



A Community Benefit Society
The Shop & Post Office Great Street Norton Sub Hamdon Somerset TA14 6SG

Minutes of The Board of Directors of Norton sub Hamdon Community Land Trust Ltd

Held on Monday 17th June 2024, 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

Attendees: Niall Clifford (NC) Chair
Lindsay Higgins (LH) Treasurer
Simon Harris (SH)
Ian Murray (IM) Secretary
Rowena Asley (RA)
Jennie Harris (JH)
Anne Fairweather (AF)
Brian Wickins (BW)

1. Apologies

None

NC warmly welcomed BW back following his period of absence with illness.

2. Declarations of Interest

None.

3. Approval of Minutes of previous meeting (20th May)

Approved, signed & dated.

Matters Arising -

Minchington Field

Following complaints about the health/welfare of the sheep there (sheep remains & discarded fleece) NC has visited the field & has since spoken to Alex Rodgers & received a call from Dave Rodgers (sheep owner).

He informed NC that the sheep were being fed & watered every 3 days. NC visited the field on 3 consecutive days & saw no evidence of that happening. Also the condition of the pasture has changed with minimum available grass for the sheep & the majority of the field covered in thistle.

DEFRA have been informed both by a member of the public & NC for them to take any appropriate action including referring to a local vet.

NC felt that the CLT are at 'risk' overall due to the circumstances (although not the responsibility of the CLT) & therefore the only solution would be to draw the matter to a

close by stating that we do not wish to continue the arrangement (which has always been an informal one) & that the sheep are to be removed.

This was agreed by the board.

There had been an offer from local residents to temporarily look after the sheep however this was declined by the board on the basis that it wouldn't resolve the issue.

Bagnall Farm have expressed an interest in the use of the field.

IM to write a letter (via Alex Rodgers) requiring removal of the sheep & vacating the land. Also to continue contact with local residents as required.

AF to make enquiries regarding a Grazing Licence.

4. Property / Assets

Field - as already discussed.

NC mentioned the possibility of the land being adopted as part of the phosphate reduction campaign that the county council is pursuing. It's a method that developers can use, buying phosphate credits, concerning land identified by the council that is not being developed & that can be enhanced as a bio-diversity improvement. So if the field was ever developed in any way the land will be recorded as making the difference to make it permissible. Money for this is available & a council issued booklet on the subject will be further investigated.

5. Finance Report

LH discussed her earlier circulated report.

May was a bumper month for fruit & veg (nearly £4.9k) but unfortunately, despite this, there was still a small loss on the shop & PO trading of £214.

The balance in the bank as at 31/05/24 was £71,339.80 which includes the pledge monies; plus £1,637.53 cash-in-hand & so far the bank balance has not dropped below £57k in the last 6mths.

LH put forward the suggestion that perhaps at least £50k should now be invested & NC said he would look at the options.

The daily energy consumption has risen & is slightly higher than this time last year although no obvious explanation for this.

A general request for volunteers to join the Finance Committee have not been fruitful & so there was no monthly meeting due to availability.

However, good news with WorldPay who have apologised for their failing standards & offered to credit our account with them by £150.

LH proposed this was accepted & that as from 1st July we would revert back to them until a new supplier could be found.

This was agreed by all & SH thanked her for stepping in & organising Sumup.

EPOS - a demonstration has taken place with a company called EPOS NOW. In attendance were LH, NC, SH, Claire, Lindsay Elliott (cashing-up) & Louise Faulkner (data production)

Initial impressions were positive although there were some back-office questions which needed answering/clarifying. This system would be around a 2mth setup however, there were a couple more to see yet.

Lindsay Elliott was thanked for her help so far.

Youngs - LH & Claire met with the local rep. Their 'best' sellers range was shared & it was clear that they wanted to keep the shop as a customer & continue the good relationship. A £100 saving per yr was offered on crisps that were bought although LH felt that wasn't a huge offer considering the thousands that were purchased anyway. However, they are reintroducing their take-away coffee machines & IM is looking into the feasibility of one within the shop.

A discussion was then held about the impact of a coffee machine generally, covering who would be responsible for it, where would it be situated, not wanting to be in competition with Katie (Reading Rm) etc. The only supply from the shop would be water & electricity. Everything else would be supplied by Youngs & 99p per sale would go to them, the rest would be profit for the shop. IM suggested that 5 sales per day would be the minimum to make it work, the object being, aiming at the trade workers who call in for sandwiches etc & at a time when Katie would not be open (8 - 9).

Although the Board unanimously supported Katie it was agreed that the coffee machine would not be in direct competition due to her particular quality & style of cafe.

SH to visit Katie.

Accountants - The shop/PO accounts are governed by the FCA & for example, require the accountant to have an audit certificate. Following other quote enquiries, Chalmers rates are more competitive & LH recommended continuing with them.

6. Secretary & Action Log

Action Log discussed & updated.

Shop lease due for renewal in 2026.

IM to enquire regarding a surveyor valuation for the shop.

JH & RA to plan a volunteers evening in September.

A new 'Free Cash Withdrawals' banner now in place on the shop.

7. Shop & Post Office

SH - Peter Callaghan is now working with Francesca & Veronica with veg ordering from Bower Hinton & will mentor them, with 'all' contact needed, via Claire.

Direct debit v cash payees were discussed & it was agreed that any local person/small business providing local goods would meet the cash payment criteria.
Larger suppliers to be contacted with a view to changing to monthly DD.

Although no issues, it was clarified that volunteers will not work on their own in the shop unless either Claire or Cheryl were also on the premises. RA confirmed that the rota was set up to meet that requirement.

RA stated that a volunteer asked why there was no shop/PO news in the newsletter. IM stated he does submit items but only when there was something new or necessary to report about.

JH reported on the recent cream teas afternoon in the village hall. Although footfall was down a fuller report will go in the newsletter.

RA will email all volunteers (on behalf of Lynn Orchard as a last call) to assist with the Jubilee Garden evening on the 29th June with some proceeds going towards the shop.

8. Marketing

Assistance towards the Business Plan is still ongoing.

Flyers for various B&Bs to be sent out.

9. Health & Safety

SH - Nothing specific to report.

10. A O B

LH stated that Business Plan is due to be launched.

Request for other village volunteers to join the board with the idea of being able to assist specific areas & help with the ideas submitted.

BW to put a request out to the residents of Chiselborough & NC to contact W.Chinnock PC clerk with a view of a presentation.

21.00 meeting finished

Next meeting date/s - No August meeting
Tuesday 17th Sept. 7.30pm Village Hall