

Toller Porcorum CLT Steering Group Meeting.

Held at the Village Hall on 18th June 2012 at 7pm

Present: Steve Watson, Somerset Devon and Dorset CLT Project. Tim Crabtree, Wessex Community Assets. Robert Aspray, Rural Housing Development Officer West Dorset District Council, Chris Moglia, Synergy Housing Association. Simon Thompson, Dorset Community Action. Village members: Colin Baker, Barry Rutherford, Debbie Billen, Brian and Jill Bacchus, Evelyn Whitcombe, Peggy Denty, Jeremy Stavenhagen, Vanora Hereward, Mick and Jennifer Rolfe, Richard Blackmore, David Ennals, Rorie Geddes.

Apologies: Alex Carstairs

Colin baker welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Chris Moglia from Synergy.

The minutes of the meeting on the 14th May 2012 had been distributed and there were no matters arising.

Rorie had been approached by Peter Mason of Halsall Construction Ltd, working in partnership with Synergy, to arrange topographic and tree surveys. Colin met Shaun Berry of Berry Yates Land and Engineering Surveyors on Monday morning to carry out the former. These surveys and legal enquiries are essential precursors to the feasibility study which might take a further six weeks. Disappointment was expressed at the meeting that the study was not more advanced but the reality is that there is a lot of work required to form a definitive conclusion and Synergy have been hampered by staff changes. Chris reported that he has been in touch with Symonds & Sampson about the Longley's land.

Robert Aspray reported on the Housing Need survey. The District Council have a new register and not everyone has reapplied to go on it. He does now have a Toller register and has eight potential applicants. It was felt that when neighbouring parishes were included there would be plenty of interest.

The use of a charity as the legal entity structure had been discussed but Simon Thompson pointed out that 100% rate relief was available (50% Gov 50% WDDC) for community assets of this nature so it was decided that the

structure would be the Community Benefit Society. Evelyn pointed out that if there was a break in her contract the Post Office might choose to end it so care was needed to ensure this did not happen. Simon pointed out that the shop was a good opportunity for local employment but it was felt that the proposed size would be impractical.

A decision was made to call the CLT the 'Toller Porcorum Community Land Trust' and to incorporate as a CBS under Wessex Community Assets Model Rules. It would cover TP and environs. The founder members are Vanora Hereward, Jill Bacchus, Barry Rutherford and Rorie Geddes as secretary. Once the CLT was incorporated it would co-opt other members on to the Board. Within six months, and preferably sooner, it would have to call a special meeting to elect directors, appoint a secretary and resolve not to require an audit. This process would be supported by Sean Wheeldon and/or Tim Crabtree. A bank account would be required and Rorie undertook to initiate this.

Vanora reported on the meeting with Ian Moran of Cobbetts Solicitors on 29th May. He explained the legal structure and the 125 year lease; he confirmed that the restriction on the transfer of Vanora's land was easy to set up. He also pointed out that the Synergy partnership Heads of Agreement was the basis for the legal document. She felt he was familiar with this type of work.

It was confirmed that WDDC had approved £5,000 to cover the contracts with the landowners, the lease of the land, the partnership agreement with Synergy, negotiating the s106 agreement and the incorporation of the CLT.

There was discussion about the nature of the agreement between the CLT/post office in regard to repairs. As there was no rental income forthcoming it was not right to expect Synergy to meet all costs. Subsequent discussion indicates that a fair compromise can be made. As VAT on the new post office construction and fitting would not be reclaimable it might be appropriate for the community to do as much as possible. The Plunkett Foundation might be able to help with some of these costs. Use of the building in the event of the Post Office withdrawing services was briefly touched upon but needs further discussion.

The options for the existing Post Office Structure, the Toller Porcorum Village Association, are to keep separate, to close down and donate funds

remaining after restitution of the existing PO to the CLT (retaining those funds for post office use) or for the TPVA to become a member of the CLT. The middle option was felt to be most appropriate.

The next meeting will be called after the meeting with Bruce Voss, Area Manager for the Homes and Communities Agency, on the 29th June, completion of the surveys, feasibility study and incorporation of the CLT.

Meeting ended at 9pm