.

## Climate change Medium Impact

**Risk:** Low Risk; At this stage the overall risk is considered to be low as there is no commitment to capital expenditure.

**Links to background information** [Agenda for Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum \(formerly LED Monitoring Forum\) on Tuesday, 19th September, 2023, 10.00 am - East Devon](#)  
[Agenda for Strategic Planning Committee on Tuesday, 13th February, 2024, 10.00 am - East Devon](#)

## Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
- A greener East Devon
- A resilient economy

## Public Consultation

- In October and November 2023, the council undertook a public consultation in respect of the land in Cranbrook town centre that is or will end up in public sector ownership (Cranbrook Town Council, East Devon District Council, Devon County Council) on parcels TC2, TC4b, c, d and e as shown on the plan below.



Figure 1 – Town Centre parcel structure and areas plan page 15

2. The consultation comprised of surveys hosted on Commonplace, drop-in sessions for the public, interviews with key stakeholders, focus groups and workshop sessions. In order to publicise the consultation, a leaflet was delivered to all properties and social media was used to engage with people.
3. Testament to the strong community desire to see the town have extra services and facilities, engagement in the consultation was exceptionally good and residents were enthusiastic and want to be involved. Three surveys were available for completion, the first short survey saw 1,397 responses, with 292 to the more detailed survey and 50 responses to a business survey. A copy of the final report from Ash Futures is included as Appendix 1.
4. Within the first survey, residents were asked to rank the importance of the delivery of a number of public sector facilities. The chart below shows the number of respondents who ranked each facility either first or second. As can be seen, a leisure centre with pool came out as the top priority, followed closely by a health and wellbeing centre. In discussions at the face-to-face consultation events, most people understood that a swimming pool will be expensive to deliver but a leisure centre was considered a must have.

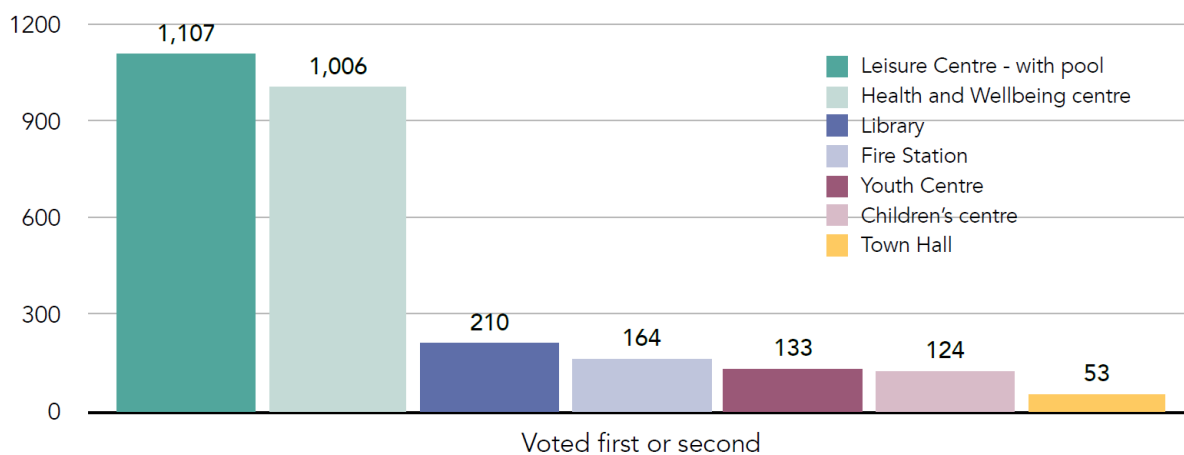


Figure 2 – Bar chart showing how important respondents viewed the delivery of specific facilities.

## Town Centre Masterplan

5. In February 2024 the council's Strategic Planning Committee endorsed the production of a masterplan for the town centre. This work has now begun, with a timetable that looks to have a completed masterplan produced by the end of August 2024. The project is being led by the council as Local Planning Authority rather than as land owner.
6. The masterplan will seek to set out where the main uses will be located and high-level principles for the form and feel of the town centre. A key element of this exercise will be to establish if any of the facilities can be co-located or perhaps be developed in a campus type approach. Officers have begun to explore this with stakeholders.
7. Of particular relevance to a leisure centre is the relationship with the delivery of a health and wellbeing centre as co-location could bring about tangible health benefits for resident as well as capital construction cost savings. However, as explained in the previous report to this Forum, co-location also brings about challenges particularly with timing of delivery as neither facility is yet fully funded and also with governance and management once operational as there will be multiple users. It may be better to look at a campus approach, where the two are sited close to one another, in order to realise as many benefits as possible.
8. Bringing forward the development of a leisure centre will drive increased footfall in the town centre and create the potential for linked trips. As such it is likely to act as a catalyst to accelerate the delivery of further facilities in the town centre. This aligns with the objectives of the Enterprise Zone designation.



## Leisure Centre

9. The Council's Leisure and Built Facilities Strategy identifies the delivery of a Leisure Centre at Cranbrook as being a priority one action, with an indicative specification given as:
  - a. 6 lane 25m swimming pool
  - b. Health and fitness suite
  - c. 4 court sports hall
  - d. 2 studios
10. Establishing a final specification will require consideration to be given not only to the viability of delivering a swimming pool but in particular to if a sports hall is included as it a large space with a high ceiling and no windows. To include a sports hall will be challenging to incorporate into the town centre without detrimentally impacting upon the public realm unless it is explored early on in the masterplan exercise. There is also the scope for a swimming pool to be heated utilising a supply of low carbon heat from the town's district heating network.
11. It is important that the council maintains an active role in the production of the town centre masterplan from the perspective of the future development of a leisure centre. We must therefore ensure that there is appropriate representation in any stakeholder discussions to explore co-location of facilities and consideration of constraints and opportunities.
12. As set out in the previous report to the Forum the expansion of Cranbrook is expected to provide a capital contribution toward the delivery of a leisure centre, although at a total of around £4.5m in today's money there will be a substantial funding gap. These monies will also be paid in phases unless the council is able to work with the developers to secure forward funding. At the time of writing none of the expansion area planning applications have yet been determined, although resolutions to approve exist for the majority of the allocated land.
13. Having regard to the high priority that residents give to the delivery of a leisure centre and the ongoing masterplan production, it is considered imperative for progress to be made on a leisure centre proposal sooner rather than later. To progress the project will also leave us in a better position to bid for external grant funding as 'shovel ready' schemes are often viewed more favourably for funding awards.
14. For these reasons officers are therefore looking to establish a project and project team for the Leisure Centre. At this stage there is no separate request for revenue funding made as the project team will initially be taken forward with existing staff resources and budget, including additional resources that were considered at the meeting of the Cabinet on 27 March 2024 in respect of the options appraisal of the Leisure & Built Facilities Strategy.

---

### **Financial implications:**

The recommendations in the report at this stage have no direct financial implications although the report highlights a future funding gap that needs to be addressed if a leisure centre is to be provided in Cranbrook.

### **Legal implications:**

There is no direct comment to be made in relation to this report, any individual issues will need to be considered as they arise in the future.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted