Kennett Community Land Trust

Trustee Board Meeting – Minutes – 12.02.25

Location: Zoom Virtual Meeting

Present:

Robin Swanson	(RS)
Frank Danks	(FD)
Susan Meister	(SM)
Tim Foddy	(TF)
Lynne McCallum	(LMc)
Alison Rich	(AR)
Peter Johnson	(PJ)
Paul Swanson	(PS)

Apologies:

Scott Horsley (SH)

The meeting was opened at 1305 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 16.10.24 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 Chair presented an overview of the funding options from Triodos Bank. The Board were requested to consider the options on available interest rates for funding of Plots 318-321.

- Fix everything and if so for 2 or 5 years?
- Fix part of it. If so, how much (Min £100,000)?
- Go totally variable.

The Board discussed at length the possible options and considered the advantages and disadvantages of each and the future impact on Trust business going forward. Each Trustee presented their view and the option to fix interest for 2 years was approved by a majority vote.

(TF) expressed concern that the central government plan to transform local government from the current structure may impact the support for the Trust from ECDC if ECDC ceased to exist in its current form and was replaced by a less supporting centralised system of local government.

Item 4.

The Treasurer (TF) provided a review of investigations into buildings insurance cover for KCLT housing. There is a degree of urgency to obtain cover as it is a condition of funding. Several quotes had been obtained but there remained uncertainty over the scope of cover for semi-detached units and how shared ownership insurance is included. (TF) agreed to raise the queries with his sources and report back.

Action: (TF)

Item 5.

For several years the Trust's accounts preparation and returns to the FCA and HMRC have been provided by a small local accountancy business. There has been a degree of concern over the last-minute response for completion of returns by the incumbent as well as poor communication. On the positive side, the service cost has been low and accuracy has not been an issue.

As the Trust approaches considerable expansion of its financial footprint with the acquisition of housing it is now considered that accountancy services should now be placed in the hands of a larger business with the facilities and experience to cover all financial eventualities. A local accountancy firm, HSA & Co has been identified as suitable to conduct the Trust's business and have provided a proposal which, although more expensive, appears suitable for ongoing Trust fiscal support. Two Board members declared firsthand experience of HAS &Co and with their recommendation the Board agreed to engage with them and place financial matters in their hands.

The Secretary (FD) committed to contact the previous accountants and advise termination of their services.

Action: (FD)

Item 6.

The Chair (RS) advised that an issue has been identified with the infrastructure of the new Community Building. Despite the fact that the approved plan was for the installation of underfloor heating, the developer has advised that this has been omitted and the floor screed laid. Installation of underfloor heating is now an issue as considerable work would be involved to remove the completed floor and install underfloor heating. The developer has put forward an alternative option which is to install radiator heating and to compensate for their error to install a total of 6 PV panels with battery storage.

(L.Mc) stated that it would still be possible to install an electrical underfloor heating mat with a screed on top. The Board discussed the options and it was stated that, if the developer's option was taken, the additional PV panels and the battery storage would enable additional PV panels to be added in the future as the roof area is considerable and the resultant battery storage would be financially beneficial given the occupancy of the building.

It was agreed that the developer's proposal be accepted provided battery storage is included. (RS) committed to approach the developer to include battery storage for future proofing and sufficient inverter capacity to accommodate additional PV Panels/infrastructure.

Action: (RS)

Item 7.

Two board members had recently attended a meeting with other stakeholders on the open spaces. Community Gardens, approximately 60meters X 30 metres, were discussed and some present advocated installation of raised beds as part of the infrastructure to be available to those living in the immediate area to develop for community use.

This has been a long-term consideration but is dependent on householders to develop and maintain the facilities. There is concern by the Trust that management of the area could be problematic as householders may not have an interest in the facilities with subsequent deterioration resulting in additional work and expense to the Trust as freeholder. It was decided that from a Trust point of view the Community Gardens be completed to be as simple as possible and low maintenance. The provision would remain for community involvement if popular among residents.

AOB

(TF) has recently inspected the village pond and produced a comprehensive report. There remains a question whether the depth of the pond will be sufficient to support wild life as it is approximately only a maximum of 12 inches deep shelving to 8 inches and the edge. The design of the village is considered to be poor and ill-conceived and it would appear that new residents are of the opinion that it is an attenuation basin for drainage and not a pond.

The Secretary (FD) had researched further PV panels and the potential income from exported surplus electricity particularly in the summer months. Although the output from each house will be small, when the full hosing portfolio is taken into account the modest income should go some way to providing funding for maintenance of the PV panels in the future. Further research is ongoing to identify a suitable income tariff which will enable application for export to be completed.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 1428.

Frank Danks – KCLT Secretary.