

Minutes from the Open Public Meeting on 15/08/23 at 7pm

Held at Nenthead Village Hall

'Community purchase options for the Miners Arms Pub'

This meeting was well attended by the community and approximately over 50 residents and current owner (Alison Baker) of the pub were in attendance.

These minutes are a short overview of the meeting that took place.

**Agenda item 1 – Background of why meeting arranged.**

Following a request from the ward meeting on 31/07/23 it was suggested to arrange a community meeting. The current owner of the Miners Arms was approached and asked if she would attend the meeting on 15/08/23 to give an update on the current situation with the pub. The meeting tonight was to explore the possibility of working alongside and with permission from current owner to see if there was a way of purchasing the pub by the community. Looking into various groups that can help with community purchase of pubs as well as exploring the 'Community Ownership Fund' via the government levelling up funding.

**Agenda item 2 – Update from current owner**

There have been some viewings and a potential purchase option over the years but sadly did not come off due to personal family circumstances (this was from a potential buyer last year). Other people that viewed the pub stated they did not want to run it as a pub, and they would have wanted to turn it into a dwelling. This was the reason the current planning application (to apply for dwelling status) was submitted at the end of last year. The current owner has said that she is happy to withdraw the planning application immediately if there is a serious discussion tonight about the possibility of a community purchase and she is also happy to work with the community to achieve this. She would rather it sold as a pub. She also stated there was no time limit for a community purchase but did point out that the pub would remain on the market. There is also an independent valuation happening and she would let us know what the valuation is. She was also happy to let the group who would be looking into a community purchase have the current 'books' via the estate agents.

Dave Raeside made some comments regarding a potential purchase of the pub a few years ago. He also referred to the coast to coast cycling route which has been going for nearly 30 years and how it has generated business here in the village (shop, bike shop, B&Bs, Hive, pub when it was opened). The C2C relied on small community businesses and now small village communities rely on them!

*There were comments from the community at this point regarding the pub (was decided that differences from the past needed to be left in the past and we need to unite to find a positive way forward working with current owner).*

**Agenda item 3 – Community interest**

This is where we find out if the community is interested in saving the pub and working together to formulate a plan of how this can happen. Looking into diverse ways of raising and finding fund to purchase the Miners Arms. One way of doing this would be to ask every household in

Nenthead and the surrounding areas of Nentsberry, Hayring and the outlying areas to complete a questionnaire to find out what the public want from a community pub, (this is discussed in detail by the Plunkett foundation). These surveys/questionnaires have not been distributed yet but will be in due course.

#### **Agenda item 4 – What is a community pub**

This can be looked at by following the link below:

<https://www1-camra.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/06100418/What-is-a-community-pub-v.06012020.pdf>

#### **Agenda item 5 – Campaign for real ale (CAMRA)**

This can be looked at by following the link below:

<https://camra.org.uk/about/>

#### **Agenda item 6 – Listing the pub as an asset of community value (ACV)**

Applies to businesses in England only

CAMRA are keen to see as many pubs in England as possible be registered as ACVs given the extra protection this affords them.

Whatever form of campaign the community decides on there will be a need to demonstrate that the pub is valued by the community.

Gathering support from local MP (this has already been done), district and local councils as well as other local businesses and established groups.

Under the Localism Act 2011 you can apply to the council to have the pub declared as an ACV which means that should the pub be put up for sale (we know the miners arms already is) then a community group is entitled to submit a bid and a SIX month moratorium kicks in to give the community group time to raise the necessary funds.

Laura Seaton did point out that she has raised this with Alston Moor Parish Council about them potentially submitting the application form. She will be reporting back at next meeting in September.

Link below on ACV's:

<https://camra.org.uk/take-action/save-your-local-pub/assets-of-community-value/#:~:text=You%20can%20list%20your%20pub,over%20%2C000%20pubs%20as%20ACVs.>

<https://mycommunity.org.uk/nominating-an-asset-of-community-value-acv-and-community-right-to-bid>

<https://www.eden.gov.uk/environment/your-community/community-right-to-bid/>

#### **Agenda item 7 – Community purchase 'Plunkett Foundation'**

The Plunkett Foundation is a national charity with a vision for creating resilient, thriving, and inclusive rural communities throughout the UK.

To date they have supported around 750 community businesses to reach trading stage across the UK.

To keep it in the community

To help people across the country take their first steps towards community ownership and keep it in the community.

They provide access to information about all ACVs in your local area.

Plunkett has a wide range of resources that can be accessed. There are membership fees to pay for certain products (this will be looked at in due course)

Links below for the Plunkett Foundation:

<https://plunkett.co.uk/>

<https://plunkett.co.uk/become-a-member/#cbm>

<https://plunkett.co.uk/who-we-are/>

### **Agenda item 8 – Government funding (Community Ownership Fund)**

Part of the Levelling up Strategy

To support community groups to take ownership of assets which are at risk of being lost to the community.

To strengthen community ownership across the UK.

To strengthen the social infrastructure that helps communities thrive.

Firstly, through an expression of interest form

Round 3 bidding window is open 30/08/23 to 11/10/23

Applications must be submitted by 11:59am on each bidding window's respective closing date.

FOUR bidding windows each year at regular intervals

### **MARCH 2025 the fund CLOSES**

The document link is below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-ownership-fund-prospectus/community-ownership-fund-prospectus--3>

Supporting documentation and how to complete the application:

<https://mycommunity.org.uk/community-ownership-fund>

## **Agenda item 9 – Thoughts, ideas, and questions?**

Where do we go from here?

There is a large show of hands when the question was asked in the hall 'Who wants to save the pub?'

There are pubs that have successfully been able to facilitate community purchases around the region of Cumbria and further afield.

A working group has been set up to explore the ownership and funding options that are available to us as a community. It was suggested the working group would report back to the community via email/meetings/newsletters/WhatsApp group.

*'A list for members of community to put down their address/email address details was passes around'*

*'A post on social media to encourage more people to come forward to register their interest was put up'*

It was decided not to rush into asking the parish council to submit and ACV for the pub yet, this can be looked at once the background research is carried out.

**The most important thing that needs to be done is to raise funds to purchase the pub, there were at least 16-18 people who raised their hands who said they were willing to do this on the night of the meeting. This is fundamental for a community purchase and anyone who is willing to help with financial backing will be asked to come forward in due course.**

**If anyone needs any further information, please use the links attached in the minutes.**

Meeting closed and everyone thanked for attending.

### Members of the working group:

Simon Walker

Dave Raeside

Andy Reay

Peter Mckenzie

Colin McNulty

Laura Seaton

Madeleine Harris

