

Dorchester Area Community Area Land Trust

Minutes of the Board Meeting held on Wednesday 19th December 2018 at 5.30pm

Present: Tricia Mitchell (TM) (Chair), Barry Thompson (BT), Izzy Aldwinckle (IA), Douglas Dearing (DD), Andy Stillman (AS), John Christmas (JC), Felicity McLaren (FM), Ian Gosling (IG), Alistair Chisholm (AC) and John Palmer (JP)

Also Attending Steve Watson (SW) (Wessex CLT) Emma Scott (ES) (Dorchester Town Council)

Administration: Georgina Wakely – Minute Clerk

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| <p><u>1) Apologies</u> Apologies were received from Paul Derrien and Adrian Stuart.</p> <p><u>2) Declarations of Interest</u> No declarations of interest were made at this point. The Chairman reminded those present that they could declare an interest at any time throughout the meeting if required.</p> <p><u>3) Minutes of the last meetings</u></p> <p><u>a) DACLT – Board Meeting held on 21st November 2018</u></p> <p>The minutes were agreed by the board and signed by the Chairman as an accurate record of that meeting.</p> <p><u>4) Feedback from Hastoe Housing and Potential Developer Partners</u></p> <p>The Chairman reported that no feedback or correspondence had been received from Hastoe Housing.</p> <p>Members heard that Steve Watson had written to Yarlinton Housing Group, Magna Housing Association and Places for People to invite them to express an interest if they would like to consider working with the DACLT.</p> <p>Steve Watson informed the group that only Places for People had expressed an interest although the other organisations had acknowledged and declined the opportunity to express an interest in working with the DACLT.</p> <p>John Palmer declared an interest as he was employed by Places for People and left the room for the matter to be discussed.</p> <p>The Chairman informed the group that she, Andy Stillman and Steve Watson had met with Places for People’s Planning Manager, Kate Foot. The meeting had been positive and that the company would be pleased to work with the DACLT, particularly as they had offices located nearby and they had ongoing projects in the area. They had learned that Places for People were one of the largest property management and development organisations and had had previous experience of other types of affordable housing schemes. As a consequence of this it would negate the need for research into the demand by the public for our type of housing scheme thus saving the sum of £10k</p> | |
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which had been allocated for surveys. Members heard that Places for People had submitted DACLT's draft agreement and lease to their solicitors to view but they had not expressed any initial concerns regarding the terms. The group heard that if required, Places for People could manage the properties once completed, though it was generally felt that it would not be the preferred option of the DACLT. Kate Foot had indicated at the meeting that should Places for People be instructed to act on behalf of the DACLT the lead time once the planning application had been granted would be between three and four months before footings were in the ground.

A member queried the credentials of the company and heard that all Housing Associations were regulated and scored by the Regulator for Social Housing and that Places for People had scored highly for both their quality of governance and their financial viability - link to latest report

www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulatory-judgement-places-for-people-group-limited/current-regulatory-judgement-places-for-people-group-limited-14-november-2018

It was proposed and unanimously agreed that the DACLT should in principle move forward with Places for People as a non risk strategy – and discontinue the working relationship with Hastoe Housing Association. In addition the group agreed to liaise with the current architects, Reed Watts to continue their involvement in the project at least up to the point of submitting a planning application.

Steve Watson reminded the group that should any issues arise in arrangements with People for Places, they would still retain the option to find another partner to work with.

It was agreed that a further meeting with representatives from Places for People be arranged on Wednesday, 9 January at 2pm at their Offices.

The board noted and agreed that should a contract with Places for People be agreed, Board member, John Palmer would need to resign from the board though it was hoped that he would be available to consult with if required.

John Palmer was asked to return to the meeting at this stage.

5) Feedback from the meeting with the architects, Reed Watts

The group heard that the working group had conducted a site visit with the architects, Reed Watts. It was of the opinion of the architects that the planning authority may be concerned about the loss of any view that gave the perception of distance and space as opposed to the view of the existing scenery. The architects had also discussed matters of parking and aesthetic concerns.

The working group had viewed an architectural model developed from the drawings which had been previously produced, the proposed structure would consist of 17 or 18 flats, over 3 floors. Members were shown photos of the model. The group heard that if the design was agreed, then an application for planning permission would be submitted by Reed Watts and Places for People towards the end of January. Tricia Mitchell asked what the current timescale was for a planning application to be processed and was informed that although the local planning authority was busy it shouldn't be too long as both Reed Watts and Places for People had a great deal of experience of

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submitting applications, The Chairman also queried the cost of an application if changes were required and was informed that it could be resubmitted a further time before further costs were incurred.

Andy Stillman proposed that the DACLT formally instruct Reed Watts to progress with the architectural model design which was agreed by all members.

It was agreed that Andy Stillman would contact and confirm with the architects and thank them for their work.

Members heard that the architects had recently won an award for designing modular wooden pods which were cheap and easy to assemble and would provide temporary shelter for homeless people in Deptford.

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6) Progress on Obtaining the Grant of £62712 from Homes England to cover pre-development revenue funding.

Ian Gosling informed Members that he had not received a further update regarding the grant application. Steve Watson had contacted Homes England and had heard that the application was being considered by the Risk Team which was under pressure due to a considerable number of applications.

7) Future Projects, feedback of the subgroup from Douglas Dearing

Douglas Dearing told the group that he would be meeting with a representative from Dorset County Council on Friday, 20 December 2018 to view a property with extra land that had the potential to be developed, owned by the County Council and that was in disrepair. It was hoped that some if not all of the property could be made available to the DACLT.

Steve Watson informed the group of a policy known as Entry Level Exception Sites, which permits the use of land that is adjacent to existing settlements, which is not allocated for housing to be used for affordable housing. Steve Watson was aware of another CLT that had acquired a plot of land for £7k under the scheme. Members were asked to bear the DACLT in mind if they became aware of any plots that may be suitable.

The group agreed that it may be beneficial to build a database of the owners of land on the boundaries of Dorchester, drawing on the existing knowledge of West Dorset District Council if possible.

8) Applications for Membership

No new applications for membership had been received.

9) Treasurer's Report

John Christmas reported that the grant of £8940 from West Dorset District Council for marketing and consulting purposes had been received. The current balance in the account was approximately £25k, the majority of which was already committed.

10) DACLT Logo

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| <p>The group viewed a revised design of the logo designed by Felicity McLaren's son. Members heard that the design could be enlarged if required, but a higher pixelated image would be required. The group approved the logo and it was agreed that it would be circulated to members for use.</p> | |
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11) Any other business

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| <p>There being no other business the meeting closed at 6.35pm with notice that the next DACLT Board Meeting would be held on Wednesday 16 January 2019 at 5.30pm.</p> | |
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