

# Dorchester Area Community Land Trust

## Minutes of the DACLT board meeting held on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> February at 5.30pm via Zoom Meeting

Board Present: Ian Gosling (IG), Theo Hawkins (TH), Felicity McLaren (FM), Tricia Mitchell (Chair) (TM), Barry Thompson (BT)

Also Present: Steve Watson (SW) – Wessex CLT  
Robin James – East Boro Housing

Administration: Paula Harding (PH) – Minute Clerk

<p><u>1) Apologies</u> Apologies were received from Alistair Chisholm, Emma Scott, Paul Derrien</p> <p><u>2) Declarations of Interest</u> There were no declarations of interest made.</p> <p><u>3) Minutes of the Board meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2023</u> There were no amendments proposed. The minutes were agreed by those present and signed as a true record of that meeting by the Chairman.</p> <p><u>4) Matters arising not covered by other Agenda items</u> <u>i) East Boro Representative</u> Robin James has replaced Nigel Reed as the representative for East Boro Housing who will liaise with the DACLT. PH and IG to add him to their distribution lists for minutes and correspondence</p> <p><u>5) Membership applications</u> There were no new applications since the last meeting</p> <p><u>6) Treasurers report</u> <u>i) Invoices received for payment</u> An invoice has been received from Becky Smyth (Excello Law) to cover the additional work in amending the agreements from Places for People to East Boro Housing. This invoice is for £7,200. IG is to look at the charges to confirm they are acceptable for the work carried out before this is agreed for payment.</p> <p><u>ii) Financial position at the end of March 2023.</u> The treasurer (FM) reported that the end of year balance was £11,841 with the administration fees and website costs paid up to date.</p> <p>It was noted by all that the invoice noted above in 6(i) is still to come from this figure if approved.</p> <p><u>7) Progress on the Tennis Court/West Walks site.</u> <u>i) Section 106 agreement</u> There will be no further progress on the S106 agreement until planning permission is granted.</p>	<p><b>Admin and Ian Gosling</b></p> <p><b>Ian Gosling</b></p>
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ii) Nitrate mitigation – Poole Harbour Catchment area

The Wessex CLT commissioned a calculation study to see how much of East Boro/Aster housing stock would need to be retro fitted with water saving devices to mitigate any new developments they were proposing. This study was then submitted to Dorset Council for their consideration.

Dorset Council consulted with Natural England regarding the findings, however Natural England rejected the conclusions, suggesting that limiting water into the system would just concentrate the nitrate levels being released.

The upgrading of septic tanks is an alternative proposal which has been put forward and East Boro/Aster are now looking to see if they would be able to meet the necessary nitrate reductions through this method. SW informed the group that in Devon it has been established that 1 replaced septic tank mitigates nitrates for approximately 6 properties.

The consultants who produced the original study have now been asked to do extra calculations based on this alternative proposal. East Boro/Aster housing covers 5 different catchment areas so it is in their interest to find a solution as fast as possible. There will however be a significant increased cost implication to this alternative. It was costed that the waterflow solution would have a cost of £165 per property where the septic tank solution is nearer £20,000 per property.

iii) Legal Documents

SW suggested that whilst a solution to the nitrate issue is still being sought it would be good for the DACLT to finalise all of the remaining legal documentation that now needs to be switched from Places for People to East Boro/Aster. The options agreement and lease both need amending.

East Boro have put forward some changes that they would also like to these documents. IG reported that he needed to complete his review of their request but could not, at present, see any deal breakers from his point of view.

There was a suggestion that the planning application needed to be resubmitted now that the potential provider had changed, this is not correct.

Ashfords, solicitors for East Boro, have raised the searches required and made enquiries to the other parties' solicitors to make sure that all is in place once planning is finally granted.

Ashfords have sent an invoice to the DACLT regarding the Dorchester Town Council part of the S106. TM has been calling them to clarify that the invoice is correctly addressed to the DACLT and establish what costs it relates to, but with no response as yet. TM is to forward the details to Robin James (RJ) to see if he can follow this up when he next speaks to them.

RJ to continue to liaise with SW on the legal part of this development.

(RJ left the meeting)

**Tricia Mitchell  
and Robin  
James.**

**Robin James  
and Steve  
Watson**

**8) Other Potential Sites****i) Site X - Dorchester**

There was no update from IG on this potential site

**ii) Site Y – Dorchester Area**

A number of meetings have taken place regarding this proposed site all of which were positive.

PD reported that 'in principle' Dorset Council would be happy to support this potential site for affordable housing. The next stage would be to hold a housing needs survey for local residents, businesses, education and health services in conjunction with the local Parish Council. The housing needs survey would be required as this site would be designated as a rural exception site. In order for a rural exception site to be granted permission for new development a 'local need' has to be proven.

PD is confident that if the DACLT, Parish Council and local businesses work together a local community need can be established and supported.

**iii) Garfield Avenue**

This site is currently for sale 'with offers' on the Goasby and Harding website. It was noted that Dorset Council Asset Management strategy states that 'Dorset Council reserve the right NOT to accept the highest offer on any sale of asset'. SW acknowledged the level of frustration with the strategy as whilst the DACLT have shown interest in this site it has still been put on the open market.

The DACLT does not have funds at this time to put in an offer through the commercial sale channel. It was agreed to let the expiry date for offers expire and then if a sale is not agreed the DACLT will re-approach the Council.

IG suggested contacting Chris Loder MP to ask him to write to the new Director of Assets at Dorset Council requesting a list of assets that the Council would consider transferring to the DACLT for development as part of their asset disposal programme. Explaining to him the current situation with Garfield Avenue site. TM is to send a draft letter to IG to forward.

**iv) Dorchester Prison**

BT reported that the planning permission for the Prison site has been extended and it is back on the market.

**v) New Street/South Street site**

The site hosting the betting shop(south street), bakery (new street) and parking area used for Trinity Street Xmas Trees is back on the market. The agent is Max Gate Properties and the current owners are Barnardo's. The Betting shop is a Grade 2 property. IG is to obtain the details and report back to the board.

**9) Website**

FM asked if an article could be put in the news section of the website (linked from the home page) to explain why the Tennis Court/West Walks project is being held up. TH and TM are to draft an article and send round to the board for agreement before posting on the website.

**Tricia Mitchell  
& Ian Gosling**

**Ian Gosling**

**Tricia Mitchell  
& Theo  
Hawkins**

10) Any other business

i) Potential Electricity works around Tennis Court site.

AC stated that an electric company have approached Dorchester Town Council (DTC) to undertake some works in the parking/tennis court area which will be required for the construction zone of the Tennis Court/West Walks site. Further information will be provided if the works are confirmed as it will depend on the timing whether the land has transferred from DTC to DACLT. It would also be good to get the two projects running concurrently to avoid further disruption to local residents. AC to keep the board informed this matter.

ii) AGM and Approval of Accounts

IG stated that the draft accounts would be put before the board in July for approval, these would then be ratified at the AGM.

The AGM will be scheduled for August. There will be a short board meeting if required before the AGM begins with the only item on the agenda to confirm any new members who have applied since the July meeting. The full August board meeting will then take place after the AGM is complete.

iii) Future Meetings

It was agreed to cancel the proposed June meeting unless something significant arises. The July meeting will remain due to the requirement to sign off the accounts.

It was therefore noted that the next meeting would take place on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2023 in the Magistrates room at the Corn Exchange, unless otherwise instructed by the Chairman.

The meeting closed at 6.35pm.

**Alistair  
Chisholm**