

Agenda for Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum Tuesday, 8th April, 2025, 10.00 am

Members of Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum

Councillors: P Arnott, K Bloxham, M Goodman, S Hawkins
(Chair), P Hayward, N Hookway, J Loudoun, S Smith, A Teye,
J Whibley

Venue: Online via Zoom app

Contact: Sarah James;

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(or group number 01395 517546)

Monday, 31 March 2025



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- 1 Apologies
- 2 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 January 2025 (Pages 3 - 6)
- 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 Response to question re: Honiton Car Park arrangements (Pages 7 - 12)
- 8 LED Facilities and Activities report March 2025 (Pages 13 - 15)
- 9 LED KPI Dashboard February 2025 (Page 16)
- 10 Update on Leisure Strategy Delivery Plan and Playing Pitch Audit (Pages 17 - 29)
- 11 Update on Cranbrook Leisure Centre Project (Pages 30 - 33)

Part B

- 12 Update on Leisure Review (Pages 34 - 93)

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[Decision making and equalities](#)

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EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum held at Online via Zoom app on 14 January 2025

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.19 pm

18 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 November 2024

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 November 2024 were noted as a true and accurate record.

19 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

20 Public Speaking

No members of the public had registered to speak at the meeting.

21 Matters of urgency

There were three matters of urgency (minutes 25-27 refer).

22 Confidential/exempt item(s)

There was one confidential/exempt item (minute 27 refers).

23 LED Facilities and Activities report November - December 2024

The LED Director of Delivery introduced this report which provided an update on the activities of LED including operational delivery, customer engagement, facilities projects, health and safety, and community projects.

Discussion and clarification included the following points:

- Members thanked the LED Director of Delivery for the very good report and commented positively on the range of activities and LED's strong work in deepening community engagement around health and mental wellbeing.
- An ongoing issue had been identified with parking at Honiton Leisure Centre particularly when matches were taking place on the adjacent pitches. LED staff had observed inconsiderate and dangerous parking and there had been increased cancellations as well as complaints from users of the Leisure Centre who were unable to park and were therefore missing sessions which they had paid for. The Assistant Director – Place, Assets & Commercialisation responded that he and the leadership team had been aware of the issues and following discussion, had decided in summer 2024 that it was not appropriate to intervene by introducing charging and parking enforcement; however, due to evidence recently provided by LED, the matter would be reviewed again in the coming weeks, to consider how the issues can be addressed.
- One Member had been approached by users of Exmouth Leisure Centre who were unhappy that the men's changing facilities for the swimming pool had been closed or unavailable for use. The LED Director of Delivery stated that he would look into the

reasons for this and respond outside of the meeting but the fact that he was unaware, would indicate that any closure had been very temporary.

- A Member asked about the nature and success of a project at Cranbrook Education Campus led by LED. The LED Director of Delivery would enquire with the relevant team and provide a response outside of the meeting.
- In response to a Member's question, Cllr Fernley stated that she was aware that yoga sessions provided free in Cranbrook had been popular and were well attended. It was her understanding that the funding was for a 12-month fixed term and no contingency was currently in place for when the funding expired.
- Responding to a question about health referrals, The LED Director of Delivery stated that where they were not funded by the referring body, access to sessions and facilities was offered at a reduced rate to make them accessible and break down barriers. The onus was then on LED to make the experience a positive one with encouraging results, such that referred individuals felt confident to engage and might consider enrolling with LED as a full member.
- A Member raised concern that some sessions which LED members had been accessing had been replaced with HYROX sessions not included in the cost of their membership meaning that, in effect, affected members were being asked to pay twice. The LED Director of Delivery stated that LED had responded to an identified demand for HYROX and had hoped that it would encourage additional people to engage and join the facility, but there was a cost to becoming HYROX affiliated. He would explore with the relevant team the impact on existing LED members, and report back.

24 **LED KPI Dashboard November 2024**

The Forum received and noted key details of the performance of LED Community Leisure for November 2024.

25 **Leisure Strategy Action Plan Update**

The Senior Leisure Officer introduced this report which provided the latest update on the Leisure Strategy Action Plan.

The report highlighted that many of the actions identified within the Action Plan had been completed or were in progress. Some of the timescales required adjustment due to the strategic review of leisure service delivery currently taking place, this being a more detailed piece of work than originally intended when the Action Plan was written in 2022.

Discussion and clarification included the following points:

- Members were pleased that the Senior Leisure Officer was now in post to progress the actions set out in the Plan, noting that the Council had not had a dedicated resource for leisure for a considerable number of years.
- The Chair asked for a specific update report to the next Forum meeting covering progress with the Cranbrook Leisure Centre proposals.
- The Chair asked that timescales in the Action Plan were updated in order that Officers and Members could see where there were actions which were at risk of not being completed by 2027.
- Members asked to be updated after discussions had taken place regarding the future of Wellbeing Exeter post-April 2025, since it was understood the people involved would no longer be in post after the end of March.

26 **Playing Pitch Audit and Strategy Update**

The Senior Leisure Officer introduced this report which provided an outline of the Playing Pitch Audit (PPA) currently taking place led by leisure consultants, Strategic Leisure.

The PPA would underpin an updated Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS). The report also included the vision and objectives that would be recommended within the proposed PPS from 2025.

Discussion and clarification included the following points:

- The evidence from the Audit should be available by the end of March 2025 and would inform the later stages of the consultation on the Local Plan.
- Officers were asked to review the equalities impact of the Strategy to ensure that careful consideration was given to groups which it might disproportionately impact.
- Members commented on the difficulty around managing demand, expectation, cost, and the requirements of the Local Plan, as well as the demands of central government around house building targets. Members were committed, however, to ensuring that playing pitches were delivered for towns in the long term.

The meeting then went into private session.

27 **Review of Leisure Provision - Funding and Management Agreement with LED Community Leisure**

The Assistant Director – Place, Assets and Commercialisation introduced this report which provided an update on progress made against project milestones.

Members discussed the report and relevant considerations, at length.

The Forum:

1. noted the progress that had been made against the project milestones; and
1. asked officers to take advice concerning the issues which had been discussed and report back to the next Forum meeting.

Attendance List

Councillors present:

P Arnott
K Bloxham
M Goodman
S Hawkins (Chair)
P Hayward
N Hookway
J Loudoun
S Smith
A Teye

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

C Brown
R Collins
P Fernley
R Jefferies
G Jung
M Rixson

Officers in attendance:

Mike O'Mahony, Senior Leisure Officer
Tim Child, Assistant Director Place, Assets & Commercialisation
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Sarah James, Democratic Services Officer
Andrew Wood, Director of Place
Wendy Harris, Democratic Services Officer

LED Leisure representatives in attendance:

Olly Swayne, LED CEO
Richard Purchase, Chair of LED Board
Matt Wright, LED Director of Delivery

Chair

Date:

Report to: Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum
 Date of Meeting 8th April 2025
 Document classification: Part A Public Document
 Exemption applied: None
 Review date for release N/A



Car Park Pressure at Honiton Leisure Centre

Report summary:

1.1 This topic was raised at the 14th January 2025 Leisure Delivery Forum, minuted as follows;

An ongoing issue had been identified with parking at Honiton Leisure Centre particularly when matches were taking place on the adjacent pitches. LED staff had observed inconsiderate and dangerous parking and there had been increased cancellations as well as complaints from users of the Leisure Centre who were unable to park and were therefore missing sessions which they had paid for.

The Assistant Director – Place, Assets & Commercialisation responded that he and the leadership team had been aware of the issues and following discussion, had decided in summer 2024 that it was not appropriate to intervene by introducing charging and parking enforcement; however, due to evidence recently provided by LED, the matter would be reviewed again in the coming weeks, to consider how the issues can be addressed.

1.2 Following the Forum, upon request, LED have provided evidence of health and safety concerns and customer feedback expressing dissatisfaction with the current arrangements and cancelling memberships as a result. They have also sought to allay concerns around income retention stating that this is not a commercial decision to raise income, but a community one to protect users of the facilities.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes ☒ No ☐

Policy Framework Yes ☒ No ☐

Recommendation:

That the Forum notes the progress being made on the car parking arrangements and that a more detailed report will come to the next Forum Meeting.

Reason for recommendation:

To reflect and where possible reduce concerns relating to the existing car park arrangements at Honiton Leisure Centre.

Officer: Mike O'Mahony, Senior Leisure Officer mike.o'mahony@eastdevon.gov.uk; Tim Child, Assistant Director - Place, Assets & Commercialisation tim.child@eastdevon.gov.uk

- ☐ Climate Action and Emergency Response
- ☐ Coast, Country and Environment
- ☐ Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- ☐ Communications and Democracy
- ☐ Economy and Assets
- ☐ Finance

- ☒ Strategic Planning
- ☒ Sustainable Homes and Communities
- ☒ Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism

Equalities impact Low Impact

Any change in car parking arrangements needs to consider accessibility for all people and groups. A full equalities impact assessment will be completed as part of any car park approach agreed.

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

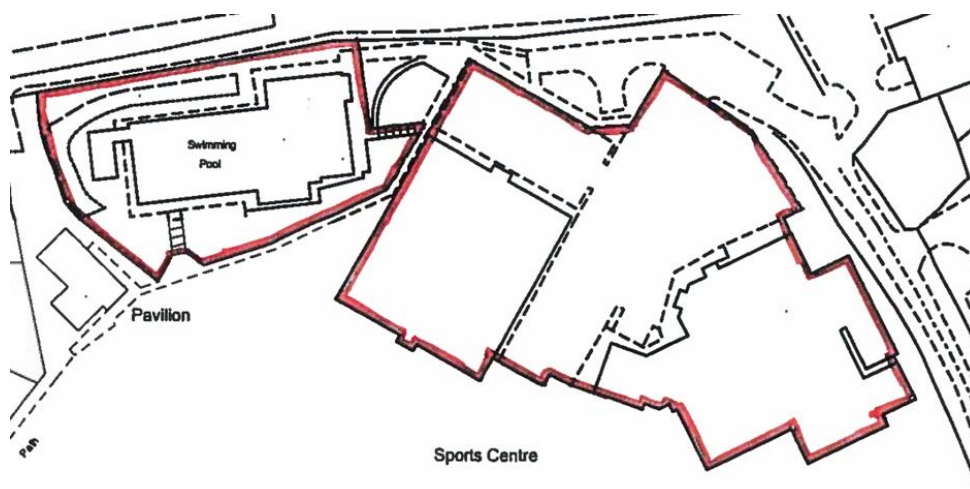
Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☒ A supported and engaged community
- ☐ Carbon neutrality and ecological recovery
- ☐ Resilient economy that supports local business
- ☐ Financially secure and improving quality of services

1.0 Honiton Car Park

1.1 The car park at Honiton sports centre is included within the lease to LED as shown below:-



1.2 . With approximately 75 spaces at the site, since the Centre opened over 30 years ago, the centre management have had issues with people using the car park who are not using either the swimming pool or the sports centre.

1.3 The issue is particularly bad during peak times, when multiple activities are running simultaneously or when the rugby club have matches.

1.4 . The Centre usage is illustrated by the table below

Activity	Peak Use	Number
Gym – 55 Stations	5pm – 8pm Evenings Weekends	50/60% capacity so 25/30 people Steady flow of users = 5/10 people
Studio Classes – 30 Max	5pm – 8pm Evenings	75% capacity so 25 people

Sports Hall	6pm – 8pm Evenings	Between 4/8/16 players depending on activity (i.e. Badminton / 5 a side)
Squash Court	6pm – 8pm Evenings	4 players
Virtual Cycling Studio	6pm – 8pm Evenings	4/5 people using it at a time
Swimming	4pm – 6.30pm Evenings Saturday mornings Saturday afternoons	4 lessons across pool = 32 kids per 30 minutes – changeover times a challenge 4 lessons across pool = 32 kids per 30 Fun and Splash / Parties = 30 kids
Netball League	6pm – 9pm Mondays and Wednesdays	2 courts = 28 players plus subs / spectators at one time.
Rugby Club	Saturdays and Sundays Saturday afternoons Tuesday and Thursdays	Junior Rugby = 20/30 per session Adult Matches = Players and spectators Adult Training - 20/30 per session

- 1.5 . This has led to centre users cancelling booked classes during evenings and weekends as they haven't been able to park. In some instances, members have terminated their membership and gone to other gyms in the area.
- 1.6. In those instances, the car park is not adequately able to accommodate Leisure Centre members. The issue is particularly bad during peak times, when multiple activities are running simultaneously or when the rugby club have matches.
- 1.7. The centre management have expressed Health and Safety concerns as overcrowded parking leads to obscured sightlines, increasing the risk of pedestrian (especially children) collisions. There is also the potential for emergency vehicle access could be critically hindered, delaying response times in emergencies.
- 1.9. The pictures at the end of this report illustrates the severity of the parking issue, highlighting the congestion and pinch points experienced throughout the week. These images underscore the urgent need for a solution to manage the car park more effectively.
- 1.10. Honiton Community College: The introduction of pay and display parking at the college in early 2024 has led to more non-members who are visiting the College using the Leisure Centre car park to avoid fees. There is a planning application currently in progress for a full sized and floodlit All Weather Pitch at the College which could potentially impact on available car parking in the local vicinity.
- 1.11. Honiton Rugby Club: Additional activities at the rugby club during weekends and evenings have significantly increased the demand for parking spaces. The rugby club have been providing their members with information about alternative parking, and an arrangement to use part of the school car park at weekends. However, this does not seem to have solved the problem.
- 1.12. Sidmouth and Exmouth Leisure Centres being situated in seaside towns, have Pay and Display car parks operated by the Council car parking team at both leisure facilities. Leisure facilities on dual use sites share car parking facilities with the school and are free to use in evenings and weekends. The possible exception is Axminster Leisure centre which has a Pay and Display Car Park; however, enforcement seems to be minimal. The Tennis Centre has its own dedicated car park offering free spaces.

3.0 A Way Forward

Officers are in discussion with LED re possible solutions. These include;

- 3.1 . Hybrid Pay and Display / ANPR operation managed by private company.

The land in question is not currently included in the EDDC Off-Street Parking Order and therefore any agreement with a third party to manage the site will not conflict with our current enforcement arrangements. Legal have confirmed that a Parking Places Order is not required for this proposal.

3.2 . Car Park managed by Council

An alternative is to remove the car park from the LED lease and operate it as part of the Councils Car parking Service as a pay and display scheme. This would require resource in terms of set up costs and require the site to be included within the Parking Places Order.

3.3 Car Park monitored without Pay and Display.

Consider an option in which no charge is made, however parking is only available for users of the leisure centre which will be monitored and where necessary enforced.

Next Steps

4.0. For both parties to review the proposals received and consider the best approach to take.

4.1 . Under the constitution, the following is within Assistant Director – Place, Assets and Commercialisation delegations.

“Authority, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder, to agree variations to leases.” (3.32.53).

4.3 Once a decision has been reached and approved, ward members and PFH will be notified about the proposals and subject to feedback (particularly from PH), proceed through a deed of variation agreed with Legal and LED under their lease to implement the preferred scheme.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 The car park at Honiton Leisure Centre is under significant pressure which is likely to increase with the development of a new 3G pitch within the Community College across the road from the Leisure Centre which already have Pay and Display arrangements in place.

5.2 Implementing a new car parking regime system is a crucial step towards alleviating this pressure, addressing health and safety concerns and enhancing the overall experience for users of the facilities by providing safe car parking space availability through a clear and effective parking strategy.

5.3 . It is important that all options are considered as the demand for using the site will not change regardless of the restrictions. There will be increased parking use of nearby residential streets and alternative car parks, potentially causing unrest and issues with traffic movement in the vicinity.

Financial implications:

The alternative solutions are being considered and the financial position will be considered as part of this assessment.

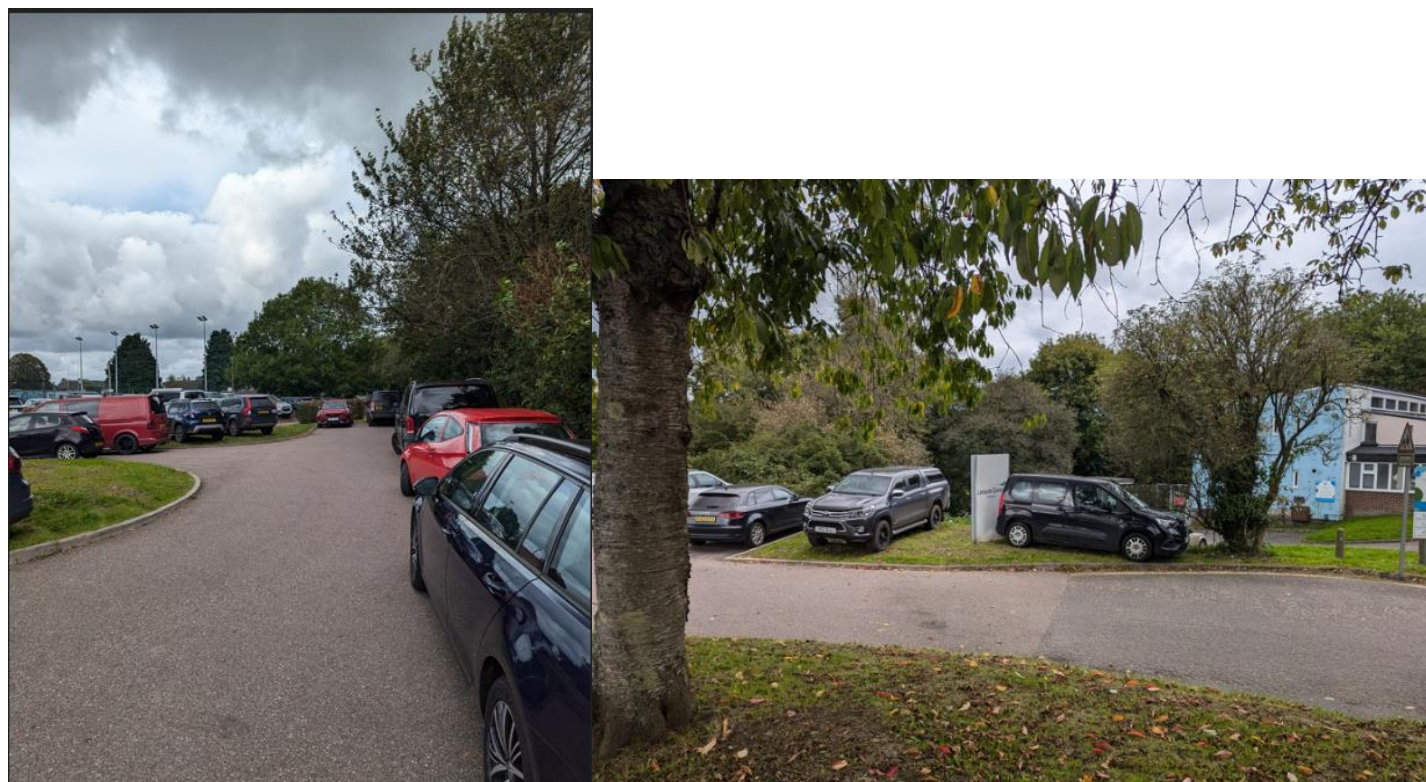
Legal implications:

Any deed of variation will be subject to approval by the legal team.

Net Promoter Score (NSP) Feedback to LED Management

Tag Groups	Comment	Date
Car Parking, Exercise Classes	Parking is problematic when the school term is on as year 6 use the gym car park as if it is their own.	8 months ago

	<p>We need more Substitute instructors for yoga etc so classes aren't cancelled so often.</p> <p>Padding out the class list on the app with virtual classes that don't get used is an irritant. Otherwise, everything is fine</p>	
Car Parking, Exercise Classes, Gym	<p>Hi parking is really difficult. I was close to having to miss a Pilates class due to a sports event and no parking available at the gym. A person doesn't expect parking issues in a Sunday. I also experience this during the week when there are school events on. Really the main reason I will leave the gym</p>	3 months ago
Car Parking	<p>Macy who taught Jack was wonderful. She was so lovely and made Jacks sessions so much fun! We are sceptical for leaving, but with the parking being a huge issue which needs resolving asap and now coming into the winter months Jack was coming out blue from being so cold, we hope to re join in the spring/summer!</p>	2 months ago



See the below example of the car park after Leisure Centre closed on a Saturday. This is full after a rugby game.



LED Facilities and Activities Report April 2025

The Leisure Team has experienced a period of high activity and significant progress over the past three months. Strong demand for indoor activities, driven by prevailing weather conditions, has resulted in increased bookings for swimming and Funsplash sessions. Furthermore, strategic initiatives focused on facility optimisation and service expansion have yielded positive results, contributing to a membership growth of 234 and a peak club live of 11,125.

Key Achievements and Performance Highlights:

- Increased Activity Demand:
 - Adverse weather conditions have significantly boosted demand for indoor leisure activities, particularly swimming and Funsplash sessions, demonstrating the team's ability to capitalise on seasonal trends.
- Enhanced Facility Accessibility:
 - The implementation of self-access modelling at Axminster and Broadclyst Leisure Centres has successfully facilitated extended facility access for local clubs, enabling them to conduct fixtures and support ongoing training for junior and adult members outside of standard operating hours.
- Membership Dynamics:
 - The team welcomed 1,150 new members, while 916 members departed, resulting in a current total membership of 11,125. This indicates a net membership growth and highlights the need to focus on member retention strategies.
- Facility Improvements and Programs:
 - The Ottery Gym and Studio has undergone a significant transformation, featuring refurbished matting from Exmouth, a fresh paint job completed by the team, and the installation of new equipment and lighting. These improvements have demonstrably enhanced the gym's appeal and functionality.
 - Consistent brand development across all sites continues with the ongoing upgrade of desk graphics, facility enhancements, and the implementation of new digital screens.
 - Launch of Pickleball at Colyton and Axminster Leisure Centre
 - Gymnastics at Exmouth is continuing to increase. Exmouth hosted a competition practice in January and an Award Scheme in February which ran in addition to their normal programme. In March we hosted a gymnastics competition with 100 attendances from children across East Devon. These sessions provide additional sporting experiences to children, which is something that is lacking in Devon.
 - Exmouth Tennis Centre has introduced Blue Stage Tennis, a new programme specially designed for children aged 4–6 who are beginners to tennis. This will provide young children with the perfect opportunity to explore and enjoy the sport of tennis, along with this, we have rebranded our 2–4-year-old sessions, now called 'Tots Tennis.' This new name better reflects the purpose of the session and communicates its focus and target audience.
- Digital Service Expansion:

- Following successful trials at other locations, Exmouth Leisure Centre has launched Les Mills On Demand, a virtual fitness solution that allows members to book studio space during off-peak hours. This initiative has proven highly successful, generating over 70 bookings in its first month.
- The Active Standard Initiative:
 - The UK Active – ‘Active Standard’ audits have taken place with LED successfully awarded the accreditation in the first cohort, making LED one of the first trusts in the country to successfully go through the process. This initiative underscores the commitment to maintaining high standards of quality, compliance, and service across all our facilities.

Recommendations and Future Focus:

- Continue to monitor membership trends and implement strategies to enhance member retention.
- Further evaluate and optimise the self-access model to maximise facility utilisation.
- Leverage the success of Les Mills on Demand to explore additional digital service offerings.
- Continue the work to achieve the Active Standard across all sites.
- Continue facility upgrades across all sites.

Community Team

- We started a Gymnastics Project in January at Littleham Primary School for SEND children.

Quote

“I wanted to send an email to say what a big success the gymnastics project has been. their confidence is slowly improving, which in turn is increasing the skill set. We have one child, who is in a wheelchair, telling her mum that Tuesday is her favourite day because she enjoys the gymnastics so much. Roxanne has done an amazing job of making these sessions fully inclusive”

Jo – Pastoral Lead

- The Community Team partnered with AGE UK Devon to assist them in delivering their scam prevention & support programme. This is a project dedicated to safeguarding people aged over 50 from the growing threat of scams. This session was delivered at Exmouth Leisure Centre and saw over 20 people attending.

Quote:

“I just wanted to say a massive thank you to you all for your support in helping to arrange the scams awareness presentation this morning. It was a great success, and I have received some very positive feedback. It’s been a great partnership working experience and I look forward to working with you all again”

Nina – Age UK

- Continued support for Exmouth Stroke Survivors Club with our community instructor Hazel who delivers a weekly seated exercise session.
- Working with the Deaf Academy to provide Pickleball Sessions for their students with Pickleball instructor Dianne.
- Continued delivery of the Wellbeing Walk programme, including supporting the volunteer walk leaders. Additional evening summer walks are being planned ready for their start in May.

