



THORVERTON AFFORDABLE HOUSING – STEERING GROUP

Notes on the meeting held on Wednesday 24 April 2024

Present:

Andrew Foster (AF), Jan Wills (JW), Steve Rendell (SR), Stuart Crebo (SC), Bry Uglow (BU), Andrew Wiles (AW), Helen Ratcliffe (HR – minute-taking), Roger Cashmore (RC), Andrew Saunders (AS), Noel Tancock (NT)

Apologies were received from Jim Roberts and Geoff Pook.

Minutes from the Steering Group Meeting held on 22 March 2024 were approved.

Matters arising

Low-Cost Home-Ownership

It was agreed that the TSP group, with the addition of AW and SC, should investigate this further, with JW taking the lead.

Public Open Meeting held on 11 April 2024

It was felt that the meeting had been very successful, with lots of positive comments received. AF had updated the website to include a report of the meeting, with a link to the presentation slides and a summary of the questions raised and answers given.

Managing the Next Steps

Update on incorporation of Thorverton CLT

The four 'founder members' (ie those required to sign the Rules) will be AF (Chair), AW (Company Secretary), SC (Finance) and HR (Minutes Secretary), all of whom are required to declare any other directorships;

The roles and mix of other directors and co-opted members of the board will be agreed once incorporation is complete;

RC will take responsibility for membership.

The process now is that the signed application will be submitted to the FCA on our behalf and should take 4-6 weeks to complete. Once this is done, we can proceed with opening a bank account etc and starting the membership drive.

Membership

We can, in addition to the requirements set out in the Rules, draw up our own membership policy if we so wish; the CEMC group should meet to draw up proposals for a membership strategy, including consideration of application via either a physical form or the website.

Become a Registered Provider (RP) or partner with an RP/HA?

Following successful meetings with both Aster and Teign, with, in summary, the former being large and well financed, while the latter is smaller but only works with CLTs within one hour of their HQ in Teignbridge, there was much discussion about both the merits and drawbacks of working with Housing Associations.

The possibility of a hybrid model was discussed, providing affordable housing through a partner HA and a mix of market and discounted market sales.

Both MDDC and Homes England (through the First Homes initiative) are potentially very important partners in this potential package – in particular, Homes England seem to want to support small, innovative, community-led housing schemes, and we have the opportunity to present an exciting, ground-breaking model for this.

It was agreed that:

- the HA option should continue to be explored
- the potential for funding from MDDC should be established
- a parallel route of potential funding from Homes England should also be followed up

If, as seems likely, the provision of social rent housing is achieved through partnership with an HA, the question was raised as to whether the Rules should be changed before incorporation to include the asset lock now rather than later; it was agreed to continue without the asset lock as it is possible to change this later, but once done it cannot be reversed.

Negotiation with the Church Commissioners

AW that this is still progressing, with the MoU nearing completion

Legal advice/input

Although we need to plan//budget for significant legal advice/input as the project progresses, it would be helpful to have some local expert guidance in the meantime; HR will approach a parishioner with the relevant background to establish whether he might be interested in helping us.

Housing mix

While it would be helpful to have a more up-to-date sense of what the housing need might be, caution was urged in terms of any of the Board members holding information about confidential expressions of interest.

Aspects of eligibility were discussed, including connection with the village (typically, already living here, working here or with a caring/family link) and income/asset checks.

It was agreed to take the discussion about housing mix and different models of tenure forward once the outcome of the topographical surveys is available as this will help to inform potential numbers of units

Stakeholder management

The following appointed leads were identified:

- Housing Associations – AW
- CLT Network – AW
- MDDC Finance – SC
- Homes England – JW
- Church Commissioners – JW

Members of the group were asked to identify any others to be added to the list.

Topographical surveys

The surveys are planned for w/c 29th April and that JW would contact the Church Commissioners to ensure that they have given consent and informed their tenants.

The utilities surveys had already been done and that the feasibility studies would be completed in mid-May;

As the question had been raised at the Public Open Meeting, the situation re potential foot and mouth contamination on the site north of Silver Street would be investigated.

Stage 2 grant application

SC reported that he had sent a briefing note to Arron Beecham at MDDC for him to critique. It was noted that the sequence of events then is that, following Aaron's report on this, SC will complete and submit the application for it to be considered by the Council.

MDDC engagement/support

SC reported that his meeting with Andrew Jarrett and Rhys Roberts has been set for 15th May; the intention is to keep the meeting small and focused, with just SC and AW representing TCLT. Although it seems unlikely that there will be much funding available, there is the opportunity to exert some moral pressure to provide support in other ways (eg planning).

Financial feasibility model

SC reported that he had started the process of modelling the financial feasibility and will share iterations with the group to prompt discussion and further input.

Any Other Business

Technical Group

The feasibility appraisal of the sites includes services, road/highways and flood risk – and that any warning flags will prompt further investigation.

Communications Group

It was noted that there have been a lot of compliments regarding the website;

It was agreed that Steering Group Minutes should not be uploaded, but that there should be a brief report of the meeting included instead. Once the CLT Board is set up properly, minutes of AGMs and any SGMs should be published on the website.



Thorverton CLT Steering Group Meeting Report

A Q&A format for the Governance Group section on the website will be produced by AF and AW.

It was agreed that the following timeline should be uploaded onto the website:

- Incorporation of Thorverton CLT – 4-6 weeks
- Membership Drive – July/August
- Public Open Meeting to elect the Board – Sept/Oct

AS reported that the inside back cover of May's Focus will promote the CLT.

AF reported that he is handling enquiries through the website at the moment, but that when there are more of them, he will delegate responsibility to a nominated representative from each of the groups.

Date of Next Steering Group Meeting

The meeting Steering Group meeting will be held on Wednesday 29th May at 5pm in the Exeter Inn Skittle Alley.