

**Report to:** Cranbrook Placemaking Group

**Date of Meeting** 8 June 2026

**Heading/Title:** Cranbrook Town Centre projects

**Cabinet Member(s):** Cllr Paul Hayward, Portfolio Holder for Assets and Economy, Cllr Todd Olive, Portfolio Holder for Place, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning

**Director/Assistant Director:** Andy Wood, Director of Place

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**Key decision:** No

**If a Key Decision has it appeared on Forward Plan** N/A

**Document classification:** Part A Public Document

**Exemption applied:** None

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 There are several ongoing projects within Cranbrook Town Centre, most of which are being led by the public sector. This report provides an update on these projects.
- 1.2 In November 2020 the council purchased town centre land parcels TC4 d&e, which is part of the land between Morrisons, Crannafor Lane and Badger Way. This acquisition has helped to provide greater opportunities for the delivery of facilities in the town centre.
- 1.3 In addition to the land already acquired, a number of land transfers are underway or expected.
- 1.4 Since the last update in February 2026, land parcel TC1 has been transferred from the New Community partners to Devon County Council, intended for the delivery of an Extra Care facility. The land transfer included additional land to facilitate the access between TC1 and TC2 to reflect the full planning permission granted to Live West and to enable the proposed access road to be constructed by them. Live West has now begun construction of the 58-unit Extra Care facility.
- 1.5 Adjacent to TC1 is land parcel TC2 which represents the remaining land north of Tillhouse Road and south of the Country Park. This land is due for transfer to East Devon District Council. The site is in part expected to accommodate The Tillhouse building for Cranbrook Town Council, together with Cranbox

(discussed below) and therefore there will need to be an onward transfer of part of the site to the Town Council at an appropriate project stage and once transfer boundaries for this have been established.

- 1.6 The transfer of TC2 is now nearing completion, with the remaining matters being the securing of two licence agreements, one for the benefit of the New Community partners to facilitate the site compound associated with their drainage and highway works and the second for the benefit of the council to enable works to be undertaken on a strip of land at the back edge of the existing pavement. This strip of land will be retained by the New Community partners as it is required for a widened pavement as part of the MLR uplift works, however before those works are completed the council will need to pave part of it to facilitate access to Cranbox.
- 1.7 In addition to these land transfers, the New Community partners have made an offer to transfer land parcel TC4b to Devon County Council, in line with their existing legal obligations. The land was originally intended to accommodate the facilities for children's, youth and library services; however, Devon County Council's Cabinet have now taken the decision to incorporate these services within the wider Leisure & Wellbeing centre. The s106 provisions allow for Devon County Council and East Devon District Council to jointly direct that the land is instead transferred to East Devon District Council and given the changed circumstances and a letter to direct that the land is offered for transfer to East Devon District Council was sent to the New Community partners at the end of May 2026. This letter also requested that this transfer is made together with that of the adjoining TC4c land parcel to minimise administrative burden.
- 1.8 Once TC2, TC4b&c are transferred the council will own all remaining non-residential undeveloped town centre parcels.
- 1.9 A town centre masterplan narrative was endorsed by the council in October 2024, identifying high level principles for the development of the town centre and locations for key uses. Since then, projects for the health and leisure campus have been established and this report gives further information about that. Following further analysis, the health and leisure project has altered the location of these uses from that previously identified, in part due to a change in the facilities mix, to ensure that the swimming facilities are sized to account for the proposed new town of Marlcombe.
- 1.10 As part of wider work being undertaken by the council to explore how the new town of Marlcombe can be developed alongside and complementary to Cranbrook and the Enterprise Zone sites, AHR architects have been appointed to develop the next stage of masterplan. This work has begun but has been delayed as part of the work on the overall Outline Business Case that supports Marlcombe and the wider projects in the growth corridor. Engagement with officers and members of the three local authorities is intended. A high-level delivery strategy will also be produced alongside the more detailed masterplan and as part of their Outline Business Case commission CBRE have undertaken soft market testing, including for uses in Cranbrook Town Centre.
- 1.11 The Placemaking Group were provided with a written update regarding health provision at the meeting in December 2025 and it should be noted that this project to deliver an Integrated Neighbourhood Health Centre is not progressing at the same pace as the leisure and wellbeing project. Revenue

funding is still being sought to complete a Short Form Business Case to enable capital funding from the NHS to be sought through a bid.

- 1.12 A project team, led by AHR Architects, have been appointed following a competitive tender exercise undertaken in Autumn 2025. The team are progressing on several workstreams to meet the ambitious programme that the council is working to. Latest developments are:
- a. RIBA stage 3 design nearing completion
  - b. First public consultation undertaken in February 2026, with an in-person event included. Nearly 1000 contributions to the Commonplace based survey were received.
  - c. Second pre-planning public consultation is currently underway. This is an online survey only, providing a summary of the earlier consultation feedback and how the project has been updated/unable to be updated as a result.
  - d. Pre-application consultation with the council's Local Planning Authority team.
  - e. Planning application due for submission toward the end of June 2026.
  - f. Project critical decisions regarding swimming pool tank, depth and filtration.
  - g. Full Business Case being produced
  - h. Risk management ongoing
  - i. Ongoing engagement with Devon County Council regarding the inclusion of services to be delivered by them within the facility.
- 1.13 Although the leisure and wellbeing project continues to progress at a faster pace than the health element, the overall campus approach is being maintained, with shared parking provision for the public and provision of the public realm between the two facilities. Subject to the resolution of drainage and highway considerations being worked through by the project team, the planning strategy is to submit a hybrid planning application, seeking full planning permission for the leisure and wellbeing centre, car parking and public realm and outline planning permission for the health facility.
- 1.14 The Cranbox project continues to advance according to a revised programme. Western Buildings, the modular provider, has is undertaking detailed design activities under the Pre-Construction Services Agreement.
- 1.15 A planning application for the delivery of Cranbox on land parcel TC2 was approved in late February 2026. A Section 73 Variation of Condition application has been made and is pending consideration. This application seeks to amend the approved drawings to adjust the building height and external paving.
- 1.16 As already detailed, the transfer of TC2 has taken far longer than anticipated and this has impacted upon the project programme. On the basis that the transfer completes in June 2026 and the Section 73 application is approved, work is anticipated to begin in July 2026. Project completion is targeted in Winter 2026. However, this is dependent upon the transfer of the TC2 land to EDDC.
- 1.17 Following a Cabinet report in May 2026 upon completion, ownership and management of the building and land will remain with East Devon District Council. Occupation of the units is anticipated to start toward the end of Q1 of 2027.

## **2. Recommendations/Decision**

2.1 The Cranbrook Placemaking Group are recommended to note the progress being made on the delivery of Cranbrook Town Centre.

## **3. Reasons for Recommendations/Decision**

3.1 To ensure that the Placemaking Group are kept informed about constituent projects within Cranbrook Town Centre.

## **4. Options**

4.1 The Cranbrook Placemaking Group is an advisory body, and this report provides an update on project progress only. No other options for reporting are considered appropriate.

## **5. Relevance to Council Plan/priorities**

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

## **6. Financial Comments/Implications**

6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report (JS).

## **7. Legal Comments/Implications**

7.1 There are no legal implications requiring comment in this update report. (MW)

## **8. Risk Implications**

**Please complete the risk table – further guidance available on the [Intranet](#)**

8.1 Each of the individual capital projects discussed above have their own risk registers that are regularly updated.

8.2 This report provides an update on the projects and makes no recommendation which has an implication on risk. Accordingly, there is no risk associated with the recommendation.

Activity/ plant/ materials etc	List significant hazards	People at risk	Assessment of Risk			Existing controls e.g. Safety procedures	What further action  Is required to control/mitigate the risk?
			*Impact 1-4	*Likeli hood 1-4	Risk Score		

\*Impact – Major = 4      Serious = 3      Significant = 2      Minor = 1

\*Likelihood – Very Likely = 4      Likely = 3      Unlikely = 2      Remote = 1

## 9. Equality Implications (Public Sector Equality Duty)

9.1 This relevance assessment aims to analyse gathered information for potential relevance to equality.

<b>Scope</b> ( <i>Provide an overview, including objectives and desired outcomes</i> )	This report provides an update on a number of individual projects and makes no recommendation that will have an impact upon them. Accordingly, the scope for this assessment is such that it would only assess the impacts of the recommendation, which means there are no considerations. However, the individual projects will need to undertake a relevance assessment and potentially a full Equality Impact Assessment.
<b>Evidence gathered and engagement</b> ( <i>List stakeholders consulted and relevant processes, policies, and data sources</i> )	None for the production of this report.
<b>Relevance assessment findings</b> ( <i>If relevant to equality, undertake a full EIA or If no relevance to equality, explain why with supporting information</i> )	A full EIA is required: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>  If yes, this assessment has demonstrated relevance to equality with regard to: Please check relevant boxes <input type="checkbox"/> Age <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy and maternity <input type="checkbox"/> Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation <input type="checkbox"/> Race <input type="checkbox"/> Gender reassignment <input type="checkbox"/> Sex <input type="checkbox"/> Marriage or Civil Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Religion or Belief <input type="checkbox"/> Armed Forces <input type="checkbox"/> Other, e.g. carers, care leavers, low income, rurality/isolation, etc.  If no, explain why:
<b>Relevance ranking</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> High – Very relevant to protected characteristics

	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium – Somewhat relevant to protected characteristics <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Low – Not relevant to protected characteristics
<b>Key findings and impacts</b>	None
<b>Conclusion drawn</b> ( <i>i.e No major changes needed; EIA found no negative impact or adjust policy/process to remove identified barriers</i> )	No negative impact from the recommendation of this report.
<b>Actions</b> ( <i>Proposed actions to mitigate negative impacts on identified groups</i> )	None
<b>Signed off by</b>	

## 10. HR and Workforce Implications

10.1 None

## 11. Community Safety Implications (Crime and Disorder)

11.1 Community safety considerations are paramount when designing a town centre and bringing forward projects within it. The council consults with Devon and Cornwall Police on planning applications within the town centre, who provide advice on designing out crime considerations.

## 12. Climate Change Implications

12.1 This report provides an update on several separate projects, each of which will consider climate change implications. It is however noted that projects relating to district heating were established to ensure low carbon emissions for heating and hot water and that the other built development projects will need to comply both with planning policies relating to sustainability and climate change and building regulations.

## 13. Health & Safety and Health & Wellbeing Implications

13.1 None

## 14. Procurement and Social Value implications

14.1 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.

14.2 This report provides an update on several separate projects, each of which will consider the implications of the Public Services (Social Value) Act. This report therefore gives no further consideration of this matter.

**Further guidance is provided at the end of the report.**

## 15. Land and Buildings (non-housing)/Asset Management Implications

15.1 The land transfers for parcels TC2 and TC4 b&c are pursuant to s106 obligations and will be taken forward in accordance with the constitution. The Town Centre masterplan and Delivery Plan will consider asset management implications in further detail.

**16. Overview and Scrutiny Committees Comments/Recommendations**

16.1 N/A

**17. Digital and Data**

17.1 None

**18. Consultation and Engagement**

18.1 Public consultation was undertaken regarding resident's views on the future of Cranbrook town centre in 2023 and this has led to the subsequent projects discussed in this report. Further public consultation was undertaken regarding Cranbrook Leisure & Wellbeing Centre in February 2026 and a second consultation has now begun.

**19. Communications**

19.1 None

**20. Next Steps**

20.1 A further update on these projects will be provided at the August 2026 meeting of the Cranbrook Placemaking Group.

**21. Appendices**

21.1 None

**22. Background Papers**

22.1 No need to refer to minutes or previous reports on the same matter as these are already publicly available.

**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.

	<b>Officer Name</b>	<b>Date requested</b>	<b>Date Completed</b>
Legal & Governance	Monitoring Officer or Deputy Monitoring Officer	27/05/2026	28/05/2026
Finance	Section 151 Officer or Deputy S151 Officer	27/05/2026	29/05/2026
Communications	<a href="mailto:communications@eastdevon.gov.uk">communications@eastdevon.gov.uk</a>	N/A	If applicable

Digital and Data	<a href="mailto:digital@eastdevon.gov.uk">digital@eastdevon.gov.uk</a>	N/A	If applicable
Engagement	<a href="mailto:engagement@eastdevon.gov.uk">engagement@eastdevon.gov.uk</a>	N/A	If applicable
HR	HR Lead	N/A	If applicable
Chief Executive	Chief Executive	N/A	If applicable
Director	Relevant Director	29/05/2026	29/05/2026
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	N/A	If applicable