

Thame CLT Update

21st May 2019

1. Homes England has informed the Trust that it has been awarded, from the Community Housing Fund (CHF) a grant of 90% of the £132000 needed to take a future site through to planning permission. The net amount of £118800 is subject to completion of due diligence and the signature of a contract with Homes England. Due diligence forms were completed by the Trust and sent to Homes England last week. We await clearance and the receipt of the contract. This is a significant step forward.
2. As previously explained, the CLT has been obliged to apply for the grant, now, owing to the **rules of the Community Housing Fund**. Payments are made on the achievement of 4 milestones and identification of the site can be deferred to milestone 3. However, all milestones have to be completed by the end of March 2020. The CHF has not yet been renewed for another year and payments cannot be carried over to the following fiscal year. It is inevitable that the CHF is set up for failure on this basis as Trusts could be delayed in planning applications and have to raise its own resources to complete. Also, the last applications are supposed to be in Dec 19 but there will be a natural disinclination to apply the closer we get to March 2020 owing to potentially extended approval processes. Attempts to achieve some flexibility have so far not yielded any positive responses despite approaches to John Howell MP and national bodies concerned.
3. **The CLT will have to provide the 10%** remaining of the £132000 needed- £2750 of £13200 already raised- and application to grant awarding bodies is being made. An application for £6000 from 'Community Led Homes' has already been submitted.
4. The **call for sites** has resulted in a limited number of responses indicating sites suitable for CLT development. One particular site is now being subject to serious examination.
5. An urgent **meeting with SODC** is now being sought in the light of both Thame CLT's success in being awarded a revenue grant and SODC's indication of willingness to invest capital funds in the project 'subject to the usual approvals. The objective of the meeting is to achieve clarity regarding SODC's policies, processes and information requirements in order to progress potential capital investment.
6. Preparatory work is now being undertaken for a **public launch**, of Thame CLT, intended to garner membership and support from the widest possible constituency. Full implementation of the launch must await the release of funds

from the CHF revenue grant. Specific provision has been made in the latter for a public launch and approved as such by Homes England.

7. Much work has been done in setting up a suite of **policies and procedures** to guide the Trust as it grows and develops. These do and will cover all current and future areas of operation.

Bob Austin

Chair – Thame CLT Steering Group