

Report To: Leisure Strategy Delivery Forum

Date of Meeting 28th April 2026

Heading/Title: Cranbrook Leisure Centre

Cabinet Member(s): Cllr Nick Hookway / Cllr Todd Olive

Director/Assistant Director: Andy Wood / Tim Child

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Key decision: No

If a Key Decision has it appeared on Forward Plan

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: Para 3 Schedule 12A Information relating to the finance or business affairs of any particular person

1. Background

- 1.1 The Leisure Delivery Forum requested in April 2025 that regular updates are received on the progress with the Cranbrook Leisure and Wellbeing Centre, part of Cranbrook Leisure, Health and Wellbeing project.
- 1.2 The project is now progressing at pace with an initial Public Consultation Event held and the RIBA Stage 2 design and cost plan signed off. The team are now progressing RIBA Stage 3. This design stage takes the project through Spatial Coordination Design, allowing the design to be tested, coordinated and more detailed costing undertaken. The multi-disciplinary design team have been appointed to secure Planning Consent. It is currently anticipated that the Planning Application will be submitted in Summer 2026.
- 1.3 In parallel with the design, a procurement exercise has been undertaken to appoint a Contractor under a two stage Design and Build procurement route. The first stage tender has been awarded and the Contractor is now working with the EDDC and Consultant Team under a Pre Construction Services Agreement. The latest developments are set out in the report.

2. Recommendations/Decision

- 2.1 That the Forum notes the progress being made by the Cranbrook Leisure Centre Project Team.

3. Reasons for Recommendations/Decision

- 3.1 To enable progress to be made on the delivery of a leisure centre for Cranbrook in order to provide the services and facilities necessary to support the growing town and its community.

4. Options

- 4.1 Include details of Options considered or rejected when making a recommendation.

5. Relevance to Council Plan/priorities

- 5.1 Set out how report links to the Council Plan/priorities:

- A supported and engaged community that has the right homes in the right places, with appropriate infrastructure
- A sustainable environment that is moving towards carbon neutrality and which promotes ecological recovery.
- A vibrant and resilient economy that supports local business, provides local jobs and leads to a reduction in poverty and inequality.
- A well-managed, financially secure and continuously improving council that delivers quality services

- 5.2 Indicate how the recommendations/decision contributes to the delivery of the Council Plan and its priorities

A supported and engaged community that has the right homes in the right places, with appropriate infrastructure

- Deliver our Leisure Strategy and action plan to improve access for residents to leisure facilities within the district.

A well-managed, financially secure and continuously improving council that delivers quality services

- Implement the Financial Sustainability Model to identify service costs, enhance performance, drive efficiencies, savings, and maximize income, ensuring the Council's budget remains balanced.

6. Current Status

- 6.1 The Project team have been progressing on a number of areas. The latest developments are:

- First Public Consultation event undertaken and completed.

- Contractor Procurement undertaken and a Pre Construction Services Agreement under a two stage design and build procurement route.
 - RIBA Stage 2 design and cost plan completed and signed off.
 - RIBA Stage 2 BREEAM Submission made.
 - Ecology surveys continue.
 - Ground Investigation survey procured.
 - Risk management ongoing.
 - Programme updated.
 - Engagement with Sport England ongoing.
 - Engagement with DCC in regard to their facility and its inclusion within the Leisure facility.
- 6.2 It should be noted that NHS Devon are currently progressing work on a business case for the health facility, which is a key component of the Cranbrook Leisure, Health and Wellbeing Campus and Council Officers and Members are involved in that project. This work is not progressing at the same pace as the Leisure project.
- 6.3 In addition to the development of designs, the Cranbrook Plan DPD identifying a leisure centre as being a key facility in Cranbrook, the Council's Leisure and Built Facilities Strategy was approved in October 2022 and also contains within it, a recommendation for a leisure centre in the town, to include a 6 lane, 25m swimming pool, learner pool, health and fitness studio, 4 court sports hall and 2 studios as a minimum. This has now been updated with an addendum to reflect the latest population and leisure industry guidelines.

7. Next Steps

- 7.1 The most immediate steps include the progression of the project through RIBA Stage 3, allowing design development, a second round of public consultation and more detailed cost planning.
- 7.2 The programme as developed for Cranbrook Leisure Centre is highly accelerated, and as such it is very important that key decisions are made in a timely manner to allow the pace to be maintained.
- 7.3 Additional surveys will be commissioned over the coming period.

8. Funding

- 8.1 The team are currently working to deliver to the budget agreed by Council on 15th October 2025.
- 8.2 A funding strategy and Business Case is being developed in regard to the capital required to allow the construction of the facility.
- 8.3 The first two outline planning applications for the expansion of Cranbrook have been approved and both secure some funding for the pooled category 4 contributions (the infrastructure category that both the leisure centre and health and wellbeing project fall under). There are resolutions to approve a further three outline planning applications and live applications for approximately 550 homes at the Grange expansion area. Together, these applications make up the vast majority of the allocated expansion area land.

8.4 In addition to the s106 monies, together with Exeter City Council, the council has Sport England Place Partnership status. Being part of this programme provides the opportunity for capital funding bids that are exclusive to Place Partners. Bids for external grant funding are often most likely to be successful if a project is 'shovel ready'; this further enhances the imperative nature of progressing the leisure centre project. Officers are currently engaging with Sport England and will make a bid for funding when adequate information is available to allow this to be fully considered.

9. Leisure Delivery Review

9.1 On a parallel path, a Leisure Officer Working Group has also been established to inform the Leisure Management arrangements for the future.

9.2 The Cranbrook Leisure programme and the Programme for the Leisure Review are now shown together to allow interrelationships to be clearly identified.

10. Financial Comments/Implications

10.1 The recommendations in the report at this stage have no direct financial implications that have not already been considered by Cabinet, although the report highlights a future funding gap that needs to be addressed if a leisure centre is to be provided in Cranbrook.

11. Legal Comments/Implications

11.1 As this is an update report only, there are no substantive legal issues directly arising.

12. Risk Implications

12.1 At this stage the overall risk is considered to be low as there is currently no commitment to capital expenditure for the build, however, a commitment has been made to fund fees for the advancement of design.

12.2 There is a risk register in place for the whole project, which is available on request from Councillors on the Forum

13. Equality Implications (Public Sector Equality Duty)

13.1 Any new Leisure Centre needs to be designed to be accessible for all people and groups. Careful consideration of accessibility and the scope and range of services and facilities provided will need to be made. A full equalities impact assessment will be completed as part of the Leisure Centre project initiation

14. HR and Workforce Implications

14.1 As this is an update report only, there are no substantive HR issues directly arising.

15. Community Safety Implications (Crime and Disorder)

- 15.1 As this is an update report only, there are no Community Safety implications issues directly arising.

16. Climate Change Implications

- 16.1. The Project has been registered with BREEAM v6. Multiple BREEAM workshops have been held to determine and agree the most suitable credits to target. At the current time we are above 75 points which is well within the Excellent score parameters targeted.
- 16.2 Essentially, BREEAM ensures that construction projects are designed, built, and operated to high environmental, health, and sustainability standards.

17. Health & Safety and Health & Wellbeing Implications

- 17.1 This project is based upon a facility mix and specification that will incorporate all the best industrial standards in design, build, operation and maintenance. This will be consistently applied by consultants commissioned by the Council to provide that assurance and contractors appointed who will absorb that liability.
- 17.2 The facility is a wellbeing hub and is designed with the end user in mind – a fully accessible community venue that will seek to encourage use from the whole community to partake in activities that promote their physical and mental wellbeing. There have been several local studies and consultation to shape the needs of the community that the facility will aim to provide for.

18. Procurement and Social Value implications

- 18.1 The [Public Services \(Social Value\) Act](#) came into force on 31 January 2013. The Act requires public authorities to consider how the services they commission and procure might improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of their area.
- 18.2 As part of this development, the Cranbrook Project Team have undertaken :
- Consultation with the Community to gather input on what facility mix they would like to see in the centre such as swimming pools, fitness gym and studios and soft play area.
 - Appointment of local regional contractors that promotes local employment for the design and construction of the park.
 - Dialogue with the design and construction teams to source (where possible and economically feasible) materials to promote environmental sustainability.
 - Dialogue with Sport England and Designers to ensure that the centre will be designed to be accessible to people of all ages and abilities, including wheelchair users.
 - Create spaces within the centre (Cafe) that encourage social interaction and community events.
- 18.3 By considering these factors, the council ensures that the new centre not only provides a living breathing wellbeing hub, but also delivers broader social, economic, and environmental benefits to the community.

19. Land and Buildings / Asset Management Implications

- 19.1 The Cranbrook Leisure and wellbeing facility forms part of the Cranbrook Masterplan. Previous reports have outlined the strategic implications of this project.

20. Leisure Strategy Delivery Committee

- 20.1 The Leisure Delivery Forum received regular updates since April 2025 on the progress of the Cranbrook Leisure and Wellbeing Centre, part of Cranbrook Leisure, Health and Wellbeing project.

21. Digital and Data

- 21.1 No digital and data implications in this update report.

22. Consultation and Engagement

- 22.1 Public Consultation has been undertaken as set out within the previous report. This is an update only with no recommendations included.

23. Communications

- 23.1 No PR/Comms implications arising from the report which is for information only.

24. Next Steps

- 24.1 The team are now progressing RIBA Stage 3. This design stage takes the project through Spatial Coordination Design, allowing the design to be tested, coordinated and more detailed costing undertaken. The multi-disciplinary design team have been appointed to secure Planning Consent. It is currently anticipated that the Planning Application will be submitted in Summer 2026.
- 24.2 In parallel with the design, a procurement exercise has been undertaken to appoint a Contractor under a two stage Design and Build procurement route. The first stage tender has been awarded and the Contractor is now working with the EDDC and Consultant Team under a Pre Construction Services Agreement. The latest developments are set out in the report.

25. Appendices

- 25.1 No appendices attached to this report.

26 Background Papers

- 26.1 Previous Forum updates (Since April 2025) that are in the public domain.

Proposed Report Sign Off process

Please make sure you have obtained the relevant sign off and the date completed before submitting your report to Democratic Services.

	Officer Name	Date requested	Date Completed
Legal & Governance	Monitoring Officer or Deputy Monitoring Officer		Required
Finance	Section 151 Officer or Deputy S151 Officer		Required
Communications	communications@eastdevon.gov.uk		If applicable
Digital and Data	digital@eastdevon.gov.uk		If applicable
Engagement	engagement@eastdevon.gov.uk		If applicable
HR	HR Lead		If applicable
Chief Executive	Chief Executive		If applicable
Director	Relevant Director		Required
Assistant Director(s)	Relevant Assistant Director(s)		Required
Cabinet Lead Member(s)	Relevant Lead Member (s)		Required
Executive Leadership Team	ELT	Insert date approved by ELT	Required
Strategic Leadership Team	SLT		If applicable