



MORETONHAMPSTEAD DEVELOPMENT TRUST

Green Hill, Fore Street, Moretonhampstead

Devon, TQ13 8LL

Telephone: (01647) 440775 Fax: (01647) 440775

E-Mail: admin@moretonhampstead.com

Website: www.moretonhampsteadtrust.org.uk

Registered in England & Wales

Company No. 5133939

Registered Charity No. 1105114

Minutes of Directors' Meeting Thursday 15 October 2020

1. Present

Richard Foxwell, Bob Small, Frank Loft, Liz Prince, Henry Reddaway, Alison Hastie, John Willis, Liz Gavrilenko, Cameron Caverhill, Camilla Rooney (at Green Hill)
Emily Dooley, Peter Nottingham, Jenny Bates, Alastair Wimberley (from home via Zoom)

2. Apologies

Andrea Foxwell

3. Declaration of interest

John Willis, Jenny Bates: Members of NEDCare Board

Cameron: Standing declaration about his legal work for the Trust

Liz Gavrilenko: a tenant of the Trust

4. Minutes of June meeting

The minutes were proposed and accepted, with no matters arising.

5. Strategic Plan and Annual Report

At the strategic meeting MDT Trustees and staff created a draft Vision, Mission and Values and generated a list of priorities which were broken down into themes. Camilla used this information to create five priority areas: Environmental Sustainability, Support Local Business and Facilities, Arts, Health and Wellbeing and Affordable Housing. These themes are underpinned by the theme: Engaging Wider.

Camilla has shared this work with Peter Jones, Development Officer at Locality, who made some suggestions about the wordings of the Vision, Mission and Values.

Liz G suggested that the next steps should be to fix strategic aims and then work in smaller groups to create a more detailed plan for moving the priorities forward.

Action: Liz G to circulate examples of strategic aims from similar organisations to generate ideas. Camilla to work on rewording the Vision, Mission and Values.

6. Finance report and Annual Accounts for 2019

6a. MDT's new accountants Griffins have provided a final draft of the Annual Accounts and Financial Statements for 2019. Our statement for income and expenditure showed a loss of around 25K. Griffin has increased the depreciation from £7K to £17.5K. The operating loss without depreciation is around £3K.

Our lease of the Hospital shows a loss of £5.5K. This is due to service charges made by NHS property services which are in dispute. The remaining deficiency was identified by Griffins who looked at MDT's lease agreement and found that only 75% has been sublet with no revenue from the remaining 25%.

All Trustees were in favour of accepting the Annual Accounts.

6b. Liz P presented Forecast and Actuals for Core and Centre Management income up to September. Rentals have remained steady and there is currently full occupancy at Green Hill. Centre Management shows a profit but there are several payments that have not been taken into account which comes to around 10K. These include: a social investment mortgage repayment holiday, payment of accountant's fees, deferment of the external building maintenance and repayment of NiM credit.

7. Library developments

Camilla has become a Trustee in a personal capacity of the Bowring Library Charitable Trust (BLCT) and attended a board meeting in September. Camilla reported that the Parish Council supported the transfer of the building from DCC in principle but were concerned that they might end up with an unsaleable liability, and wanted assurances that BLCT felt were unrealistic and was unlikely to be able to provide. BLCT is currently consulting with DCC about alternative solutions with the support of the Devon Historic Buildings Trust.

She had also proposed to the BLCT Trustees that MDT might apply for funding to set up a business hub in the building, but it had been agreed that this could not happen until the transfer was confirmed and there was a date for completion of building repairs.

8. Post Office developments

Camilla and John have been exploring possibilities of setting up a community-run Post Office in Moretonhampstead. They have identified a candidate with experience and training who is interested and willing to act as Postmistress for a potential Moretonhampstead branch. They have been looking at the ground floor of Bowring Library and the Sawdye and Harris Office as two potential locations. They have had several positive meetings with Steve Turner, Head of Commercial & Innovation of Libraries Unlimited but have not yet gained access to the Sawdye and Harris location or received a floorplan.

Camilla has been in contact with Stuart Taylor, External Relations Manager at the Post Office, who estimated annual fees for the Post Office based on predicted migration of customers back to using the service following its closure as between £16,604 - £18,448 pa. As a branch operating on a transaction-income-only contract in a rural area then it would also qualify for a Local Remote Support payment of £5K per year. In terms of costs, the indicative capital set-up cost for a single position, Local style branch are £15-17K, if a Post Office alarm is included in the specification. Due to the impact of Covid there has been a pause to capital expenditure on new build Post Office (i.e. we would have to fund this work ourselves) though they hope for some Government funding for this in 2021.

New style Post Office formats have been deliberately designed in conjunction with retailers so that they can run alongside another form of retail / service business. The potential of extending Green Hill retail space would therefore be considered in the development of a business plan.

Action: Camilla to speak to Andy Healey, the local Area Manager to go through physical requirements of the Post Office and prepare a draft business plan.

9. Hospital

MDT has a lease of a third of Moretonhampstead Hospital until 31st Dec 2021. Roughly three-quarters of this space is currently sublet to Knead to Connect and NEDCare. MDT has an ongoing dispute with NHS Property Services over service charges.

The RD&E Community Services Team have given notice to staff to move to Okehampton at the beginning of next month. This was not unexpected but very sudden and done with no consultation. Moreton Health Centre, led by Tom Waterfall, are challenging the decision but will only be able to delay the decision.

Richard suggested that this decision opens several possibilities for the Trust. Firstly, we could end our tenancy when the lease expires. Alternatively, the Trust could consider purchasing the building. Richard has spoken to NHS Property Services who welcome ideas from MDT, including letting more of the building or taking a headlease for whole of the building. As John registered the hospital as a community asset, the community can enact the Community Right to Bid if they can raise the finance to purchase it.

He asked Trustees for their support in carrying out a feasibility study including community consultation.

Trustees accepted Richard's proposal. Cameron agreed to be on working group. Liz G and Jenny Bates also agreed to join in connection to their interest as tenants.

10. Wellmoor projects

Richard reported that the Allotment continues to be a success with a group of active volunteers led by Julia Oliver. Other projects information will be circulated. The Wellmoor Steering committee will be starting after several delays, with its first meeting scheduled for 10th November. Bob Small has agreed to be the second Trustee on the Committee.

11. Housing project (Live Work Units)

John, Emily and Alastair have set up a Community Benefit Society independent from MDT called Moretonhampstead Community Land Trust, which will receive a Resonance grant of £10K when it is formally constituted. Camilla will act as Company Secretary. The grant funding will be used to put together a feasibility to develop affordable Live-Work units on a site next to Thompsons with the possibility of solar energy generation in a nearby field.

The Resonance consultant working with John has been trying to uncover if the planning permissions for the site still exist - there were concerns raised by the Environmental Agency about the site being a flood risk area - but there is still confusion between the owner and DNP. John is optimistic that it will be confirmed by a DNP Officer as standing, after which time a business plan can be produced and reported to the Trustees.

12. Christmas plans – trees

The installation of Christmas Trees will go ahead as normal. Camilla is working closely with Sam Parkin, PC Clerk, to coordinate with the Switch-On event which this year will not be in the traditional format as social distancing rules could not be maintained.

Camilla, Georgie and Emily have also worked together on a local shopping campaign called the 'Moreton Shop Local Challenge.' Anyone taking part in the challenge needs to buy 5 presents from local business and makers to be entered into a prize draw.

13. Visit Moretonhampstead website

The PC has relinquished ownership but made a grant of £500 for refreshing the site. The Info Centre have agreed to take ongoing responsibility for the site. Georgie reports that she is working with them to make a start on refreshing the site, uploading new photos in folders and updating the calendar.

14. Arts report and plans

Andrea has produced a report including updates on Green Hill Arts strategic plans which was circulated amongst Trustees. Georgie will be returning from furlough at 4 days a week. The current Winter Show is now open and looking very good thanks to effort by Georgie and Carol.

15. AGM and new Trustees

Trustees agreed on 7pm on Thursday 3rd December for a virtual AGM via Zoom. There has been interest from Nina Bailey, owner of Zero Waste, about becoming a new Trustee.

16. Next meeting date

AGM: Thursday 3rd December 7.00 pm

Board Meeting: Thursday 4th February 7.00 pm

Finance & Staffing Committee: Thursday 28th January 9.30 am