

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Cranbrook Placemaking Group held at Conference Room, Younghayes Centre, Cranbrook on 16 September 2024

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 10.30 am and ended at 12.05 pm

9 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 1 July 2024

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 1 July 2024 were confirmed as a true record.

10 Declarations of interest

There were none.

11 Public speaking

There were no speakers.

12 Matters of urgency

There were none.

13 Confidential / exempt items

There were none.

14 Electricity supply

The Chair welcomed representatives of National Grid Electricity Distribution (NGED) and introductions were made around the table.

The working group received a presentation that gave an update on NGED's proposed strategy for Cranbrook outlining:

- Estimated requirement for the expansion zone for the eastern side of Cranbrook which would include the Cobdens area (2,000+ residential dwellings, community buildings, 2 schools, local centre and place of worship)
- EV charging provisions.
- Expansion for individual heat pumps
- Existing connection points (Marsh Green - primary circuit) which will be monitored during growth and interconnected with new circuits.
- Estimated requirement for the expansion zone for the western side of Cranbrook which would include Treasbeare (1,035 residential dwellings, school, sports hub and 10 ha of employment land) and Bluehayes (up to 950 residential dwellings, school and local centre)
- Existing connection points (Clyst Honiton – primary circuit) which will be monitored during growth and interconnected with new circuits and a new primary is required.
- Reinforcement options using the existing primary circuits.
- Consideration of a new primary substation – currently looking at options to secure land north of Cranbrook.

- Business plan for a new BSP (bulk supply point) in Exeter – early stages to look for viable land east of the M5 and in proximity to existing infrastructure.

Responses to questions from members of the group included:

- It was noted that there would be one EV charging point per property which would not which would not increase the overall demand on the network as charging would be done at different times.
- In response to whether there was capacity to increase electricity supply, alternative options would need to be looked at depending on what was required.
- It was noted that a further BSP would be required for the proposed new town.
- In response to noise omissions, noise enclosures can put over the top of the transformers which would also act as a visual amenity.
- In response to a question about the provision for electric HGVs, NGED advised they had reserved capacity to do this but emphasised this would take a number of years depending on the location of demand.

Director of Place (Interim) advised he was keen to follow up on the noise omissions and referred to the planned converter station that was going to be located close to the A30 and welcomed joint working with NGED. This was welcomed as it would be beneficial to locate the BSP close to the station.

RESOLVED:

The work of National Grid Electricity Distribution in seeking to ensure that there is adequate network capacity to cater for the electrical loading arising from the expansion of Cranbrook be noted.

15 **Town Centre masterplan**

The New Cranbrook Manager's presentation outlined the current plans for inclusion in the Cranbrook town centre masterplan and advised that invites would go out shortly inviting members to meet next week to go through the final details.

These included:

- Key routes in and out of the town centre;
- Key pedestrian routes across;
- TC3 link to supermarket;
- Orientation of buildings to maximise hours of daylight;
- Key viewpoints.

Following discussions with stakeholders the following key assumptions had been made which included:

- DCC facilities will become part of Till House which will free up TC4b;
- Cranbox will form one part of TC2 square;
- Health and Wellbeing Centre and Leisure Centre will be in separate buildings as there is no capital budget available;
- Drainage will be required on site;
- Biodiversity Net Gain will be required on site to make it a greener town centre

Outstanding decisions included:

- Whether a building is required for the Fire Station. Risk review completed;
- Size of the Tillhouse building;
- Preferred size of the second square;

- Preferred location of the Health and Wellbeing Centre;
- Preferred location of the Leisure Centre;
- Width of footpaths;
- Precise alignment of road through TC4e;
- Heights of buildings;
- Quantum of car parking;

Group members viewed two town centre plan options and the New Cranbrook Manager asked group members to attend an in-person workshop to finalise the plans and to discuss the outstanding decisions. Group Members were happy to meet either Wednesday, 25 September or Thursday, 26 September.

Clarification was sought about whether the town centre masterplan would be considered at the Strategic Planning Committee on 29 October 2024. Nicola advised that although there are ongoing positive discussions with Cranbrook Town Council it was not ready for a DCC Cabinet decision. The Chair urged Devon County Council of the urgency that a decision needed to be reached as soon as possible.

Responses to the outstanding decisions included:

- It was suggested that the second square should be made into a square (same width as depth);
- The width of the Tillhouse building would be determined by the width of the square and as deep as necessary;
- Need a significant amount of car parking to make the town centre viable. It was suggested to use Area D for more car parking provision;
- Shared footpaths and cycle paths do not work;
- Town Centre Plan – prefer option 2 as it has more car parking spaces and green spaces;

Further comments included:

- There is a need to have a footpath link from the Tillhouse to the countrypark;
- Support was expressed for the masterplan to remain flexible to keep spaces free to enable the town to grow into itself;
- Reference to paragraph 15 of the report and whether the sizes of the leisure centre and the health and wellbeing centre have been agreed; The Cranbrook Manager advised that the NHS had confirmed a floorspace of approximately 3,000 square metres and the leisure centre was still to be decided but it would need to accommodate a 6 lane swimming pool;
- The lack of water supply at the existing town centre needs to be rectified.

The Cranbrook Manager noted all the points raised and advised these can be discussed during the workshop.

RESOLVED:

1. That the progress made on the town centre masterplan to date be noted and the Cranbrook Placemaking Group provide feedback to guide the refinement and completion of the masterplan.
2. That the town centre masterplan document be presented to Strategic Planning Committee at their meeting on 29 October 2024.

Director of Place (Interim) advised that the funding for Cranbox has been confirmed for the end of March 2025 subject to wider ongoing national discussions.

The following update was read out on behalf of Naomi Harnett, Corporate Lead – Major Projects & Programmes (Interim):

I have met with the town council to discuss a brief for the architects and the scheme can now progress from concept to a deliverable scheme. The location for the scheme has also been identified through the master planning work, with the location in TC2 to the west of the proposed town centre building.

Working with Kenji, Andy and Thea the proposed locations works in placemaking terms and will begin to frame the square to the north of the high street.

Janine and myself have agreed that the business case will be revised inhouse, this will progress once the planning application is submitted.

17 **Implementation plan**

Group Members noted the updated Implementation Plan.

18 **Forward plan**

Group Members noted the Forward Plan up to Quarter 1 January to March 2025.

19 **Move More Cranbrook and Place Partnership (verbal update)**

Item deferred to a later meeting.

Attendance List

Councillors present:

K Blakey
T Olive

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

I Barlow
P Faithfull

Officers in attendance:

Thea Billeter, Cranbrook New Community Manager
Wendy Harris, Democratic Services Officer
Andrew Wood, Director of Place (interim)

Councillor apologies:

K Bloxham

Chair

Date: