

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Cranbrook Placemaking Group held at Conference Room, Younghayes Centre, Cranbrook on 1 July 2024

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 9.30 am and ended at 10.20 am

1 Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interests.

2 Public Speaking

There were no members of the public registered to speak.

3 Matters of Urgency

There were no matters of urgency.

4 Confidential/exempt Items

There was one confidential/exempt item discussed under item 9.

5 Town Centre Masterplan

Before the start of the meeting Councillor Todd Olive was elected Chair for the Group and in the absence of the Chair panel members agreed that an EDDC Cranbrook Ward Member would chair the meeting.

Councillor Todd Olive, Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made around the table.

Thea Billeter, the Cranbrook New Community Manager provided an update on the progress on the town centre masterplan following the initial consultation undertaken in 2023. The following fundamental changes to the service requirements were noted which had been made through the stakeholder's meetings:

- Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue – will not know if a fire station is required until a risk analysis has been completed. It was noted that Section 106 monies would be payable in relation to this building.
- Devon and Cornwall Police – would require an area of approximately 150 – 250 sq.m. but this needs to be formally confirmed by the Police Authority.
- Devon County Council – may no longer wish to pursue a stand-alone building.

It was advised there was a delay in the current timeline for the production of the masterplan. This was due to the review on the service requirements taking much longer than expected and the work needed to develop the Cranbox proposals. It was now anticipated that the masterplan document would go to the Strategic Planning Committee on 3 October 2024.

During discussions the following questions were asked:

- In response to a question raised by Councillor Kim Bloxham about whether the Police Authority had been provided with a timescale for a formal response about its requirement for a police station, it was noted that although it was important to keep the pressure on Devon and Cornwall Police for a formal response, the Force does not want an individual building but is happy to co-locate with someone else. Councillor Kevin Blakey agreed with maintaining the pressure and reported that the last information received from the Police Authority was the request for six desk spaces, six permanent car park spaces and the use of showers which he advised could also be shared with the Fire and Rescue Service.
- Clarification was sought from Councillor Henry Gent about whether Devon County Council and Cranbrook Town Council were planning to share a building. It was noted that discussions were taking place about this, but it was early days.
- In response to a concern raised about the officer resourcing issue to allow the continuation of both the masterplan and Cranbox it was advised that although additional officer support could be explored the main driver for the delay in the timeline was the time taken to get clarity from other organisations about their service requirements.
- Clarification was sought by Janine Gardner, Clerk to Cranbrook Town Council about whether there was outline planning consent for the town centre. It was noted that all the outline planning applications had lapsed.

The Chair acknowledged Members concerns about the delay from the Police Authority and the Fire and Rescue Service and asked Councillor Henry Gent about whether Devon County Council could put pressure on these authorities to help speed up the formal responses. Councillor Gent was happy to assist and asked for some suitable wording. Andy Wood, Director of Place (interim) advised he was happy to provide the wording.

RESOLVED:

That the new timetable for the production of the town centre plan be endorsed that will result in a final document being presented to Strategic Planning Committee on 1 October 2024.

6 Implementation Plan

Members received an updated report on specific projects and responsibilities for the delivery of key assets and services. It was noted the following projects had been completed and removed from the RAG:

- Approval of planning consent for Treasbeare and Cobdens;
- Several town council projects including the pump track.

Other projects updates included:

- Cranbox;
- DCC Community Building;
- Extra Care Housing – TC1 ongoing;
- Town Centre works including an update on the supermarket.

During discussions the following points were noted:

- It was suggested to formally write to the Chairman and Chief Executive of Morrisons in order to encourage them to bring forward the fit and opening of the supermarket. This letter was needed in advance of a Morrisons Board meeting in August which would consider how to move forward.

- It would be useful to obtain a programme of events which would be beneficial for future non-domestic rates payments currently not being paid and for job recruitments for local people.
- An update was sought on the land for a new primary sub-station which was yet to be secured. It was noted that there was an option to secure the transfer of up to 2 ha. of land for energy uses at Treasbeare and that the National Grid Electricity Distribution were also working on a number of options on how they could deliver the energy to this area.
- It was suggested there was a need to make a specific agenda item for the National Grid and to invite a representative from the National Grid to attend a future meeting to give an update.
- An update was sought on the public consultation for the London Road upgrade and it was queried how much the total cost would likely to be. Nicola Wilson, Devon County Council's Principal Planning Officer could not provide an update and advised she would follow this up. The Cranbrook New Community Manager advised that although the upgrade had not been costed the works to date had been designed with costs in mind to help lower vehicle speeds and to leave in place critical items of infrastructure.
- It was queried why EDDC were asking for quotes from external law firms to undertake the Community Governance Review as this would be costly. In response it was advised that this was EDDC's preferred route and was the most expeditious way of taking forward the Review.
- It was pointed out on the list of projects that the rollout of district heating networks final investment decision would be made in May 2024. In response it was advised this was incorrect and due to ongoing negotiations it would need to go back to Cabinet in October 2024 to seek a final investment decision.
- It was pointed out that green hydrogen plants generate a lot of heat which could potentially be harnessed in district heating networks.

7 **Forward Plan**

The Director of Place (interim) presented the current forward plan and advised of the following amendments:

- To add the National Grid and to invite a representative to the next meeting.
- To change the decarbonisation of district heating to Quarter 4: October to December 2024.

Following discussion it was agreed to also include:

- A progress report on the Community Governance Review.
- An item on leisure provision.
- To formally agree the Terms of Reference.
- To consider inviting the East Devon New Community Partners to the next meeting.

8 **Cranbox**

The meeting moved into a private session.

The report before the panel gave an update on Cranbox which was a project developed by EDDC and Cranbrook Town Council to deliver new commercial floorspace within Cranbrook Town Centre.

Clarity was required about the progression of the proposed devolution deal with Devon and Torbay and associated funding streams. Irrespective of this the intent was to continue to develop the project.

Attendance List

Councillors present:

K Blakey (EDDC)
K Bloxham (EDDC)
T Olive (EDDC)
L Bayliss (Cranbrook Town Council)
H Gent (DCC)

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

I Barlow (EDDC)

Officers in attendance:

Andrew Wood, Director of Place (interim) (EDDC)
Thea Billeter, Cranbrook New Community Manager (EDDC)
Naomi Harnett, Delivery Manager (EDDC)
Wendy Harris, Democratic Services Officer (EDDC)
Alexandra Robinson, (CTC)
Janine Gardner, (CTC)
Nicola Wilson, Principal Planning Officer (DCC)

Apologies:

S Hawkins (EDDC)
S Randall Johnson (DCC)
S Ratnage (DCC)
E Freeman (EDDC)

Chair

Date: