

OFFWELL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY SUB COMMITTEE MEETING

HELD AT 10.00am ON WEDNESDAY 8th FEBRUARY 2017
AT COLWELL HOUSE

Present: Cllrs A Small (Chair), J. Tristram, S Patch, ,
M Mulrain, P Tuke,

In Attendance: A. Jenkins (Clerk), Janice Alexander (Devon Communities
Together)

COUNCIL BUSINESS

The Chair welcomed Janice Alexander from Devon Communities Together (DCH). Janice is the person who carries out all the housing needs surveys on behalf of the organisation.

She explained that she hoped to commence the Offwell survey in March, the forms would be out for 4 weeks and then after analysis of the data the report would follow in a further 3 weeks.

The envelopes with printed forms and covering letters would be supplied to the Council for hand delivery to all the households in the parish. The householders are requested to post back the completed forms to DCH. The Council should not collect the forms as they will contain confidential

information but it may carry out a reminder visit to all households to encourage a higher response rate. She said that the usual response rate was about 25%.

She agreed that there was a need to stress in the covering letter that the survey was an official survey fully sanctioned by the Parish Council and should not be confused with the recent survey carried out by a local landowner in support of a planning application. She said that she would amend the letter to emphasize this and also incorporate the Council's letterhead logo and Clerk's contact details.

She advised that whilst it would not affect the independence or validity of the survey whoever paid the £300 voluntary contribution towards the printing costs. It could affect the perceived independence of the survey. She agreed that it would be best for the Council to approach Cllr. S Randall-Johnson (DCC) to see if she would pay it or for Council to reconsider their decision as suggested by Cllr. Tristram.

Councillors raised a number of queries about the survey form questions and in particular about Community Land Trusts (CLT).

She explained how a Community Land Trust would operate, that it could purchase land within the Community with monies provided by a Housing Association who would build, manage and rent the houses. The Community Land Trust would own the freehold and the Housing Association would have a 125 year lease and pay an annual ground rent to the Trust for each property. There would be no right to buy. A qualifying matrix would be established for persons hoping to rent and these would be strictly adhered to.

Any land suitable for a Community Land Trust Affordable Housing Needs development must however be either within the village boundary or adjacent to it. She advised that there are different planning rules applying to such developments.

Concerns were expressed by Councillors on the representation on the management board of a Community Land Trust and whether a landowner/developer could be a board member and as such have undue influence on site selection etc. She said that landowners/developers who have any interests in land that may be considered would be precluded from

becoming a board member. The Parish Council would have representation on the board.

She said that Community Land Trusts can also be used for other community projects such as village shops, pubs etc.

Community Land Trusts within Devon are overseen by Wessex CLT Project. She said that she would amend the forms to include a link to the National Community Land Trust Network for anyone interested in finding out more information.

She said that she would get the covering letter and survey forms amended and send them to the Clerk for Council's approval.

The Chair thanked Janice for attending the meeting and for her advice on the matter.

The meeting closed at 11.20am.