

Kennett Community Land Trust

Trustee Board Meeting – Minutes – 31.07.24

Location: Zoom Virtual Meeting

Present:

Robin Swanson (RS)

Frank Danks (FD)

Paul Swanson (PS)

Susan Meister (SM)

Tim Foddy (TF)

Lynne McCallum (LMc)

Alison Rich (AR)

Peter Johnson (PJ)

Apologies:

Scott Horsley (SH)

The meeting was opened at 1303 by the chair (RS) who welcomed all present and thanked everyone for their attendance.

Item 1.

Trustee declarations of interest.

The Board members were requested to declare any personal interest in any of the agenda items for this meeting. Such a declaration would restrict the individual to discussion and information only and prevent them from voting on any decision-making concerning policy or allocation of assets. (LMc) declared an interest in Shared Ownership and Affordable Rental homes.

Item 2

Previous Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the previous Trustee Board meeting on 29.05.24 had been circulated to all Trustees prior to this meeting for review. Those minutes were reviewed and accepted as a true record by all who attended. The minutes were signed accordingly by the Secretary on the behalf of the Chair.

Item 3.

The Treasurer (TF) provided the latest financial information. The balance in the bank account is currently £29,178.27 with £22.03 in petty cash. This includes ECDC grant funding of £1,875 provided to cover Registered Provider application and £26,366.14 for legal and funding expenses for the initial four houses and self- build plots which represents 75% of the total requested. PGH have indicated that support for capital deposits following lump sum provision for the Open Spaces would be available.

The Chair presented a comprehensive overview of the interaction with Triodos Bank for funding thus far. Support and input from ECTC/PGH has proved invaluable resulting in Triodos acceptance that the funding for the first four units was viable and would be forthcoming following survey and valuation results. ECTC/PGH will provide a Community Support grant spread over a seven-year period as well as the provision of additional financial security in the form of an ESCROW account deposit.

Item 4.

The Board discussed options for future banking and agreed in the meantime to continue with the Lloyds Bank Business account and also to open a linked Savings Deposit account for future use and financial flexibility. The Treasurer (TF) committed to action this.

Action: (TF)

Item 5.

The Chair (RS) advised that after a considerable amount of negotiation with the developer involving both the Trust's and Bellway legal teams with further support from ECDC/PGH as well as the Trust's officers, the contracts and legal issues for the Public Open Spaces and Affordable Housing were complex but close to agreement and exchange. There remained some issues and delay due to legal concerns with covenants and overage resulting in transfers having to be reset as well as an issue with pipeline indemnity but confidence remains high for early completion.

The Self- Build to be agreed in Sep 24, Healthcare, CLT Office and Allotments contracts are still outstanding.

Item 6.

(L.Mc) advised the Board that the Bellway Senior Technical Focal Point had changed for approximately the sixth time. Sketchy internal Bellway handovers have caused issues with previously agreed construction detail resulting in a number of areas having to be re-visited with resultant delay and frustration. There remains concern that communication and commonality between the Bellway and Ashberry areas of construction are less than satisfactory. A site visit is planned on 9th August to hopefully allow snagging to be initiated.

The Board agreed to fund a software purchase to aid the snagging process.

Item 7.

The Chair (RS) advised that he had been recently informed that due to delay in contract completion, the Handover of the first four units was now subject to delay and would probably now be during the latter half of September. This would impact on the planned scheduling of the Opening Event.

It is anticipated that houses would be handed over on a Friday with Affordable Housing tenants moving in 5-7 days afterwards. The Opening Event would be scheduled within this window.

(SM) presented a list of proposals to cover the event which included:

- Invitations
- Press release
- Venue preparation to include refreshments
- Registration of attendees
- Speeches and announcements
- Display of plans and visual material

The Chair (RS) thanked (SM) for her valuable work and requested that she continued to fine tune as necessary prior to the event. The Chair (RS) agreed to provide a list of possible invitees from outside agencies.

Item 8.

The Chair (RS) provided an overview of the first group of applicants under consideration for the first three Affordable Houses. One applicant was agreed to be suitable with no concerns. A second, although subject to a debt recovery plan, was also agreed to be suitable whilst a third with a concerning identified debt history considered not to be suitable.

There have been issues with the first Shared Ownership 2 bed house resulting in 4 rejections to date for a variety of reasons. Following Trustee discussion, it was agreed that the Shared Ownership allocation be modified to allow smaller family groups to apply for shared ownership of a bigger unit. It is considered that this more flexible approach will be more attractive to potential shared ownership tenants and beneficial to future sales of this type of tenure.

Item 9

(TF) Shared his concerns with the Board about the village pond. Photographs of the pond and surrounding area had been circulated prior to the meeting. The resulting end product, although not yet fully landscaped is considered poor and well below the anticipated rural village pond requested by the community. In appearance the pond resembled a drainage SWALE with ugly infrastructure. Bellway appear reluctant to improve this. It was considered that the Trust would be able to improve the look of the pond area and infrastructure after taking ownership if new improvements are not forthcoming from the developer.

Item 10

The Secretary (FD) presented the agenda for the 2024 AGM scheduled for 3rd September. This was agreed by the Board. The required attendance this year is 18 members. The Chair (RS) is currently preparing the Annual Report for presentation to the membership. The annual accounts for 2023/24 have still to be received from the Trust accountants but have been promised shortly. The Secretary will chase this up to enable approval prior to the AGM.

Item 11

The requirement to establish a Trustee focal point to oversee the development service charges after handover from the developer and prior to the enrolment of a Trust employee who would carry out this function has been identified. This had been carried over from the previous Board meeting. It has also been apparent that there needs to be a focal point to oversee the initial rent income and turnover until a more permanent role is established. The Treasurer (TF) volunteered to undertake this function for the first tranche of housing.

AOB

(L.Mc) raised several points on allocation which were discussed but as the Trustees have no input into allocations, with rank order being assessed and verified by independent sources, it was recommended that queries be raised with the independent assessor. A query on the inclusion of "key worker" in the application form was flagged but as no points are allocated in this area the inclusion is redundant and should be subject to removal. The current application form will be reviewed and updated by the Trust.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 1440.

Frank Danks – KCLT Secretary.