

PRUDHOE TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of Ordinary Meeting 28th February 2018

PRESENT

Cllr Gerry Price (Chair), Cllr Tracy Gilmore, Cllr Chris Cuthbert, Cllr Andy Gill, , Cllr Russ Greig, Cllr Yvonne Ritchie, Cllr Eileen Burt, Cllr Jennifer McGee, Cllr Duncan Couchman

County Cllr Gordon Stewart

1718/145 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Ignasious Varghese, Cllr Graham Robinson, Cllr Angie Scott

County Cllr Ken Stow, County Cllr Anne Dale

1718/146 Declarations of Interest**1718/147 DRAFT Minutes of Ordinary Meeting (including Planning Matters), held on 31st January 2017**

The minutes were received as a true record.

Proposed: Cllr Eileen Burt Seconded: Cllr Russ Greig

1718/148 Matters Arising**1718/136 (page 2) Town Signs**

A meeting was held on 20th February with County Cllrs Ken Stow and Gordon Stewart. Those attending were Cllr Tracy Gilmore, Cllr Angie Scott, Cllr Russ Greig and Cllr Andy Gill.

It was agreed that County Cllrs would look at prices for signs which would be paid for from their Capital Small Scheme Funding and that the signs would be the same as ones coming into Mickley, black and gold.

It was discussed that signs are required at top of Hagg Bank as there is no sign to say you are coming in to Prudhoe, possibly one at bypass roundabout and also Mickley bypass. It was discussed that the Fuse Centre (Fuse Cinema) needs to be advertised and a map of the town would be good. It was also discussed that signs are required for public toilets which can be used at Waterworld, Greggs, Spetchells Centre and road ends in Prudhoe. ***(Please note that the toilets in Greggs are not public toilets)***

Access for wheelchair users on Front Street has been mentioned to County Cllrs.

It was discussed that a further meeting could be held to agree what other signs are required in the town.

1718/139 (page 3) Prudhoe East Centre

A meeting was held between Cllr Gerry Price, Cllr Chris Cuthbert and Mr George Hepburn on Tuesday 13th February. A report of the meeting will come to the March Ordinary meeting.

Those Cllrs keen to be involved in the Asset Transfer of Prudhoe East are having their first meeting on Monday 5th March at 6:30pm.

The Feasibility Report (The East Centre – Possible Asset Transfer) is now available on the town council website as part of the papers for this meeting.

Cllr Gerry Price reported that the acting clerk had chased this up the Youth Service review and there was a delay due to HR issues.

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1718/140 (page 3) Cottier Grange, Phase Two Street Naming

Cllr Glenn Simpson copied the list of previously suggested names to all Cllrs and Cllr Yvonne Ritchie has arranged for the Prudhoe & District History Society to meet with Paul Nagel (Gentoo).

1718/142 (page 4) Grant Aid 2018/19

Cllr Jennifer McGee asked if the decision making process with regards the agreement of Grant Aid to CAB could be checked with Stephen Rickett of NALC as she was concerned that both proposals were carried with 5 votes in favour. **This was AGREED.**

Cllr Yvonne Ritchie asked whether if it was found that the votes were not valid, would Grant Aid be back on the table to agree. Some members voiced that this would be the case.

The Administrative Officer advised that following the acknowledgement of the Town Council's Grant Aid pledge to Northumberland CAB, providing the West Hub is located in Prudhoe, it is now apparent that The Spetchells Centre cannot accommodate the 'West Hub'. They were offered x2 rooms and the interview rooms currently used but this was not considered suitable. CAB did ask if the 1st Floor could be reconfigured so they could take over meeting room 1.

Members discussed that there would be room for CAB to relocate into the East Centre and if the Council wished to pursue this once the building was transferred, this was an option. Cllr Russ Greig advised that CAB were looking to house 11 people in their West Area Hub. Cllr Gerry Price asked if the Open Door would be big enough; Cllr Chris Cuthbert responded that the building was not their yet and CAB were making decisions now.

Cllr Jennifer McGee acknowledged that even though the building does not belong to Prudhoe Town Council yet, and that it may be 12 months before it does, it would still be a good idea to float the idea of the Open Door being made available for CAB to use, as at the moment it is standing empty. **It was AGREED** to make this suggestion to NCC Assets and to CAB.

Cllr Jennifer McGee asked if the decision making process with regards the agreement of Grant Aid to CAB could be checked with Stephen Rickett of NALC as she was concerned that both proposals were carried with 5 votes in favour. **This was AGREED.**

1718/149 DRAFT Report of the Planning, Contract and Works Committee, held on 14th February 2018

The report was noted.

1718/150 Co-option of Councillor onto Castle & Eltringham Seat, Prudhoe Town Council

a) It was AGREED to RECEIVE the formal notification that no by-election has been called for Castle & Eltringham.

b) It was AGREED to RECEIVE the written statements of interest in the seat from Chris Barrett and Holly Kelleher.

Cllr Gerry Price made the point that the agenda showed that the Council would be declaring a further vacancy in the Prudhoe West and Halfway Ward and that he hoped that whoever was not co-opted into the Castle and Eltringham seat would consider reapplying either for election or for co-option if an election is not called.

Cllr Yvonne Ritchie proposed Holly Kelleher for the Castle and Eltringham seat; this was and seconded by Cllr Carol Stephenson.

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Cllr Tracy Gilmore proposed Chris Barrett for the Castle and Eltringham seat; this was seconded by Cllr Andy Gill.

With both candidates proposed and seconded, a vote was taken.

Holly Kelleher; 7 in favour Chris Barrett; 4 in favour

c) It was AGREED to co-opt Holly Kelleher into the seat for Castle and Eltringham

1718/151 Councillor Eileen Burt: Declaration of Vacancy

It was AGREED to RECEIVE the resignation of Cllr Eileen Burt from the Prudhoe West and Halfway Ward and to declare a casual vacancy in accordance with section 68, Local Government Act 1972.

Cllr Jennifer McGee paid a special tribute to Cllr Eileen Burt, describing her as an excellent Cllr and a great colleague. Cllr Jennifer McGee laughed and described that she and Cllr Burt had not always agreed on everything but that she would miss her greatly, as a friend and a Councillor. She said that Cllr Eileen Burt would be a huge miss to Prudhoe, and not just to the Town Council, as she had been part of so many things for such a long time. Cllr Jennifer McGee concluded by wishing Cllr Eileen Burt well in her move and much happiness in her new home.

Cllr Gerry Price also gave thanks to Cllr Eileen Burt for her diligent service as a Town Councillor and a County Councillor, a school governor, a trustee of Prudhoe Community Partnership and a justice of the peace.

Tributes were echoed by all Councillors present, by County Councillor Gordon Stewart, also in attendance, and County Councillor Anne Dale, via a note to the Chair.

Cllr Eileen Burt was very grateful for the kind words spoken and responded that it had been a pleasure to serve Prudhoe and she wished the Council all the best for the future.

1718/152 County Cllr Reports

County Cllr Gordon Stewart encouraged Cllrs to watch the County Hall debate on Active Northumberland which is available on YouTube, describing that there is a lot of scaremongering going on about closures.

With regards the withdrawal of the Core Strategy County Cllr Gordon Stewart advised that there was a raft of information available on the NCC Website and that hopefully the Local Plan would be in place very soon.

County Cllr Gordon Stewart advised that pot holes are being repaired with 24 hours, quicker than ever but they are appearing just as quickly and experts advise that there will be lots more soon, as the snow melts. The roads are terrible and winter services are working 24 hours day, with £400,000 spent on additional grit; this has been described as the worst winter the Highways Manager has ever experienced.

County Cllr Gordon Stewart encouraged everyone to take part in the on-line consultation on schools in West Northumberland.

With regards the café at the Riverside Park, County Cllr Gordon Stewart was pleased to advise that 'expressions of interest' were being sought and although it was frustrating that it has taken so long, there is great interest and they want to get on with it.

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County Cllr Gordon Stewart described that the Adult Learning Centre is thriving at The Fuse but it still needs more publicity and better signage.

With regards the resurfacing and lighting on Moor Road; County Cllr Gordon Stewart described that he is pushing Gentoo all the time for a date when they will come off that site/road so the work can be done, but it is still not certain if this will be before the summer.

County Cllr Gordon Stewart advised that there was renewed interest in Kingdom Hall and that people have been shown around but the information was commercially sensitive at this time.

The long-term parking of caravans on the highway has been raised and County Cllr Gordon Stewart advised that although this was a police matter, rather than a local authority concern, he would be working with Karbon Homes and Sergeant Pattison on the issue.

County Cllr Gordon Stewart advised that the incident on Front Street at the weekend was juveniles so he could not comment but he could confirm that the helicopter was for a separate incident.

With regards street lighting, County Cllr Gordon Stewart reported that there had not been a great deal of complaints but residents were asking for more lighting. It was acknowledged that the beam may not seem as far reaching but adjustments can be made.

Finally, County Cllr Gordon Stewart welcomed Holly Kelleher as a new Cllr and thanked Cllr Eileen Burt for her years of service to Prudhoe, wishing her well in the future.

Questions were invited:

Progress on the windows smashed in the drill hall on Swalwell Close was requested; advised 24 hours for repair and that was 3 weeks ago. County Cllr Gordon Stewart confirmed he would chase this up.

Poor pavements and new street lighting is an issue as the extent of area lit is not as substantial; County Cllr Gordon Stewart reiterated that the lights could be tweaked so they light up a greater area and there are minimum and maximum areas that need to be lit. Cllrs advised to send any pavement issues and insufficient light requests directly to County Cllr Gordon Stewart.

When questioned on the location of the Tynedale Area Committee Meeting, County Cllr Gordon Stewart advised that free accommodation was a big factor as well as being on the A69 corridor for those travelling from more remote areas.

A tabled update from County Cllr Anne Dale advised:

- Japanese knotweed has been added to the treatment regime which will begin in summer once the plant is at full height.
- The gate entrance to football field at West Mickley is on a list to be fixed but is not a priority.
- Grit Bins will be inspected in the spring.
- Pelican Crossing will be installed once the gas works are completed; this has been delayed due to snow.
- Further work will be undertaken on the new bus shelter opposite Elisa Rose.

County Cllr Anne Dale also passed on her very best wishes to Cllr Eileen Burt.

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1718/153 Accounts

a) Bank Reconciliations from 10th January – 9th February 2018

It was AGREED to receive the statements

Proposed: Cllr Glenn Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Andy Gill

b) Statement of Expenditure from 1st April 2017 – 22nd February 2018

It was AGREED to receive the statement

Proposed: Cllr Eileen Burt

Seconded: Cllr Glenn Simpson

c) Accounts paid and to be paid

It was AGREED to endorse the accounts paid since the January meeting and to authorise the accounts to be paid which were tabled

Proposed: Cllr Eileen Burt

Seconded: Cllr Glenn Simpson

1718/154 Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Group Vacancies

a) **It was AGREED** to wait until the Annual General Meeting in May to fill the x2 vacancies on the Planning, Contract and Works Committee.

b) **It was AGREED** to send out an email to ask if any Cllr would be prepared to put themselves forward for the Human Resources Committee.

c) **It was AGREED** to wait until the Annual General Meeting in May to fill the x1 vacancy on the Cemetery & War Memorial Sub-Committee.

d) **It was AGREED** to defer to the appointment of a Cllr to the Events Committee to the next Planning, Contract and Works Committee.

e) **It was AGREED** to wait until the Annual General Meeting in May to fill the vacancies on the In Bloom Working Group. It was acknowledged that all Cllrs were invited to attend.

f) **It was AGREED** to revisit vacancies on the Prudhoe Town Council Young People's Forum (PTCYPF) at the Annual General Meeting in May. It was acknowledged that all Cllrs were invited to attend.

Cllr Jennifer McGee advised that only she and Cllr Gerry Price had attended the last meeting. It was discussed that the summons for the previous meeting and dates of future meetings had not been received by the office and therefore could not be forwarded to all Cllrs. **It was AGREED** to take this up with the Youth Service as the PTCYPF is a Town Council meeting, but it is clerked by the Youth Service.

g) **It was AGREED** to the Cllr Russ Greig would join the Legal Affairs Working Group.

h) **It was AGREED** to move the discussion of chair of the Civic and Community Forum to the meeting of the Democracy Group on 19th March 2018.

1718/155 Prudhoe East Centre Asset Transfer Feasibility Report

It was AGREED to RECEIVE the report.

1718/156 Town and Parish Council Liaison Meeting

It was AGREED to RECEIVE the report of the meeting held on 1st February.

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It was **AGREED** to write to Paul Jones for clarity on the grant paid to Town and Parish Councils who run their own cemeteries and how double-charging will be equalised in the future.

It was **AGREED** to write to the leaders of Newcastle City, North Tyneside and Northumberland County Council to take issue with the name 'North of Tyne' under the devolution deal in view that it is geographically incorrect and therefore does not feel inclusion of those south of the river.

1718/157 NCC Local Plan

a) It was **AGREED to RECEIVE** the Interim Position Statement from Northumberland County Council on the withdrawal of the Core Strategy

It was **AGREED** to contact Mark Ketley to request a planning officer attends a meeting of the Town Council to answer questions on the New Local Plan and the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA).

b) It was **AGREED to RECEIVE** the 'Call for Sites' for the SHLAA from Northumberland County Council and to respond with objections to the sites proposed for housing:

8006 and 2337 off Highfield Lane, Prudhoe would be catastrophic if developed; there are already traffic problems due to the fact that there are two schools on this road. Highways have for the last 12 months or more been looking at solutions to this but the problem remains.

Housing on either of the above sites would not only lead to a huge increase in traffic on Highfield Lane, but also on South Road; this is also at capacity at certain times of the day with a further two schools and the newly developed Humbles Wood and Ferndene Hospital, which only have one way in. The current junctions from Highfield Lane onto South Road are one-lane in reality and there is usually a backlog of traffic up to them from the B6395.

Development on 8006 and 2337 would also result in more traffic travelling west towards Mickley and beyond, again these roads are not suitable for more traffic, this is a country road at best.

It was acknowledged that once the sites have been put forward, the public and the Town Council will be consulted on their appropriateness.

1718/158 Reports from Outside Bodies

Town Twinning – the report of the meeting on 12th February 2018 was received.

Prudhoe Community Allotment – the January newsletter was received.

Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership – the letter regarding the Bolton corridor electrification delay was received. Cllr Gerry Price commented that meeting dates are not being communicated and that he would follow this up.

East Tynedale Parish and Town Council Forum – the report of the meeting held on 12th October was received.

West Community Safety Hub (CSH) – Cllr Yvonne Ritchie advised that she attended her first and last meeting of the West CSH as the meeting was not continuing and a consultation is expected. Cllr Yvonne Ritchie advised that she questioned how Prudhoe Town Council would receive police reports

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in the future if this was the case; Inspector Pam Bridges advised that there was no capacity to provide a report to Prudhoe Town Council as she has no administrative support.

Since the meeting the Administrative Officer has spoken with a representative of the Community Safety Team and Acting Sergeant Sharon Walton and it looks likely that Cllr Gerry Price, or another, will be invited to attend the monthly meeting attended by the herself, the Community Safety Team and County Cllrs Gordon Stewart and Ken Stow. The next meeting is being held on 5th April 2018.

Prudhoe Community Partnership – Cllr Eileen Burt reported that the main project presently is the old Police Station building and the bid from Prudhoe Community Partnership to allow the creation of 8 affordable 2-bedroom rentals, to be rented out by the social housing provider Karbon Homes. Cllr Eileen Burt advised that there was a sealed bid process and although they have secured funding via the community-led housing fund a developer could offer more and then the project would not proceed.

1718/159 Correspondence and Publications

Correspondence

1. Thanks for Grant Aid from Prudhoe Castle Bowling Club, Happy Faces, Spetchells Conservation Group, Dragon Theatre Group, Really Youthful Theatre Company, Prudhoe & District History Society and the Prudhoe Branch of Northumberland Credit Union.
RECEIVED
2. Road Closures for Events, email from NCC, Streetworks regarding charges being halved from £500 to £250 until 1st January 2019
RECEIVE
Note: we have not paid this in the past for the Christmas Lights Switch-On as we advertise the closure ourselves, but £250 will be committed just in case
3. Data Protection Regulations, Briefing Note from NALC. This relates to the need for a Data Protection Officer; however there are other implications for the council in relation to the law on Data Protection.
RECEIVE and add to future agenda
4. Post-16 Transport Consultation that will close on 2nd April. Free travel to local schools and colleges for 16-19 year olds who live more than 3 miles away.
RECEIVE and encourage individual Cllrs to respond
5. Getabout Northumberland Project that is a joint initiative by ADAPT and NCC, posters and information included that have already been published on website and via social media. There is also a survey for Councils to complete to gauge opinion on locally supported 'lift giving'
RECEIVE and add to PCW's agenda for survey completion
6. Funding Request from The Manors, West Wylam for to work in partnership with Essity and Alzheimer' Society to create a sensory garden. There is no indication of costs yet but these are being investigated.
AGREED to respond advising that more substantial financial information would be required and that usually requests for funding are only considered as part of the Grant Aid process, due to commence in November.

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7. Letter of complaint from Stocksfield resident about the non-resident rate levied in respect of an interment of ashes. For a resident the fee is £240, for a non-resident this is £695. The complaint relates to the 190% increase rather than fact there is an increase and that this is not equal across Prudhoe Town Council Cemetery fees. The letters advises that if a reasonable reason cannot be given for the disproportionate increase that the complainant will contact the MP and the Ombudsman.

It was AGREED to respond advising that the Council agreed the figures that are charged and if the resident wishes to take the matter further then they are free to do so.

Publications

1. Allotment & Leisure Gardener, Issue 1 2018
2. N.A.M.N News – January 2018
3. L'evolution – Mitry-Mory, February 2018

It was AGREED to receive the tabled items.

It was AGREED to approve a motion, that in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the press and public be excluded for consideration of the following items, in accordance with Section 68 of the Council's Standing Orders:-

1718/160 Draft Confidential Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting, held on 13th December 2017

It was AGREED to RECEIVE the minutes as a true record.

Proposed: Cllr Glenn Simpson Seconded: Cllr Eileen Burt

1718/161 Minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting, held on 9th November 2018

It was AGREED to RECEIVE the minutes as a true record.

Proposed: Cllr Seconded: Cllr

1718/162 URGENT ITEM

It was AGREED to suspend Standing Order 17: Resolutions Moved on Notice to allow the following item to be discussed and a resolution agreed.

“Except as provided by these Standing Orders, no resolution may be moved unless the business to which it relates has been put on the Agenda by the Clerk or the mover has given notice in writing of its terms and has delivered the notice to the Clerk at least [10] clear days before the next meeting of the Council.”

The item was discussed.