- Attendance at Eastern Devon Healthy Aging partnership and CLUK Volunteering Special Interest Group.
- We have a further 2 volunteers to support our gymnastics programme taking us to 9. We are now looking to train several of the volunteers in their level 1 award to assist with developing the programme and sessions further.
- We continue to work with the schools in East Devon regularly– Exeter Road Primary, Littleham Primary, Cranbrook Primary and Secondary Education Campus. We have also been working with Exmouth Community College, Honiton Community College and the Kings School on a shorter basis supporting predominantly Year 8 and 9s. We have been working closely with the pastoral teams to provide pupil premium/children struggling with anxiety, showing them the relationships that physical activity can have to their mental health. We have also been liaising and planning for future sessions with a further 4 schools should the funding allow.
- In February as part of Children’s Mental Health week we took part in the Mental Health ambassadors celebration event that was held for 8 primary schools in Exmouth. This was an opportunity for us to meet the ambassadors and give them practical tools and experience to take the message back to their schools about the relationship between their mental and physical health.
- We were involved in 2 events, a Health and Wellbeing Fayre at Exmouth Community College where we ran an information stall to support both teachers and parents, and the Engage and Connect event at Kings School Ottery.
- We have recently built a relationship with Project Food and are planning to run a pilot project in Littleham Primary in the summer term to show the relationship between nutrition and physical activity.
- In Axminster (The Hangar) we facilitated a Parkinson Café to support people with Parkinson’s with a second session to follow later this month.



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

Actual

10467

Prior Year

10109

% Change
3 Months

1%

Joiners

1,334

1649

-20.74%

Leavers

375

430

-13.59...

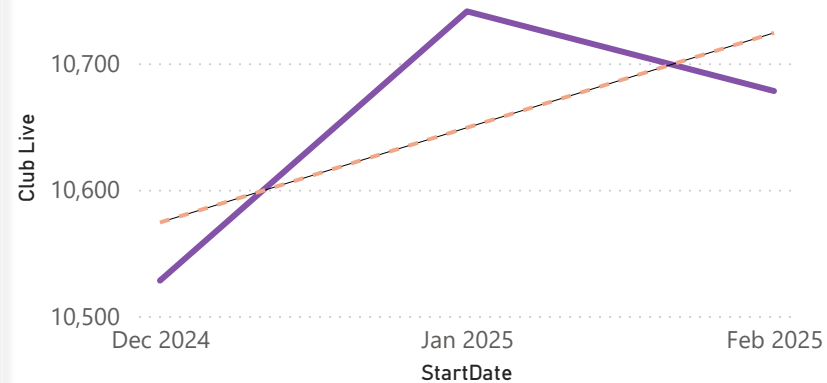
Yield

£33.48

32.05

1.78%

Club Live by Month



Swimming

51,754



Gym

65,380



Group
Exercise

42,787

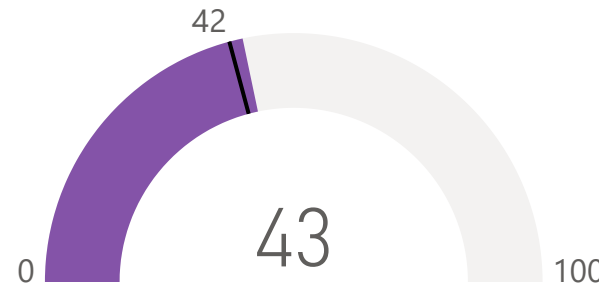


Sports

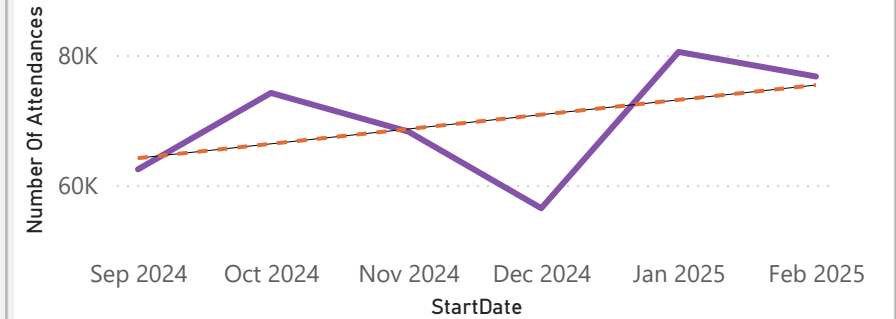
37,166

Total Attendances

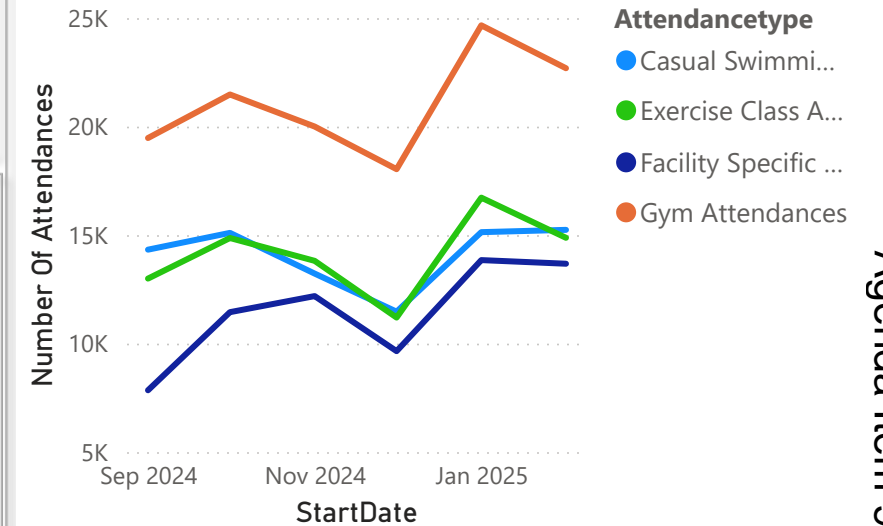
NPS Score



Total Attendance Trend over Previous 6 Months



Attendance by type Previous 6 Months (excluding swim school)



Report to: Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum

Date of Meeting 8th April 2025

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



Playing Pitch Audit and Leisure Strategy Delivery Plan Updates

Report summary:

Further to detailed reports presented to the Leisure Delivery Forum in January 2025, Officers were asked to present the latest updates on the Playing Pitch Audit (PPA) that is now taking place.

The Forum is required to keep under review the Leisure Strategy Delivery Plan and in particular, the timelines, implications for resources and staff capacity issues against the individual priority actions.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes ☒ No ☐

Policy Framework Yes ☒ No ☐

Recommendation:

That the Forum notes the progress that has been made on the Playing Pitch Audit (PPA) and the Leisure Strategy Delivery Plan and highlight any areas that warrant further discussion.

Reason for recommendation:

To comply with a monitoring, delivery and reporting request on the Playing Pitch Audit and the Leisure Strategy Delivery Plan which is under the purview of this Forum.

Officer: Mike O'Mahony, Senior Leisure Officer, email mike.o'mahony@eastdevon.gov.uk

Tim Child, Assistant Director – Place, Assets & Commercialisation, email: tchild@eastdevon.gov.uk, tel 01395 571692

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: Low Risk; The timetable includes both internal and external dependencies and adherence to this timetable will be monitored through the Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum.

Links to background information

Appendix 1 – East Devon Playing Pitch Audit and Strategy Programme – Update April 2025

Appendix 2 – Leisure Strategy Action Plan – Update April 2025

Previous Reports

Leisure Delivery Forum Report – January 2025 [Leisure Strategy Action Plan Update](#)

Leisure Delivery Forum Report – January 2025 [Playing Pitch Audit and Strategy Update.pdf](#)

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☒ A supported and engaged community
- ☐ Carbon neutrality and ecological recovery
- ☒ Resilient economy that supports local business
- ☐ Financially secure and improving quality of service

1.0 Background and context

1.1 Playing Pitch Audit

The overall Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) is underpinned by audits, consultation and a “needs led” analysis of sport and recreation across the district creating a detailed evidence base. Due to the long-term nature of the plan, it is essential that it responds to changing needs and priorities. “Regular consultation and review of supporting information is important, particularly to provide robust evidence to support and inform planning and investment decisions”. The study based on the Sport England guidance has 5 stages broken down into individual steps as detailed in the programme in Appendix 1.

- 1.2 The Audit has now completed Stage B – Supply and Demand Data within the Project Plan Timescale (February 2025). Some follow up is needed to engage with more Town and Parish Councils to complete the surveys that were issued.

Undertake site audits for winter sports (Summer sports undertaken during peak play in the summer)
Consultation with neighbouring authorities. Gather information regarding significant pitch or housing developments and displaced demand
Club, school, town council and parish surveys distributed. Request affiliation data from all NGBs as well as pitch assessment information e.g. PitchPower
Draft Stage B document using info from site audits, NGB affiliation data and online surveys
Distribute Stage B summer data to steering group. Request feedback and any missing information
Steering group provides feedback on Stage B document
Draft final stage B document, showing supply and demand information across all sports. Request steering group sign off.

1.3 Stage C – Supply and Demand Analysis.

This stage is due to be completed before end of May 25.

Agree the current and future population statistics to be used, information on housing developments etc, across study area and in the neighbouring authorities.
Understand the situation at each site - compare supply with demand, evaluate spare capacity, any key issues
Develop understanding of current community provision in the study area
Understand the potential future demand - take into account population change, participation targets, any changes to supply etc.

Identify key findings - current and future supply and demand for provision, is provision accessible and appropriately managed
Distribute stage C to steering group. Provide time for NGBs to respond with changes/recommendations

2.1 Leisure Strategy Delivery Plan

The Leisure and Built Facilities Strategy was adopted in June 2022. This outlines the Council's plans for improving leisure facilities and services in the district, with a focus on providing opportunities for physical activity and improving the quality of life for residents. Alongside that was a Built Leisure Strategy Action Plan with defined priorities over the lifespan of the strategy (i.e. 2022 – 2027). This is attached as Appendix 2.

3.0. Discussion items:

Forum to

- Review the completion timelines as indicated in the Leisure Strategy Action Plan spreadsheet attached with the report. – are these still achievable and realistic?
- Raise any issues of concern in meeting timelines that can lead to a review of completion dates and also if additional resource is required to enable the action to be delivered

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 The strategies and action plans support efforts to ensure that the sports facilities in the district continue to provide a choice of quality and accessible opportunities for participation in sport.

Financial implications:

There are no immediate financial implications identified at this stage, but the PPS itself will require financial resources to deliver, and this will need to be considered in its formulation.

Legal implications:

There are no immediate legal implications. However, as noted in Appendix 1 (Stage E: Step 8), full member approval may be required to the revised Strategy when it is in its final form. This should be addressed at the point that the draft Strategy is submitted to Cabinet for approval, by way of Officer recommendations stage.

East Devon Leisure Delivery Forum – April 2025

Playing Pitch and Leisure Strategy Update Report

Appendix 1

East Devon Playing Pitch Audit and Strategy Programme – Update April 2025

		Scope	Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy (PPOSS)
		Facilities	Grass pitches (football, cricket, rugby union, rounders, softball) Artificial grass pitches – 3G, sand-based Outdoor Tennis/Netball Courts
		Sports	Football – junior and senior Rugby Union – junior and senior Cricket – junior and senior Hockey – junior and senior Tennis Bowls Netball
Stage A	Step 1: Prepare and tailor the approach		
Step 1	<p>Firstly, review the audit and demand work completed to date and what has changed since the 2015/16 PPOSS and the most recent audit in 2022.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with all pitch NGBs and Sport England and check if in the light of identified changes in terms of pitch numbers/quality, Agreed to re-do all audits as it should be completed every 5 years and 2025 updates need to reflect latest trends and changes. (i.e. girls football) 		
Stage B:	Step 2: Gathering supply information and views		
Step 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify Supply - qualitative and quantitative audit of all agreed facility types. We will audit summer sports first and then winter sports. We will need confirmation of any technical Pitch Power assessments undertaken since 2021. <p>We understand there are 281 pitches located across 202 sites. Of these 13 are artificial grass pitches. There are in addition 87 outdoor tennis courts on 38 sites.</p>		
Stage B:	Step 3: Gathering demand information and views		
Step 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify any changes in quality of pitches- location, pitch type and nature (see above) Identify all relevant clubs and teams across the sports in scope (2024/25 season) and contact them (online survey or face to face dependant on NGB preference) to recheck the demand – level and nature; this is likely to be most critical in football where an increase in junior teams will impact on the number and type of pitches needed. Identify the extent of the changes (quality, number and types of teams) and which sport(s)/facilities are affected 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify Demand - consultation with stakeholders, schools, clubs, parishes and town councils, NGBs, Sport England Map all provision (using GIS) to show current locations, types and extent of outdoor pitches and facilities <p>Consultation will be undertaken through a combination of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face to face meetings (assuming these are possible) Online meetings Online and hard copy surveys Telephone calls Focus groups (in person/online) Emails <p>Source information from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ONS/Strategic housing Allocation reports Active Lives Pitch Power NGBs Active Places Power NGB Strategies Club, Parish and Town Council surveys School surveys League consultation
Stage C Step 4	Step 4: Understand how each site is being used Understand the situation at each site through stakeholder and wider consultation, audit and assessment, and identify how each site is being used - what, who, when.
Stage C Step 5	Step 5: Develop the current picture of provision Understand population increases and new housing development alongside the strategic context to inform the wider background to individual pitches, teams and sports.
Stage C Step 6	Step 6: Identify the key findings and issues What are the main characteristics of the current and future supply of, and demand for, provision? 2. Is there enough accessible and secured community use provision to meet current and future demand? 3. Is the provision that is accessible of sufficient quality and appropriately managed? Sign Off Stage C against Stage C Checklist
Stage D Step 7	Step 7: Develop the recommendations and action plan Prepare draft and Final reports, all technical appendices and Recommendations, and the Action Plans – site by site and sport by sport.

Develop any new scenarios relevant to the new Local Plan and assess impact against the findings of the supply and demand assessment.

Application of the Supply and Demand Analysis - Where is provision lacking and for whom? What type of provision is needed moving forward and why? What are the opportunities to address under-supply?

We would use Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator Tool and current 24/25 team numbers for each sport plus the number of new homes multiplied by average household size to identify the development population household size to be agreed with planners. The revised stage C and D analysis will identify additional capacity, if any, at accessible existing sites.

- Develop Recommendations for future provision – based on Protect, Enhance, Provide,
- Develop facility type and site-specific action plans
- Provide draft and final reports

At each stage we would draft the PPOSS Stage for discussion and sign off by Sport England, NGBs and the council.

The above covers PPOSS Stages A-D; Stage E is effectively done through a Steering group once the PPOSS is signed off.

We would need the council to provide:
Population data, GIS layers to facilitate mapping, stakeholder contacts, signposting to key policy documents.

Stage E - Steps 8, 9 and 10 are usually delivered by the Council.

<i>Stage E:</i>	Step 8: Write and adopt the Strategy
<i>Step 8</i>	Write the Strategy and report seeking endorsement by Cabinet /Council.
<i>Stage E:</i>	Step 9 and 10: Deliver the strategy and keep it robust and up to date
<i>Step 9</i>	Apply and deliver the strategy
<i>Step 10</i>	Keep the strategy robust and up to date

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL LEISURE STRATEGY - 5 YEAR ACTION PLAN 2022-2027				PROGRESS REPORT UPDATED 8th April 2025 (proposed changes in red)			
Key Actions		Priority ranking 1 - High 2 - Medium 3 - Low	Timescale (completion by)	Responsible officer(s) / organisation	Resources required	Progress (Click on cell to show drop down list arrow)	Comments
1	Facilities that meet the current and future sporting and leisure needs of East Devon residents.						
a)	EDDC to revisit all stock condition survey data and associated costs within the context of the recommendations from the strategy and the need to retain and invest in its existing portfolio of leisure facilities (priority facilities are Exmouth, Honiton, Axminster). Agree a 5 – 10 year planned preventative maintenance programme of works – capital and revenue.	1	2022/23 Survey Completed 2024.	EDDC Place, Assets and Commercialisation (Leisure) Team	Internal EDDC officer time	In progress	Building Condition Survey Final Report received Feb 25. Programme of PPM works to be drafted that will underpin capital requests by Summer 2025. Any immediate priorities to be reviewed and addressed where necessary.
b)	Building Condition Survey to be updated every 5 years.	3 Now a priority 3 as one completed in 2024.	2026/27 completed in 2024 - Next one would now be 2029.	EDDC Place, Assets and Commercialisation (Leisure) Team	Internal EDDC officer time. External property consultants?	Completed	Please see update above - Next survey would now be completed in 2029 outside of this action plan window.
c)	Continued medium term operation and minimal investment (to ensure H and S compliance) in Broadclyst LC to be agreed, until such time as decision is made on provision of new leisure centre for Cranbrook and associated timescales for delivery are known.	3	2022/23	EDDC Place, Assets and Commercialisation (Leisure) Team	Internal EDDC officer time. New Leisure Local facility circa £14m (as of Nov 24).	Completed	Since previous update, EDDC Property Services team have completed the roof works to the Sports Hall . See note re: new local Leisure Facility below.
d)	EDDC to undertake a site options appraisal to address identified shortfall in leisure facility provision highlighted within the Leisure Strategy. The priority focus should be on: • Cranbrook – 6 lane 25m pool, health and fitness, 4 court sports hall , 2 studios (small pool/ Local pool /leisure as a minimum), to ideally align to development of Town Centre • Exmouth - ATP • Honiton - ATP • Axminster – Netball Courts Consideration should be given to new and existing sites and include an integrated offer of new leisure centre(s) provision and separate arrangements for individual sports/activities, working with partner organisations in the community.	1	2023/24	EDDC Planning Team EDDC Place, Assets and Commercialisation (Leisure) Team Devon County Council Exeter City Council Local Delivery Pilot Relevant schools and sports clubs NGBs	Internal EDDC officer time. External consultants for Cranbrook business case – circa £50k.	In progress	EDDC's Planning team have commissioned an outline scoping document for a potential new swimming pool and leisure facility for Cranbrook. This has indicative costings and will be part of the ongoing discussions and masterplanning work linked to the town centre development scheme. An Officer Cranbrook Leisure Centre Working Group is established to feed into existing work streams.(i.e. Town Programme and Steering Groups) The Playing Pitch Audit is currently being undertaken by Strategic Leisure to update all evidence of supply and demand and will inform the Delivery Action Plan proposals that will inform future capital and revenue requests

Key Actions		Priority ranking 1 - High 2 - Medium 3 - Low	Timescale (completion by)	Responsible officer(s) / organisation	Resources required	Progress (Click on cell to show drop down list arrow)	Comments
e)	<p>As part of 1(d) above, EDDC and LED to further investigate options for moving existing Health and Fitness provision out of existing dual use sites to:</p> <p>(1) improve daytime access to those who would benefit the most, (2) improve the size and scope of the offer to the public, and (3) improve the financial viability for both EDDC and LED.</p> <p>As a priority, EDDC and LED should engage with Cloakham Lawn Sports Club to review options for relocating existing Health and Fitness provision from Axminster LC to the Sports Club site which would enable extended community access.</p>	1	2022/23	<p>EDDC Planning Team</p> <p>EDDC Place, Assets and Commercialisation (Leisure) Team</p> <p>LED</p> <p>Devon County Council Relevant Schools and sports clubs.</p>	<p>Internal EDDC officer time - leisure, legal, asset management</p> <p>Devon County Council Relevant Schools External leisure consultants?- circa £2,500k.</p>	In progress	<p>The provision of a new fitness and studio at the Hangar site in Axminster has now been completed and provides full community access throughout the week.</p> <p>Further to update in previous line, Cranbrook's Leisure centre facilities are part of a separate commissioned programme which is updated on at Forum meetings.</p>
f)	The refurbishment of Colyton ATP to be undertaken as a priority during Summer 2022 and for Exmouth ATP to completed by Autumn 2023 and for these works to be reflected in the Council's capital strategy.	1	2023/24	<p>EDDC Place, Assets and Commercialisation (Leisure) Team</p> <p>LED</p> <p>Colyton Grammar School</p>	<p>Internal EDDC officer time</p> <p>LED</p> <p>External contractors</p>	Completed	Colyton ATP - Successfully completed with a full refurbishment of the ATP and floodlights ahead of schedule. Completed October 2022.
g) page 24	EDDC to seek pre-app advice from the Planning Authority regarding the provision of floodlights at Sidmouth LC ATP to improve utilisation of the facility and the financial viability of the overall site. Further consultation to be undertaken, scheme to be costed and planning application progressed subject to advice received.	2	<p>2023/24</p> <p>To be adjusted to 2026/27</p>	<p>EDDC Planning</p> <p>Local Town Cllrs</p> <p>EDDC Place, Assets and Commercialisation (Leisure) Team</p> <p>LED</p>	<p>Internal EDDC officer time</p> <p>LED</p> <p>External contractors</p>	Not started	<p>An update will need to be provided to the Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum about the status of this project and if there is funding available.</p> <p>The school's ATP is nearing its target date for replacement and so there is an opportunity to link the 2 projects together.</p> <p>To be updated following Playing Pitch Audit.</p>
h)	<p>EDDC to renegotiate all existing dual use facility agreements, in favour of the Council to increase access and value for the East Devon Community.</p> <p>Daytime access is the priority to achieve.</p> <p>Following re-negotiation daytime programmes to be developed focussing on older people.</p>	1	2024/25	<p>EDDC Legal Services</p> <p>EDDC Place, Assets and Commercialisation (Leisure) Team</p> <p>LED</p> <p>Devon County Council</p> <p>Schools and Board of Governors</p>	<p>Internal EDDC officer time</p> <p>LED</p> <p>External contractors</p> <p>Internal EDDC officer time - leisure, legal*, asset management</p> <p>Devon County Council Relevant Schools External leisure consultants? Circa £5k</p> <p>*Additional dedicated legal resources required</p>	In progress	<p>Progress made with Colyton Grammer School and a new agreement</p> <p>Other active discussions with Axe Vale Community College, Kings School, Honiton Community College, Sidmouth College and Clyst Vale Community College have stalled as schools are reluctant to take on a revised arrangmeent on their improvement/maintnenace works that will mean increasing their contribution.</p> <p>Legal have been reviewing all the lease agreements for the dual use sites so we can better understand our position on this matter.</p>

Key Actions		Priority ranking 1 - High 2 - Medium 3 - Low	Timescale (completion by)	Responsible officer(s) / organisation	Resources required	Progress (Click on cell to show drop down list arrow)	Comments
i)	EDDC and LED to review indoor and outdoor tennis court programmes of use districtwide with a view to improving utilisation of courts and income generation, allowing reinvestment of monies into ongoing court refurbishment. Consideration to be given to extending Clubspark roll out for ease of booking and provision of balanced programme of casual use, coaching, outdoor exercise classes etc. plus its revenue benefits.	3	2024/25	EDDC Place, Assets and Commercialisation (Leisure) Team LED LTA	Internal EDDC officer time LED External contractors	In progress	LTA have awarded £38,985 towards introduction of a Clubspark initiative at Coburg Gardens. (Details in Jan 25 update) Officers met with LTA in mid March to discuss a District wide Tennis Strategy with a clear emphasis around East Devon Indoor Tennis Centre and outside part courts. In addition, the strategy will consider the advent of Pickle Ball and Padel Tennis opportunities. This work will form part of the Playing Pitch Strategy.
j)	EDDC will seek where possible to improve disability access within existing sites and ensure that all new leisure facility provision complies with The Equalities Act 2010.	2	2023/24 To be adjusted to 2026/27	EDDC Place, Assets and Commercialisation (Leisure) Team LED	Internal EDDC officer time, and input from Edith Stokes EDI Advisor LED External disability consultants	Not started	This action will need to be discussed and agreed between LED and the PAC team to prioritise sites and budgets.
2 EDDC priorities are aligned to and compliment Outreach Health and Wellbeing.							
a)	EDDC to appoint an officer to be responsible for: 1. co-ordinating the delivery of health and wellbeing across the district; 2. developing a coordinated and integrated health and wellbeing programme across Council departments, LED and third sector partners based on leisure strategy, public health, Active Devon outcomes etc to ensure there is no duplication of resources; 3. represent EDDC at partner meetings; 4. provide a point of contact for physical activity in EDDC who can signpost community or partner queries; 5. monitoring and reviewing this programme on a periodic basis; 6. promoting health and wellbeing districtwide; 7. a contact point for LED who drives what they deliver over and above their core service of facility management.	2	2023/24 Senior Leisure Officer appointed November 2024	EDDC Senior Leisure Officer in liaison with Health and Wellbeing Officer; with EDDC Public Health Project Officer; LED staff; Streetscene officers - for parks, play areas & outdoor gyms etc	officer resource	Completed	Senior Leisure Officer now establishing networks and contacts with colleagues and partners to cover points 1 - 7 Re 6: Public Health Officer - Uses the term "health messaging" in role = disseminating HWB messages internally & externally;.
b)	Development of a coordinated and integrated health and wellbeing programme across Council departments, LED and third sector partners based on leisure strategy, public health strategy, Active Devon outcomes etc.	2	2023/24	EDDC Health and Wellbeing Officer / Senior Leisure Officer / EDDC Public Health Project Officer; Streetscene [parks etc] LED Community Outreach Team / all LED teams EDDC HR Team (Sarah Vincent)	EDDC Health and Wellbeing Officer / Senior Leisure Officer Funding from different Sources including EDDC	Completed	This work is currently being delivered through the LED Outreach team programme and also supplemented through the UK SPF leisure programme. The Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum receive regular updates on progress.being made in how the off site leisure work is meeting EDDC's Public Health priorities. EDDC HR's Happy Healthy Here campaign for staff also in place.

