

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Cranbrook Placemaking Group held at Conference Room, Younghayes Centre, Cranbrook on 9 June 2025

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 9.33 am and ended at 11.52 am

1 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 17 March 2025

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 17 March 2025 were agreed as a true record subject to the correction of Councillor Leslie Bayliss' name.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Public speaking

There were no members of the public present.

4 Matters of urgency

There were no matters of urgency.

5 Confidential/exempt items

There were no confidential or exempt items.

6 Discussion with the Cranbrook New Community Partners

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made around the table.

The following items were addressed.

Land transfers and existing s106 obligations related to the town centre MOU and draft deed of variation

The New Community Manager sought clarification from the New Community partners (the consortium) as to why there had been some fundamental changes to the town centre deed of variation without any prior discussion with EDDC and DCC. The most significant change related to inclusion of parcel TC1 (extra care land) when the signed MOU had made no reference to this. In response Richard Harrison from Taylor Wimpey, Exeter referred to a January 2021 Cabinet report that stated parcels TC1, TC2 and TC4 would be transferred. Discussions followed about whether this was correct.

The New Community Manager strongly advised that TC1 would not be agreed to be included in the deed of variation and again sought clarification why it this had been included. Although Mr Harrison could not explain why, he gave reassurance that the consortium was very keen to see the delivery of the extra care facility, but it was also important to secure the s106 deed of variation to control the transfers for TC1 and TC2.

Other changes related to:

- The MOU states that TC2 would be offered for transfer 7 days after completion of the MOU and such an offer was made with work currently being progressed on this transfer. New clause states that this land would only be offered for transfer after all three planning applications have been granted, delaying the completion of the transfer.
- TC4C is stated as being offered for transfer to DCC but should be amended to read 'transfer to EDDC' in line with the MOU)
- The financial contributions to Cranbrook Town Council are not acceptable to them as the MOU is silent on indexation.
- The deed of variation would result in the omission of the requirement to offer to transfer TC4B. This is not acceptable.

In response to the other changes Mr Harrison from Taylor Wimpey advised that there was a make sure the provisions in the MOU were in the s106 deed of variation to give all parties clarity but said in the meantime he would welcome receipt of EDDC's workstream priorities. The New Community Manager advised she would set up a meeting.

Delays e.g. with retrofitting play areas with electricity and water

Fran Walker, Associate Director of Brookbanks advised that the electricity service connections had been put out to tender and they were currently waiting for a work programme and costings and that a meeting had been arranged with South West Water on 26 June 2025 to discuss the water connection.

Delays with the delivery of play areas as a result of consortium delays to the delivery of infrastructure

The Associate Director of Brookbanks advised the works to the play area in Basin 2C works were due to start in the next two weeks.

Councillor Bloxham made the consortium aware about the lack of communication about the delayed start date. The Associate Director of Brookbanks apologised for this and would instruct their Communications Manager to get something out to advise the Cranbrook residents that it had been delayed until 21 June.

Councillor Bloxham made the consortium aware that the town council had not received a licence for the proposed works. The Associate Director of Brookbanks confirmed this would be sent to the Town Council.

Update on town centre MLR uplift

Quotes are still outstanding with regard to the moving of the bellmouth between parcels TC1 and TC2.

The New Community Manager sought an update on the wider uplift. The Associate Director of Brookbanks advised that they still had not had an update from Eon about their proposed upgrade works to the network. Discussions took place regarding the potential for works to stop vehicles driving into the town square on Tillhouse Road and suggested that temporary planters, a bench or bollards could be put in place as an alternative solution. The consortium undertook to explore the potential for works to manage this situation.

Phase 2 high street shops land

Mr Harrison advised that they had not received any interest or offers for the site apart from an offer from EDDC which was for half of the site's evaluation. Mr Harrison advised they would continue to test the market.

The Chair invited the Group to raise any other issues with the consortium.

Councillor Kim Bloxham addressed the outstanding 'to do list' from the monthly partners meetings which included the bunding around the parcel of land in Badger Way, sorting out the utilities cabinet and installing the path. It was advised that a timeline and dates would be provided.

The Cranbrook Town Clerk advised that the damage caused by the Persimmon Sales Office to the car parking surfacing at the Ingram Sports Pitches had still not been rectified and that the town council would be instructing remediation.

The Director of Place emphasised the need to continue to have good working relationships with the consortium and raised concerns that whenever the council had tried to make progress with the town centre it is used as leverage and is unnecessary, frustrating and detrimental to everyone involved. The consortium acknowledged the fragile partnership and was disappointed that it had reached this point but gave reassurance they were keen to see Cranbrook delivered.

The New Community Manager suggested that to help rebuild relationships it would be good to reinstate the catch-up meetings with the consortium. All parties agreed.

RESOLVED:

The New Community Manager to reinstate the catch-up meetings with the consortium.

7

Community Governance Review

The Group received a verbal update on the present position of the Community Governance Review which would bring forward new boundaries for the expansion areas. The Cranbrook Ward Members had received invites to attend a meeting on 24 June that would give an update on the timeline, costs and the polling review.

The Director of Place acknowledged the town council's concerns about the maintenance of assets and public communities and advised further discussions were needed to find appropriate funding from the district council.

The Cranbrook Town Clerk questioned why the town council had not received the same communication that had been sent to the Ward Members. The Director of Place suggested this could be because it was a district council review but advised he would seek confirmation from the Director of Governance.

RESOLVED:

1. That the issues with Community Governance Review be noted.
2. Officers to circulate the community governance review timeline with the delivery of the expansion areas.
3. Director of Place to seek confirmation in writing from Director of Governance that the communication sent to the Cranbrook Members could be sent to all parishes.

