

Minutes of the meeting of the Colerne CLT Board of Trustees on Tuesday 23rd January 2024

Present: Jane Mellett – Secretary (JM); Hilary Holman – Treasurer (HH); Peter Mellett (PM); Clive Spencer (CS); Paddy Harman (PH).

1	Apologies Ally Minch; Anne Nicholas; Brain Burchfield.	Action
2	Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting held 28th November 2023 a) All present expressed great sadness at the death of Robert in December. b) The need to recruit more members to the Board of Trustees was agreed; Jane to approach Hugo House and Paul Blythe in the first instance. c) Robert's action points from the previous meeting need to be followed up i.e. continuing access to the Camp SIC and CO, via the offer of involvement of service personnel as 'helpers'; also pursuit of County-level initiatives concerning low-carbon building.	JM
3	Acceptance of the minutes of the previous meeting held 28th November 2023 Accepted as a true record: proposed by Paddy, seconded by Clive.	

Secretary's report

1. Composition of the Board

A recent consultation with NCLT emphasised that the best CLT Boards are those who feel passionately about the goal and are prepared to weather the storms together. Expertise can be recruited / paid for as required as the future evolves. Paul Blyth is a new member who expressed a wish to join the Board in the New Year; Jane is yet to hear back from him and will check.

2. Future Funding situation

Louise, from *Homes of our Own* (our local CLT housing hub) explained that this hub has been disbanded by Wilts Council, as they are now focusing on building their own council housing in towns. However they have set aside a pot of money for a new body – *Rural Community Housing Facilitators* - that is made up of *Community First* and *Wilts CLT*. Their chair – Trevor Cherrett (TC) – asked for an update about where we are as a CLT – Jane has prepared and sent. TC responded with a promise that our request will be considered; the new fund can allocate up to £15,000 for operational and professional costs leading up to development; while less than the funding earlier enjoyed by CLTs, it is a sizable amount. Application forms are being written and we shall receive a copy during the coming month.

3. Professional services

As advised by Trevor Cherriot, Jane has contacted Jeff Bishop of Place Studio, who was the key adviser for our Neighbourhood Plan. He is now retired but still interested; he is meeting a colleague in the next couple of weeks who is interested in working with CLTs. Jane has prepared a 'rough' sites report to open a conversation with them (they know we do not have any money yet).

4. Free Health Check consultation via NCLT

This week, Jane and Pete and I met with Alison Ward (AW) on Zoom for a free NCLT 'Health Check' on our organisation. She has been working with CLTs in Somerset, Devon and Dorset over the past 17 years and concluded that we are in a healthy state, with sites to explore and activities backed up by the Neighbourhood Plan. She will be sending us a written report in due course.

In short, we learnt the following:

- a) **Finance** – positive that we may get a grant from the new local hub. Re tax status – we should always send the HMRC a simple end of year profit and loss account.
- b) **Grant money** received for project purposes in one financial year should be reserved to be spent in the following financial year. HMRC can only levy tax on profit – but if there is no available free monies at the end of a year, only allocated funds, then there should be no tax payable.

AW recommends speaking with Marshfield and Seend about how they have managed their funding process.

- c) The composition of our **Board** is OK (see above).
- d) We are at a turning point with our four **potential sites** (one for self-build affordable that Jane has discussed with the Chair of Biddestone PC) and now need to get good professional help. Although the cost of Pre-apps is now £1200, we may be able to negotiate a reduction via the Housing Enabling Team, of which Louise Newman is a member. Once we have one or more realistic sites with development potential, we need to select the Housing Association we would like to work with. Ideally we should explore with more than one in order to have some comparison. White Horse HA remains a strong candidate. Also *Aster* and *Hasto* HAs, both of which are prepared to work small-scale.

The process will then be:

Select potential site(s) → Public Meeting to get public approval → Appoint a consultant team (including the HA) to develop ideas, in consultation with members to → prepare a full Planning Application → Once approved, loans and community shares to be raised → Allocation policy agreed with HA partners and community members → LA approval (architects and builders agreed by CLT Board).

Jane will contact WC about reduced fees for pre-apps; she will also contact Seend about what they did at this stage.

5. Slaughterford site – Jane had a preliminary chat with Adam Walton, the chair of Biddestone and Slaughterford Parish Council. His response was optimistic. He says their

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5	<p>Chairman position and Board membership</p> <p>Great sadness at the loss of Robert Weston. We need to carefully consider a replacement for him, bearing in mind the exceptional skills that he brought to the post and which gave significant impetus to our effectiveness. It was agreed not to appoint a temporary Chair but to actively consider the options, including future recruitment. We need to appoint a new Chair by the time of the FCA report (May–August).</p>	
6	<p>Financial report</p> <p>Hilary reported that we have £301 in the bank. She will do the accounts in April before passing to our auditor (Ray Barker) and then on the FCA. The PC donation of £200 is due in September; it would be better to receive in May, at which point we shall have £5 remaining. We can afford NCLT membership this year (due at the end of March) but not next year with the current cash flows.</p>	
7	<p>Next move on sites</p> <p>As reported above, four sites have been identified – labelled 1, 2, 3 and 4 for the purposes of these minutes. Site 4 is out-of-parish and is regarded as more suitable for 'self-build affordable'. All sites require rural exception status to proceed as building sites. We shall now move to the pre-app stage, for which Jane will contact WC Planning Department about costs and their possible reduction / waiver for a CLT. Jane will also contact the owners of Site 1 to confirm their earlier position when contacting us initially. Sites 2 and 3 are owned by local farmer / landowners who will be approached directly or via their agent as appropriate.</p>	
8	<p>Any other business</p> <p>Clive confirmed that the caravan site (owned by Andrew Spearman) is too small for community PV and advised the meeting that an on-line wind energy audit suggests that it would be suitable for a turbine. The proximity to the SGS is not an issue. Wind power is supported by the draft Local Plan and so is worth bearing in mind as a possible community asset project.</p>	
9	<p>Close – date of next meeting</p> <p>The meeting closed at 9:25 p.m. The net meeting will be held on Tuesday 12th March, 7:30 p.m. at 16 Tutton Hill.</p>	