Key Actions		Priority ranking 1 - High 2 - Medium 3 - Low	Timescale (completion by)	Responsible officer(s) / organisation	Resources required	Progress (Click on cell to show drop down list arrow)	Comments
c)	EDDC to update contract agreement with LED to reflect the Leisure Strategy and the health and wellbeing outcomes on which the leisure operator should focus. The contract agreement should incorporate clear Health and Wellbeing KPI's aligned to Public Health and Active Devon outcomes, against which the operator will be measured.	2	2022/23 Further Progress in 2024/26	EDDC Senior Leisure Officer	Internal EDDC officer time LED	In progress	Meeting held early 2024 with Officers from EDDC and LED on looking to better integrate the Public Health Plan objectives for improving physical wellbeing and LED's outreach programme. A detailed proposal came forward from LED for the 2024/25 financial year requesting an additional £25K for their outreach programme to support these activities. This was approved and reported on by LED at Forum meetings.

Key Actions		Priority ranking 1 - High 2 - Medium 3 - Low	Timescale (completion by)	Responsible officer(s) / organisation	Resources required	Progress (Click on cell to show drop down list arrow)	Comments
3	Effective partnerships delivering a sustainable community sport and leisure offer.						
a)	EDDC to work with Active Devon based on the alignment between the two strategies. Regular meetings to be established between Active Devon, EDDC and LED to develop a co-ordinated approach to delivery of key outcomes.	3	2023/24 Further Progress in 2024/26	EDDC Place, Assets and Commercialisation (Leisure) Team	Senior Leisure Officer as above.	In progress	Last Quarter Update: Contact made with Active Devon and attending next county wide meeting in February.2025. Met with Devon Leisure Officers Forum in February 25 Met Devon FA, RFU and LTA re matters in District and Playing Pitch Audit. Work with LED on UKSPF funding bid for 2025.26
b)	EDDC to engage with the Local Delivery Pilot to develop a partnership approach and forward plan for new indoor leisure facility provision in Cranbrook	2	2022/23 Further Progress in 2024/25	EDDC to engage with the Local Delivery Pilot to develop a partnership approach and forward plan for new indoor leisure facility provision in Cranbrook.	Internal EDDC officer time External Consultants for Cranbrook Business Case – circa £50k External capital funding – possibly £1.5-£2m? (New Sport England Places Fund from April 2023)	In progress	Funding was sought and approved by 27 March 2024 Cabinet meeting to create posts for the 2024/25 financial year for a Community Connector, Community Builder and Project Manager posts to support the Sport England Local Delivery Project within Cranbrook whilst seeking ongoing funding for the three posts to widen the programme to other areas of East Devon to help deliver the wider priorities within the Leisure & Built Facilities Strategy 2021-31. A provision of a budget of £76,974 for the 2024/25 financial year to fund the Community Connector, Community Builder and Project Manager posts
c) page 27	Work in partnership with Devon County Council to map and promote existing and new cycle and walking routes district wide and the benefits of active travel.	2	2024/25 To be adjusted to 2026/28	EDDC Green Infrastructure Project Manager New EDDC Senior Leisure Officer Marketing / Communications Team; Public Health Project Officer; Climate Change Officer; Countryside; Streetscene Devon CC	Senior Leisure Officer as above.	In progress	It has started,Benefits include leisure enables active travel which encourages individual health benefits "good for a person; good for the planet", so contributes to our climate emergency activities too. Cycle Routes on Travel Devon Cycle Routes public viewer. https://map.devon.gov.uk/portal/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=a37bf69501b84ad0a3a2ef11adbaf03d Leaflets local to East Devon, (Check with Countryside Team)
3d	NEW - Second new town development - working with Planning teams, design codes & policies...(Proposed for April 25 Leisure Delivery Forum)	High		EDDC to engage with the Local Delivery Pilot to develop a partnership approach and forward plan for new indoor leisure facility provision in second community.			
4	Harnessing the value of the great outdoors.						

Key Actions		Priority ranking 1 - High 2 - Medium 3 - Low	Timescale (completion by)	Responsible officer(s) / organisation	Resources required	Progress (Click on cell to show drop down list arrow)	Comments
a)	<p>EDDC new Health and Wellbeing Programme (2 (2) above) to incorporate informal and organised activities based on using the great outdoors to encourage increased levels of participation in physical activity e.g. healthy walks and cycle rides, sea/wild water swimming, community allotments, conservation volunteering activities, orienteering, Parkrun, Couch to 5K. To be delivered in partnership with Council departments, LED, and other third sector organisations.</p> <p>Could be extended to advocate the value of green prescribing.</p>	2	2023/24	<p>Senior Leisure Officer working in tandem with other partners.</p> <p>Marketing / Communications Team; Public Health Project Officer; Climate Change Officer; Countryside; Streetscene</p> <p>Devon CC</p>	Appointment of Senior Leisure Officer working in tandem with EDDC Health & Wellbeing Officer and partners. <i>PH Project Officer, Countryside team, Streetscene, and many volunteers!</i>	In progress	<p>This action also includes allotments and conservation volunteering so requires cross department/ club involvement. . This has been integrated into EDDC/LED's outreach contract and supplemented by the UK SPF lesiure programme to help deliver out of site activities to more of the district's communities.</p> <p>The Leisure Delivery Forum receives regular updates on how this is progressing and the range of activities being provided.</p>

Key Actions		Priority ranking 1 - High 2 - Medium 3 - Low	Timescale (completion by)	Responsible officer(s) / organisation	Resources required	Progress (Click on cell to show drop down list arrow)	Comments
5	Review of the existing leisure management contract.						
a)	<p>EDDC to renegotiate and possibly extend the terms of the existing contract with LED. As a minimum, the following principles should be incorporated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LED to submit business plan through to end of contract period which will present year 1 baseline breakdown of all income and expenditure (Profit and Loss Account) for each site including the health and wellbeing programme. • The business plan will provide the equivalent information for each year through to the end of the contract period, showing the management fee payable by the Council to the operator, increased by RPI annually. • The business plan will clearly show the management fee payment allocated to each site P and L account. • This management fee will replace the existing 5 year fixed service fee. • In re-basing the contract, EDDC should consider the introduction of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) a utility benchmarking procedure to be applied at a frequency to be determined. Whilst the utility tariff rate should be shared between Council and LED, the risk associated with increased energy consumption should remain the responsibility of the operator. (2) Pandemic cover, ensuring that LED will be in a 'no better, no worse' financial position, but any payments will not be unrestricted and will follow an 'open book' policy. 	1	2022/23	<p>EDDC Place, Assets and Commercialisation (Leisure) Team</p> <p>LED</p>	<p>Internal EDDC officer time</p> <p>External consultants - circa £5k</p>	Completed	EDDC have been working with Strategic Leisure to provide a new template for agreeing a rolling 2 year management fee that is more agile in its ability to read to issues around utility costs, decarbonising its pools, wage costs and impacts of cost of living.
b)	Any revised contract should clearly set out EDDC's key principles and outcomes for sport, health and physical activity and establish key performance indicators (KPIs) against which the contractor will be monitored e.g. participation targets for under-represented groups, levels/frequency of participation measured against Sport England Active Lives annual data returns, East Devon Public Health priorities etc.	1	<p>2022/23</p> <p>Initial Action Completed</p> <p>This has now developed into a much broader action which is reported to the Form seperately.</p>	EDDC Place, Assets and Commercialisation (Leisure) Team	<p>Internal EDDC officer time</p> <p>External consultants</p>	Completed	<p>Negotiations completed on the 2024/25 management fee contract and the Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum receives regular updates as part of its agenda on the budget.</p> <p>This also includes reporting on agreed KPIs on achieving not only savings but also how LED is delivering a leisure contract into our communities and improving communities health & wellbeing.</p> <p>KPIs will require setting as part of Leisure Review.</p>

Report to: Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum

Date of Meeting 8th April 2025

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



Cranbrook Leisure Centre

Report summary:

At the request of the Leisure Delivery Forum in January 2025, an update on Cranbrook Leisure Centre project was requested.

A project team is now in place to put the council in the best possible position to progress with delivery, for a leisure centre in Cranbrook. This enabled work to begin to establish core project principles and matters such as an outline business case, 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:

That the Forum notes the progress being made by the Cranbrook Leisure Centre Project Team and highlight any areas that warrant further discussion.

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: Mike O'Mahony, Senior Leisure Officer mike.o'mahony@eastdevon.gov.uk; Thea Billeter, Cranbrook New Community Manager, tbilleter@eastdevon.gov.uk

- ☐ Climate Action and Emergency Response
- ☐ Coast, Country and Environment
- ☐ Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- ☐ Communications and Democracy
- ☐ Economy and Assets
- ☐ Finance
- ☒ 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

Previous update to the Forum –

[Agenda for Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum on Tuesday, 9th April, 2024, 10.00 am - East Devon](#)

Town Centre Masterplan-

[Agenda for Strategic Planning Committee on Tuesday, 29th October, 2024, 9.00 am - East Devon](#)

Final Masterplan document - [Cranbrook Town Centre Masterplan - East Devon](#)

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☒ A supported and engaged community
- ☐ Carbon neutrality and ecological recovery
- ☐ Resilient economy that supports local business
- ☐ Financially secure and improving quality of services

1.0 Town Centre Masterplan

- 1.1 In October 2024 the council's Strategic Planning Committee endorsed a masterplan for the town centre. The masterplan sets out where the main uses will be located and high-level principles for the form and feel of the town centre. The location for these key uses is shown on figure 1 below.



Figure 1 Indicative masterplan layout for the town centre

- 1.2 As can be seen in figure 1, the chosen location for the leisure facility is at the southern end of the town centre, north of Badger Way. This site was chosen due to its relatively flat nature, unlike other town centre parcels of land. It is also part of the site that is already owned freehold by the council. The site is large enough to accommodate a leisure centre with swimming pool (but not include a sports hall).

- 1.3 The chosen site seeks to locate the health and wellbeing centre adjacent to the leisure facility. This campus-based approach rather than a fully integrated co-location approach is being taken forward to recognise the likely difference in delivery timescales of the two projects, together with the complication of asset management.
- 1.4 It should be noted that NHS Devon are currently progressing work on a business case for the health facility and council officers and members are involved in that project. In addition, Devon County Council wish to explore opportunities with both the council and the NHS regarding the integration of space within one or both of the buildings to operate library and youth services and a family hub. At the time of writing, these discussions have not yet begun.
- 1.5 In addition to the Cranbrook Plan DPD identifying a leisure centre as being a key facility in Cranbrook, the Council's Leisure and Built Facilities Strategy was approved in October 2022 and also contains within it, a recommendation for a leisure centre in the town, to include a 6 lane, 25m swimming pool, health and fitness studio, 4 court sports hall and 2 studios as a minimum. As already alluded to, with the proposed allocation of land in the new Local Plan for a second new community of up to 10,000 homes, it will be appropriate to ascertain if the facilities requirements change. It should also be noted that the final facilities mix is not expected to include a 4-court sports hall.

2.0 Project Team

- 2.1 A project team has been established comprising officers from within the Place directorate and Cllr Olive as the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning. Terms of Reference have been established that include a clear focus on outcomes and drafting necessary project documentation such as a project plan and risk register.
- 2.2 The purpose of the Group is:

To ensure that Cabinet can take a decision in relation to the development of a new Leisure Centre in Cranbrook that is informed by the best possible assessment of the available options and the associated benefits and costs.
- 2.3 The objectives of the Group are to:
 - To identify and explore all options for a new Leisure Centre in Cranbrook
 - To identify the stages of work and reporting process to achieve the stated purpose
 - To complete an outline business plan that will inform the case for a new Leisure Facility.
 - To develop a clear funding strategy to cover the capital costs for a new facility.
 - To develop a clear operating model to inform the revenue position of providing the services.
 - To develop a clear approach to the delivery of the scheme including procurement of necessary consultancy services and contractors for each stage of the project including design and build elements.
 - To consider management arrangements to operate and maintain the facility that will also inform the options appraisal for the Leisure Management of the leisure facilities within East Devon.
 - To develop documentation to support EDDC's chosen way forward which contributes to the delivery of EDDC's adopted Leisure Strategy and outcomes of the Leisure Review.
 - Ensure that all relevant information is assessed to inform reporting to Members.
 - Develop a strategic approach to deliver the Members' chosen way forward.
- 2.4 The most immediate steps within multiple work streams include further work to develop an accommodation schedule to include consideration of the impact of the proposed second new community, high level cost estimates from a Quantity Surveyor, business planning and funding strategy and initial campus design work. These steps will contribute towards the longer term objectives set out above.

- 2.5 Given the very clear impetus from the NHS to progress work on the health facility, the leisure centre project is looking to develop an initial business case in a timeframe that is co-terminus with that of the NHS project – end June 2025. This timescale is ambitious and will not see the production of a fully completed business case, however it is important to try and progress alongside the health facility due to the proposed campus-based approach to delivery.
- 3.0 Funding**
- 3.1 To complete the workstreams set out in paragraph 2.4 within the timescale will necessitate the support of external consultants and expertise. The council has a One Public Estate programme aimed at bringing together public sector services as part of health and leisure facilities at Cranbrook.
- 3.2 Approximately £81,000 remains in that programme, which is intended as a revenue contribution towards reaching RIBA stage 3 for each project (planning application submission). Up to £39,500 (including £5,500 contingency) of this money has been committed toward the current NHS-led health facility project, leaving up to £46,000 toward the leisure project and commissioning of design work for a campus layout for the two facilities. In addition to these monies, there are existing funds available from the council's Enterprise Zone programme and that have been allocated to projects within Cranbrook Town Centre.
- 3.3 As set out in previous reports 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 £4.75m 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.
- 3.4 The first two outline planning applications for the expansion of Cranbrook have been approved and both secure some funding for the pooled category 4 contributions (the infrastructure category that both the leisure centre and health and wellbeing project fall under). There are resolutions to approve a further three outline planning applications and live applications for approximately 550 homes at the Grange expansion area. Together, these applications make up the vast majority of the allocated expansion area land.
- 3.5 In addition to the s106 monies, together with Exeter City Council, the council has Sport England Place Partnership status. Being part of this programme provides the opportunity for capital funding bids that are exclusive to Place Partners. Bids for external grant funding are often most likely to be successful if a project is 'shovel ready'; this further enhances the imperative nature of progressing the leisure centre project.

4.0 Leisure Delivery Review

- 4.1 On a parallel path, a Leisure Officer Working Group has also been established to help inform the Leisure Management options appraisal being carried out and explore the best possible arrangements for the future.
- 4.2 A soft market testing exercise as part of the Leisure Review included some questions specifically relating to Cranbrook. As well as providing real insight into the state of the Leisure Contract Market (particularly in the Southwest region), the findings showed real interest from operators from building through to managing the new leisure centre. A separate report on the Leisure Review is on the Agenda under Part B.

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:

As this is an update report only, there are no substantive legal issues directly arising.

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