8

Stewardship of Public Amenities in New Developments

The Group considered the draft cabinet report that Cabinet would consider on 30 July 2025 about the need for a new approach the stewardship of community assets in East Devon's which included strategic scale new communities. This included the west end area in locations within Cranbrook, West Clyst and Tithebarn/Mosshayne.

The report acknowledged the challenges the council was facing as a result of further reductions to funding and set out various options that the council could follow which included a community-lead approach, a parish-led approach, the readoption of public amenities by local authorities or as a last resort private estate management companies.

The Director of Place invited comments which would be taken back to Cabinet:

- Councillor Bloxham was pleased to report that her comments made to the earlier report had been taken into account.
- The Town Clerk was not in support of the community-led approach as it would not be as accountable or transparent as a parish or district level approach and suggested this should be addressed in the report.
- It was questioned whether the parish precept would increase as referenced in the parish-led management column.

RESOLVED:

The Group noted the report.

9 **Cranbrook Place Partnership**

The Group considered the Cranbrook Place Partnership report noting that EDDC's Cabinet would be considering on 30 July 2025 to endorse the re-establishment of the 3-year Wellbeing Cranbrook programme.

As part of the programme it was proposed that there was a need to create a Community Wellbeing and Activity Organiser post and a Community Connector post to run the day-to-day management of Wellbeing Cranbrook. There was also a need to strengthen EDDC's representation on the Cranbrook Place Partnership to ensure Cranbrook's interests were adequately represented.

The Group noted that this would require an additional budget at a time when the Council was facing a significant deficit in future budgets.

The New Community Manager invited the Group to provide feedback and suggested to start with the third recommendation which was for the need to strengthen representation on the overarching Place Partnership governance and structure so that Cranbrook's interests are adequately represented.

Members agreed there was a need to strengthen governance as to 'walk away' would have implications to receiving future funding from Sports England which would jeopardise the future leisure centre.

RESOLVED:

The Group agreed with Recommendation 3 as written.

The New Community Manager invited the Group to provide feedback on the first recommendation to endorse the re-establishment of the Wellbeing Cranbrook programme for a period of 3 years and the creation of a Community Wellbeing and Activity Organiser for 4 days/wk and a Community Connector for 4 days/wk.

Comments included:

- Clarification was sought on whether the £32,278 detailed in paragraph 10 had been carried forward to this financial year. It was advised that this figure was carried over as it has not yet been paid to Exeter City Council.
- It was questioned whether the updated job description delivers value for money and there was a need to add more responsibility.
- The Town Council would like more focus on young people to help capture the next generation. In response the New Community Manager suggested this could be established as part of the programmes priorities rather than in the job description.
- It was queried whether the role of the Community Connector should be part of the NHS.
- It was acknowledged there was a need for further discussions at a Senior Officer level.
- There is a need for a longer term commitment of 3-5 years
- It was suggested that both roles could be combined to create one full time post to attract good quality individuals.

The New Community Manager thanked everyone for their comments and invited the Group to send any further comments by email.

RESOLVED:

1. The New Community Manager to send the Group a copy of the job description for the Activity Organiser
2. The Group to email any further comments for both job descriptions to the New Community Manager
3. The New Community Manager to contact NHS Devon to seek clarification for funding for the Community Connector role.

Comments received for the second recommendation to discuss the options for hosting and day-to-day management of proposed Wellbeing Cranbrook roles included:

- It was suggested that the day-to-day management should be managed locally and not in Exeter
- Do not support EX5 Alive/Inspiring Connections being the host.
- Support was expressed for the Town Council to be the host with a continue relationship with EX5 Alive
- Do not support Ted Wragg hosting as they will pass the line management to EX5 Alive/Inspiring Connections.

RESOLVED:

1. The New Community Manager to discuss the process with the Town Council if they were to host Wellbeing Cranbrook.
2. Further discussions needed with Ted Wragg about whether they would like to host and line manage.

10 **Implementation Plan**

The Group received the Implementation Plan which set out the progress and the Corporate Lead – Major Projects and Programmes provided a brief update on the Town Centre Delivery Plan.

RESOLVED:

That the Implementation Plan be noted and to include the update to London Road.

11 **Forward Plan**

The Group received the Forward Plan that covered the period from 4 August 2025 to 8 December 2025 which were in line with future meetings. Clarification was sought about why the Management of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace – preferred approach has been moved to December 2025. In response the New Community Manager advised this was due to ongoing work and suggested it could potentially be brought forward to October 2025.

RESOLVED:

That the Forward Plan was noted and further discussions were needed in respect of youth support provision.

Attendance List

Councillors present:

Kim Bloxham (EDDC)
Todd Olive (EDDC)
Leslie Bayliss (CTC)
Henry Gent (DCC)

Also present (for some or all the meeting)

Richard Harrison, Land and Planning Director, Taylor Wimpey Exeter
Fran Walker, Associate Director, Brookbanks
Ian Chilcott, Commercial Director, Persimmon Homes
Dan Heathcote, Managing Director, Persimmon Homes
Damon Buckle, Technical Director, Persimmon Homes

Officers in attendance:

Wendy Harris, Democratic Services Officer
Andrew Wood, Director of Place
Sarah Ratnage, County Planning Manager, DCC
Alexandra Robinson, Deputy Clerk, Cranbrook Town Council
Nicola Wilson, Principal Planning Officer (DCC)
Janine Gardner, Clerk to Cranbrook Town Council
Thea Billeter, Cranbrook New Community Manager
Naomi Harnett, Corporate Lead (Interim) – Major Projects & Programmes

Councillor apologies:

K Blakey
S Hawkins
N Vanstone

Chair

Date: