

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Cranbrook Placemaking Group held at Conference Room, Younghayes Centre, Cranbrook on 8 December 2025

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 9.30 am and ended at 10.55 am

39 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 6 October 2025 were agreed as a correct record.

40 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

41 Public speaking

There were no members of the public present.

42 Matters of urgency

There were no matters of urgency.

43 Confidential/exempt items

There were no confidential or exempt items.

44 Briefing Note: Devon County Council London Road footway/cycleway improvements

Chris Burridge-Barney, Devon County Council's Transportation Planning Officer presented the briefing note on Phase 1 of the London Road footway/cycleway improvements and gave a brief update, accompanied by engineering design plans, illustrating the proposed locations of the 3.5m wide shared footway and cycleway paths, designed in accordance with the government's Cycle Infrastructure Design Guidance. It was noted that segregated paths would not be included in the scheme, as the additional width needed for the 5m wide path would significantly increase third party land requirements and would increase the need to remove hedgerows and trees.

Before construction, the scheme will undergo independent Road Safety Audits to review safety for all users and refine design. Stakeholder feedback, including measures to prevent vehicle access to paths, would be considered and further engagement with EDDC, Cranbrook Town Council and affected landowners will be planned, along with a wider public consultation on the proposals.

The group discussed the proposed improvements, and it was requested that Rockbeare Parish Council should be included in all further engagement. It was noted that since the design plans had been developed an agreement had been reached for the redevelopment of Tillhouse Cottage, including securing a path to the front of the site and

the expansion areas fronting London Road would have segregated cycle route due to sufficient land either side to allow this.

Councillor Blakey noted the proposal for a T-junction at Ingrams, despite the town council's preference for a mini roundabout and asked whether DCC supported the use of mini roundabouts on London Road. The Transportation Planning Officer explained this would depend on anticipated traffic volumes, with larger developments typically requiring a roundabout. The Cranbrook Town Council Clerk raised concerns about traffic issues during specific times of the day at the Station Road T-junction and the Cranbrook New Community Manager confirmed there would be an opportunity to improve this junction as part of the Bluehayes development.

In response to a query on funding and stakeholder liaison timescales, the Transportation Planning Officer advised that the design stage would take up most of the next financial year, with construction planned for 2028/29, and confirmed he was happy to engage with stakeholders throughout this period. Funding will come from secured CIL and S106 contributions, with further S106 monies expected to help progress and prioritise future sections.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

45

Mechanism for the allocation and spending of Category 4 Infrastructure Payments

The Group received an update from the Cranbrook New Community Manager on the mechanism and preferences in areas relating to the allocation and spending of category 4 infrastructure contributions that the Group had previously considered.

The Cranbrook New Community Manager referred to the list of infrastructure projects worth over £30m and stated that because funding was not anticipated to begin being received until the 2028/29 financial year, the council would need to seek to use forward funding agreements on a case-by-case basis to maintain financial stability for all parties. The Group noted that a paper was being prepared for submission to Homes England to seek a forward funding package for the category 4 items and other infrastructure needs for Cranbrook.

Feedback on the draft process highlighted several key areas for improvement:

- Clarity on information required: The need to clearly specify the exact information required from Devon County Council was emphasised.
- Decision-Making Criteria: A request for transparency regarding the criteria used for allocating funds.
- Funding Round Duration: It was suggested that funding rounds remain open for a minimum of 8 weeks, rather than the proposed 6 weeks. This extension to 8 weeks should also apply to any potential extra rounds for urgent projects.

Regarding the timeline for discussion and agreement, it was confirmed that the proposed criteria could be presented at the February meeting and the Strategic Planning Committee in March 2026 for approval followed by Cabinet.

RESOLVED:

That the document setting out a mechanism and principles for the allocation and spend of category 4 infrastructure contributions be endorsed subject to the funding rounds to be

open for a minimum period of 8 weeks and a detailed criteria for Category 4 infrastructure bids to be reported to the Placemaking Group prior to reporting of this matter to Strategic Planning Committee and Cabinet.

46 **Health Provision at Cranbrook**

The Cranbrook New Community Manager presented the paper received from NHS Devon ICB updating the Group about the short-term and long-term plans for the existing primary care (GP) provision currently delivered at the Cranbrook Medical Practice.

Despite an expansion in 2021 the surgery is still too small for the population of Cranbrook residents and the NHS Devon ICB decided there was an immediate need to explore a short-term solution and would look at using the car park to provide a temporary modular solution however this would result in there being no residual parking on the site. The next meeting with the stakeholders and Cranbrook Town Council will take place on 6 January 2026 to progress this option.

The construction of a larger premises is planned for the long-term solution which would include a wellbeing service. NHS Devon have produced a programme of works aimed at securing funding and discussions are ongoing about the delivery options. Discussions are also ongoing with NHS England and EDDC regarding identifying appropriate funding of £400k to progress the Short Form Business Case for the long-term solution.

The Town Council Clerk noted the project was based on a population of 20,000 and questioned whether the figure should be near to 22,000. The Cranbrook New Community Manager acknowledged the figure was indeed higher and explained this was the figure provided by NHS Devon ICB.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

47 **Community Governance Review**

The Group received a verbal update on the progress with the Community Governance Review which looked at the current parish governance arrangements for Cranbrook and surrounding area.

It was noted that a report will be presented to Council on Wednesday, 10 December, setting out recommendations to include the following five areas within the Cranbrook parish:

- Treasbeare Expansion Area,
- Bluehayes Expansion Area (sections not already within Cranbrook parish),
- Properties on the northern side of London Road currently within Rockbeare parish
- Grange Expansion Area
- Cobdens (sections not already within Cranbrook parish)

A further public consultation will take place in the early 2026 with the outcomes reported back to Full Council in June 2026.

Councillor Gent stated that this represented the most logical solution for Cranbrook.

RESOLVED:

That the verbal update be noted.

48 **Forward Plan**

The Group received the forward plan.

RESOLVED:

The forward plan be noted subject to receiving a report on the criteria for category 4 infrastructure payments, and a general update on the expansion areas on 2 February 2026 and to move the Town Centre delivery plan and programme governance to 13 April 2026.

49 **Implementation Plan**

The Group received an Implementation Plan outlining the list of projects scheduled for delivery.

The Group noted positive progress: an architecturally-led multi-disciplinary design team has been appointed to develop plans for the leisure centre and associated car park. An outline planning application for the leisure centre, county facilities and car parking is expected to be submitted in August 2026. This application is anticipated to include the blue light land located to the west of the site.

The blue light land is intended for Fire Brigade use, however, if not required, it may be repurposed for workshop or small business units.

The Group also received an update on Cranbox which included:

- Weekly time is dedicated to support the transfer of TC2 land to the council. A meeting is hoped to take place this week between all parties to resolve outstanding matters and enable completion.
- The Preconstruction Services Agreement Contract has been awarded, and EDDC now has an employed agent. Progress to the next stage depends on the TC2 land transfer.
- A licence needs to be arranged for the strip of land located between TC2 boundaries and the existing Tillhouse Road.
- A meeting with the Town Council is scheduled next week to discuss the Cranbox transfer.
- Consideration of the planning application is ongoing.

RESOLVED:

That the Implementation Plan be noted.

Attendance List

Councillors present:

K Blakey (EDDC)

T Olive (EDDC)

V Wright (CTC)

H Gent (DCC)

Officers in attendance:

Thea Billeter, Cranbrook New Community Manager
Ed Freeman, Assistant Director Planning Strategy and Development Services
Wendy Harris, Democratic Services Officer, EDDC
Nicola Wison, Principal Planning Officer, DCC
Chris Burrige-Barney, Transportation Planning Officer, DCC
Janine Gardner, Clerk to Cranbrook Town Council
Alexandra Robinson, Deputy Clerk to Cranbrook Town Council

Councillor apologies:

K Bloxham
S Hawkins

Officer apologies:

A Wood

Chair

Date: