

Minutes of the Initial Save The Bell Meeting

Date: 12 January 2023

Venue: Robert Gready's Home

Present: **Andy Gillett** **AG**
 Nick Crabbe **NC**
 Luke Grant **LG**
 Rob Gready **RPG**
 Toby Wise **TW (Chairperson)**
 Julian Godwin **JG**
 Tim Lawson **TL**
 Lisa Bailey **LB**

		Responsible Person	Time Limit	Outcome
1.0	APOLOGIES			
1.1	Steve Walton Jane Williams			
2.0	MINUTES OF LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING			
2.1	The minutes of the meeting of 05 January 2023 were approved as a correct record.			
2.2	<p>Matters Arising from minutes of 28-12-22: All action points were reviewed and those outstanding are listed below.</p> <p>3.9 It is noted that there are many examples of community purchases of Pubs on the Plunkett website and that it would be useful to visit a few examples to assist with educating on the best approach. Brewers Arm visited so far.</p> <p>4.3 There was also brief discussion of approaching one of the four local brewers to see if they might be interested to become the tenant. This subject will be considered in more detail at a future meeting.</p> <p>6.6 Each attendee of the meeting was asked to make a list of important individuals who might need to be contacted directly concerning the purchase and fund-raising, as not everyone uses Facebook.</p> <p>8.3 The group discussed the need for a Treasurer to keep good financial records and to manage a bank account. It was agreed that TW would approach Tony Palmer (TP).</p> <p>9.2 It was agreed that local MPs, District Councillors and County Councillors should be updated at a date to be decided.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">TW</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TW</p> <p style="text-align: center;">All</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TW</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TW</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">TBC</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TBC</p> <p style="text-align: center;">On-going</p> <p style="text-align: center;">05/01 /2023</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TBC</p>	Done

	<p>It was agreed that there would be a start date for this communication and press release.</p> <p>Matters Arising from minutes of 05/01/2023:</p> <p>2.3 It was agreed the meeting minutes of this group should be published once approved. The best place to do this might be the Pensax Parish Council (PPC) website.</p> <p>RPG approached the PPC Chairman – the answer was no.</p> <p>4.3 Short term funding was discussed, and it was agreed each member of the working group would contribute £150-200 to the start-up costs, to be refunded once start-up funding is available. TW to canvas others not present to ask for a similar contribution.</p> <p>5.2 It was agreed that the public consultation meeting should go ahead, ideally on 15 February 2023, and that the venue should be the village hall either at Abberley, Rock or Great Witley.</p> <p>It was agreed that the agenda and format for public meeting require careful consideration and that we will devote time to this in a future meeting and have a specific individual assigned to plan the meeting logistics</p> <p>TW to book a venue. Mark Brewer only Monday/Tuesday.</p> <p>5.3 David Chambers is the area WCC County Councillor. He has a discretionary £10,000 “Divisional Grant”. He should be approached.</p> <p>6.1 It was agreed that TW would approach the Brewers Arms Chairperson to ask if it would be possible to have both documents in MS Word format.</p> <p>6.2 MS Word versions of the Prospectus and Rules documents would be provided to NC for suggested amendments to be made for consideration at a further meeting. It was agreed the amendments should be kept to the bare minimum</p> <p>TW to set agenda item to consider the suggested amendments.</p> <p>6.3 There was discussion about how much work should be completed on the Prospectus, Rules and business plan prior to a public meeting. The key point being that the working group would need to be able to respond to</p>	<p>RPG</p> <p>TW</p> <p>TW</p> <p>JG</p> <p>TW</p> <p>NC</p> <p>TW</p>	<p>10/01 /2023</p> <p>12/01 /2023</p> <p>ASAP</p> <p>05-01-23</p> <p>TBC</p> <p>TBC</p>	<p>Done</p> <p>09/01/23</p>
--	--	--	---	-----------------------------

	<p>questions from the public at the meeting, on the other hand the group did not want to take early decisions without input from the community for example around Tenanted / Managed model given tax implications etc</p> <p>TW will ask for advice from Nick Comley on this point.</p> <p>8.3</p> <p>TW confirmed that he would complete a draft timeline for all of the key actions required for consideration at the next meeting.</p>	TW	ASAP	
		TW	05-01-23	13-01-23
3.0	REVIEW OF TIMELINE OF ACTIVITIES			
3.1	A review of the timeline required for actions was not discussed and was carried forward to the next meeting.	TW	TBC	17-01-23
4.0	BUSINESS PLAN			
4.1	Tim Lawson attended the meeting with a draft business plan for The Bell which was distributed at the meeting.			
4.2	Tim Lawson is a local Publican who has extensive experience. There followed a Q & A session with Tim answering multiple questions.			
4.3	It was agreed a full business plan was required to demonstrate business viability whatever the final operating model that was chosen to run the Pub, namely managed or tenanted.			
4.4	RPG confirmed he had various lease and tenant codes of practice and model documents.			
4.5	Tim Lawson offered to complete further work on the business plan with Nick Crabbe, and have a further draft available for consideration at the meeting of the working group on 24 January 2023 (which it is hoped will be held at The Brewers Arms).	TL/NC	24/01/2023	
4.6	The draft business plan will be benchmarked against: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 British Beer and Pub Association benchmark figures. 2 Business plans available from Mark Haslam and Nick Comley 3 The Plunkett benchmarking tool. 	NC	24/01/2023	
4.7	NC will extract overhead figures from The Bell financial records and send to TL.	NC	ASAP	13-01-23
4.8	<p>There was general discussion about gross margins that might be expected.</p> <p>TL had produced a sensitivity analysis for gross margins ranging from 57.5% to 70% but advised that target gross margins of 65% would be appropriate and should ensure an actual gross margin on 60% plus.</p>			
4.9	TL advised a balance of turnover of 60% wet (drinks) and 40% dry (food) should be the target. This level of food turnover is achievable but would be challenging given there are only 40 dining places (covers).			

4.10	TL advised that the “sweet spot” in terms of covers at The Bell would be 65-70, as the overhead cost (chefs etc) would remain about the same as for 40 covers.			
4.11	It was agreed that a strategic development plan would be required for The Bell which might include developing more dining space. This to be considered at a future meeting.	TW	TBC	
4.12	It was agreed a core business plan would be needed to be agreed as the basis of discussion at the proposed public meeting and to demonstrate viability. A more detailed business plan would be needed to support the share prospectus and to assist in attracting a tenant and/or manager.	NC NC	02-02-23 TBC	
5.0	TIMING, CONTENT AND VENUE OF PUBLIC MEETING			
5.1	This was not discussed and was carried forward to a future meeting.	TW	TBC	17-01-23
6.0	UPDATES			
6.1	<u>Meeting with Mark Haslam (Plunkett advisor and landlord at The Brewers Arms):</u> TW, LB, NC and AG had met with Mark Haslam who has extensive experience of setting up community pubs. Key points: 1 Working group meeting to be held at Brewers Arms on 24/01/2023 with Mark attending. 2 Will provide consultancy funded via Plunkett, but happy to help prior to funding being in place. 3 Mark can assist with business plan development and help to benchmark (sense check) the draft. 4 Parish Council may be unable to purchase shares in a structure that they do not own outright. RPG to clarify this point with Plunkett, Camra and if possible, CALC and also establish if any other structure would allow a joint investment.	RPG	19/01/2023	17-01-23
6.2	<u>Valuation:</u> The valuation is set for 08 February 2023, to be undertaken by Mike Hughes, specialist pub valuer, recommended by the Plunkett Foundation.			
6.3	<u>Short Term Funding:</u> Short term funding will be from members of the working group and one or two others identified by TW. RPG to arrange to receive funding into his private bank account and to pay the valuer.	TW RPG	ASAP ASAP	21-01-23 17-01-23

	<p>The funds required short term are £1500 valuation and £200 Plunkett Foundation membership – a total of £1700 + VAT = £2040.</p> <p>It would be sensible to target £2500 to cover other incidental costs.</p>			
6.4	<p><u>Questionnaire:</u></p> <p>This has gone out on Facebook and to a limited extent by email. The response in the first 2 days has been excellent at around 150.</p> <p>It was agreed LB would follow up on the excellent work LG had done with an article in the Parish magazines and getting an email version sent out by some Parish clerks to their email lists.</p> <p>TW to send LB a link to the questionnaire email version with link, the article for the Parish magazines and contact list of Parish clerks.</p> <p>All working group members should post details to any ‘Next Door’ or similar groups they are on.</p> <p>JG to share the email he had received with the questionnaire from Stockton PC</p>	<p>LB</p> <p>TW</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>JG</p>	<p>17/01/2023</p> <p>13/01/2023</p> <p>Immediate</p> <p>13-01-23</p>	<p>17-01-23</p> <p>17-01-23</p> <p>Done</p>
6.5	<p><u>Community First and Notification of Intention to Bid:</u></p> <p>It was agreed TW would instruct Community First to notify MHDC of the “Save the Bell” working group’s intention to bid.</p> <p>It was agreed RPG would inform Gareth Clowes when the Notification had been lodged at MHDC.</p>	<p>TW</p> <p>RPG</p>	<p>19/01/2023</p> <p>19/01/2023</p>	<p>17-01-23</p> <p>17-01-23</p>
7.0	COLLATION OF ALL POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES			
7.1	<p>Mark Haslam had advised against seeking a grant from the “Community Ownership Fund”, as his experience had been that it slowed the whole process of making a bid down to an unacceptable level.</p> <p>NC informed about the “Public Works Loan Board”, from which public bodies could borrow money for community projects. A suitable local public body might be a Parish Council.</p> <p>It was agreed at the previous meeting that NC would maintain a register of all grants to which the group is signposted and coordinate any required applications</p>	<p>NC</p>	<p>On-going</p>	<p>On-going</p>
8.0	AOB			
8.1	None discussed.			

9.0	DATE OF NEXT MEETING			
9.1	19-01-2023 at 6.30 pm. Venue: RPG's home.			