

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum held at Online on 28 April 2026

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 6.30 pm and ended at 7.47 pm

40 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 13 January 2026

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 13 January 2026 were noted as a true and accurate record.

41 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

42 Public Speaking

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

43 Matters of urgency

There were no matters of urgency.

44 Confidential/exempt item(s)

There was one confidential/exempt item (minute 48 refers).

45 LED Facilities and Activities report April 2026

The LED Chief Operating Officer presented this report which provided an update on recent activities. He highlighted recent refurbishments, the launch of the Health Key programme, a tree and kelp planting initiative, and preparations for the LTA Tennis Centre Roadshow.

Discussion and clarification included the following points:

- The introduction of the Health Key programme helped LED to compete against private sector operators who were growing their reach.
- It was challenging for LED to compete given that some of the private operators could focus on a particular demographic and do very well at it. In contrast, LED were trying to be something for everyone, providing the support that people needed, remaining affordable and ensuring they had the best quality instructors and were up to date with latest trends.
- Some members were disappointed that the Council had not been consulted on the tree and kelp planting initiative and expressed that it would not have supported a policy of planting trees abroad. The LED Chief Operating Officer responded that there was a variant in the price per unit depending on where in the world a tree was planted and LED could not have delivered the initiative had all trees needed to be planted in the UK.
- Other members expressed that it was not appropriate for the Council to micromanage its contract with LED and whilst it did not absolutely align with the East Devon Tree Policy, the tree and kelp planting initiative was imaginative and had captured the imagination of the customers.

- LED would be engaging with ten schools in and around Exmouth in early June as part of the LTA Tennis Roadshow within the schools (during the week) leading to an Open Weekend at the Tennis Centre. The aim was for over 500 children to take part; however, some Members were disappointed that schools elsewhere in the district were not involved.

The Forum noted the report.

46 **LED KPI Dashboard January - March 2026**

The Forum received and noted key details of the performance of LED Community Leisure for January – March 2026.

47 **Cranbrook Leisure Centre update**

The Leisure Manager presented this report which provided an update on the progress with the Cranbrook Leisure and Wellbeing Centre detailing progress through RIBA Stage 3, results of public consultation, funding status and collaboration with Devon County Council (DCC) and NHS.

The Leisure Manager explained that the [public consultation](#) closed on 4th March 2026. The survey received 874 individual responses and 979 contributions overall. People who filled in anonymously were not recorded as respondents but were recorded as contributions.

Headline figures from the early feedback were as follows:

- 82.8% of respondents aged 25 – 54;
- 69.7% female / 28.4% male / 1.3% prefer not to say / 0.3% non-binary;
- 92.4% of respondents said they were 'very likely' or 'quite likely' to use the centre;
- 65.8% of people would walk, cycle or scoot to the centre;
- Strong desire to see trees and planting within the site;
- Strong support for a café and play facilities;
- Individual and family cubicles and private showers requested for the changing areas;
- 78.7% Cranbrook residents.

A second public consultation event was planned for late spring of 2026 to feed back on the responses received and changes considered / made.

Discussion and clarification included the following points:

- It was reported that the project was currently on schedule.
- Partnership and collaboration with DCC and NHS were important but there were risks around alignment of the work of all agencies involved which needed to be carefully managed; however, the overall prize outweighed the risk.
- It was intended to get the business plan, planning application and costs together by December 2026. The business case, when produced, would give more information about how the funding gap would be managed.

The Forum noted the progress being made by the Cranbrook Leisure Centre Project Team.

The meeting went into private session.

48 **Leisure Project Update**

The Leisure Manager presented this update report.

Members discussed the content at length and asked direct questions.

The report was noted.

Attendance List

Councillors present:

P Arnott
K Bloxham
M Goodman
S Hawkins (Chair)
P Hayward
N Hookway
G Jung
J Loudoun

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

I Barlow
P Faithfull
M Hall
S Jackson

Officers in attendance:

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

Councillor apologies:

F King
S Smith

Representatives of LED Community Leisure in attendance:

Andrew Dare, LED
Richard Purchase, Chairman of LED Board
Olly Swayne, LED Chief Executive
Matthew Wright, LED Chief Operating Officer

Chair:

Date: