

PRUDHOE TOWN COUNCIL

AGREED Minutes of the ORDINARY MEETING held in Meeting room 1, The Spetchells Centre at 7.00pm on Wednesday 28th November 2018

PRESENT

Cllr Tracy Gilmore (Chair) Cllr Gerry Price, Councillor Russell Greig, Councillor Bryan Futers, Councillor Carol Stephenson, Cllr Andy Gill, Cllr Brenda Grey, Cllr Duncan Couchman, Cllr Glenn Simpson, Cllr Jennifer McGee.

Also in attendance: -

County Councillors Anne Dale, Gordon Stewart and Ken Stow.

Officers: - Sarah Eden (Prudhoe Town Council), Pauline Cant (Prudhoe Town Council) Paul Jones Service Director Local Services (Northumberland County Council), Rachel Turnbull (Citizens Advice Northumberland, Prudhoe)

Several Members of the Public, including the following Speakers (item 13-Car Parking Charges at Prudhoe Interchange and Tyne Riverside Country Park) John Mackellar, Andrew Brown, George McCreedy, Keith Parks, Sharon Jones, Rachel Edward, David Williams.

1819/119 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Angie Scott, Cllr Chris Cuthbert

1819/120 Declarations of Interest None

1819/121 Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) Northumberland (Prudhoe)

Rachel Turnbull of Citizens Advice Northumberland gave a verbal presentation, about the work of the Citizens Advice in Prudhoe, in line with her previously circulated report to the Council, she outlined that the service operated from the Manors on an appointment basis on a Wednesday and a Friday. Rachel further advised that Universal Credit was due to be rolled out in the area from 12th December 2018 and that this was presenting difficulties in terms of delays to benefit claim processing and the requirements for additional staff training. Rachel also said that it was a concern to her that Council Tax debt was increasing in the locality, she confirmed that the Citizens Advice would prefer a more central location in Prudhoe for their services. Councillors expressed the view that establishing a “drop-in” advice service for Prudhoe would be highly beneficial, expressing their support for the work that the Citizens Advice did to help those in need of help and support and emphasising their awareness that Citizens Advice provided much needed assistance to people in very desperate situations.

It was AGREED that the Town Council, in recognition of the work that the Citizens Advice undertake in Prudhoe, to award them a grant of £6000 in accordance with the provisions of s142(2A) of The Local Government Act 1972

Proposed: Cllr Jennifer McGee Seconded: Cllr Gerry Price

Given the Public Interest shown in item 13 on the previously circulated agenda for the meeting (Car Parking Charges at Prudhoe Interchange and Tyne Riverside Country Park) and the fact that Mr Paul Jones the Service Director for Local Services for Northumberland County Council was in attendance to address the meeting The Chair exercised her discretion to change the order of the agenda and brought forward item 13.

1819/122 Car Parking Charges at Prudhoe Interchange and Tyne Riverside Park

The Service Director for Local Services outlined Northumbria County Councils intention to spend £10 million pounds across the County Council’s car parks but that this was against a backdrop of £27 Million

PRUDHOE TOWN COUNCIL

AGREED Minutes of the ORDINARY MEETING held in Meeting room 1, The Spetchells Centre at 7.00pm on Wednesday 28th November 2018

pound revenue budget reduction and that the County Council had difficult decisions to make in terms of protecting statutory front line services he advised that Northumberland County Council were almost unique in that they were currently one of only 2 Councils that did not charge for car parking in many of their car parks. He confirmed that the policy not to charge in their market towns would continue so as not to deter tourism and outlined the proposals for a one-hour free parking limit at the proposed sites, and a fee of £1.60 for 2 hours and £3 for a full day with an annual pass of £225 being available.

Concerns were raised about the impact of the proposed charging regime on the new tenants to the Tyne Riverside Park café and The Service Director for Local services confirmed that the proposed charges had not adversely impacted on the business of similar cafes he also explained that he would be in dialogue with the café proprietor about introducing some sort of reimbursement of the cost of car parking against monies spent at the café, he also indicated that he was also in dialogue with those who used the Park for the weekly park run attempting to negotiate some sort of discount.

The Chair expressed her concern at the disparity that was being shown towards Prudhoe against Morpeth and Hexham and said that it would deter visitors to Prudhoe as charging had been introduced previously to the area and it had deterred visitors to such an extent previously that the decision to charge for Car Parking was subsequently abandoned. The Chair also expressed concern that there were proposals to make special arrangements for the park run and said that she felt that this discriminated against the other groups that use the Park regularly such as Brownies, Guides the Prudhoe Plodders and the many dog walkers.

In terms of the public who wished to speak on the item, Mr John Mackellar raised his concern at the cost of the season ticket, the impact on the café, as well as bike users who take their bikes to the park on their vehicle, he said he felt that commuters who took the train into Newcastle were being victimised and that in his view there had been very little maintenance to the Car Park to justify such a charge. Mr Andrew Brown raised similar concerns about the impact on the Café he also indicated that the previous maintenance to the area had been very little and could not have cost much, indicating that it was his intention to set up a local petition against the proposed charges. Mr George McCreedy indicated that he thought the proposal was in direct conflict with the County Councils policy of encouraging a healthy living and lifestyle, he also indicated that it would simply disperse the parking elsewhere and that this would be likely to impact on Wylam Station where a new "Free Parking" sign had recently been erected.

Mr Keith Parks, on behalf of Tyne Valley Canoe Club, raised concerns on behalf of the Canoe Club who operate from the Park he advised that he felt that the charges were horrendous in an environment that was used principally for exercise he explained that the canoe club had no choice other than park there and indicated that he felt it was wrong that conversations were taking place with the Park Run Group and not the Canoe Club as it appeared that one sporting group were being discriminated against. Ms Sharon Jones echoed the concerns of the previous Public Speakers against the proposal to introduce parking charges.

Mr David Williams of the Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership then spoke against the proposed Parking charges he said that it had taken 15 years to build up the use of Prudhoe Railway station, which was now busier than Hexham and that this hard work would be undone if the parking charges were introduced at the station, history has shown that people will do all they can to avoid paying station parking and that this had happened at Wylam Station and the charges had to be subsequently removed. He explained that Prudhoe was the rail head for the East line and that as the rail fare was £6.50 from Prudhoe to Newcastle the proposed charges would increase the cost of rail transport to Newcastle by a further 50% at a time when people are being encouraged to avoid car pollution and use alternative forms of transport that are kinder to the environment, such as rail.

PRUDHOE TOWN COUNCIL

AGREED Minutes of the ORDINARY MEETING held in Meeting room 1, The Spetchells Centre at 7.00pm on Wednesday 28th November 2018

Councillors Glenn Simpson, Jennifer McGee, Bryan Futers and Gerry Price spoke against the proposed parking charges.

County Councillor Gordon Stewart spoke on behalf of himself and County Councillor Ken Stow indicating that they wanted to see a more holistic approach on this proposal to ensure fairness and parity with other areas and other Country Parks. County Councillor Anne Dale echoed the concern of her County Councillor colleagues, saying that this proposal needs to be reconsidered, particularly in light of the local issues.

It was AGREED that the Town Council would respond to the consultation proposals objecting in the strongest possible terms on the grounds of the matters of concern raised by all of those who spoke against the proposals.

Proposed Cllr Jennifer McGee Seconded Cllr Glenn Simpson

1819/122 DRAFT Minutes of Ordinary Meeting held on 31st October 2018

It was AGREED to RECEIVE the minutes as a true record

Proposed Cllr Jennifer McGee Seconded Cllr Glenn Simpson

1819/123 DRAFT Report of the Planning, Contract and Works (PCW) Committee Meeting, held on 14th November 2018

It Was AGREED to RECEIVE the report.

Proposed Cllr Jennifer McGee Seconded Cllr Glenn Simpson

1819/124 Matters Arising – The Clerk gave the following update from the matters arising

1819/092- PCP/PTC Liaison Meeting

A report of the meeting is on the agenda.

1819/108- Churches Together

Cllr Tracy Gilmore pledged £400 from her Mayoral Allowance for the 'Christmas Journey' schools initiative. Samantha Freyhan was very grateful on behalf of Churches Together and also took up the offer for necessary printing to be carried out by our office, rather than this being outsourced at a cost.

1819/113- Edgewell Cemetery

The meeting of the cemetery committee is on the agenda. The clerk visited and updated the resident who raised issues regarding the trees and the boundary and they are happy with how everything has been handled.

1819/114- Grant Aid

The clerk advised previous Grant Aid recipients of the change in the process whereby applications would be sought in January/February; feedback was very positive in terms of the pressure being removed to complete applications at an already busy time.

1819/115- Council Tax Support Scheme Consultation

The following was sent to all NCC Cabinet Members:

Leader - Cllr Peter Jackson

Deputy Leader and Children's Services - Cllr Wayne Daley

Corporate Services & Cabinet Secretary - Cllr Nick Oliver

PRUDHOE TOWN COUNCIL

AGREED Minutes of the ORDINARY MEETING held in Meeting room 1, The Spetchells Centre at 7.00pm on Wednesday 28th November 2018

Economic Development - Cllr Richard Wearmouth

Environment & Local Services - Cllr Glen Sanderson

Planning, Housing & Resilience - Cllr John Riddle

Culture, Arts & Leisure - Cllr Cath Homer

Adult Wellbeing & Health - Cllr Veronica Jones

“Please excuse this letter being received after the closing date of the above consultation, which I am aware was 2nd November for members of the public. I hope that as you are considering the results of the consultation at your cabinet meeting on 11th December, you will take on board the views of your local council colleagues, set out below.

As a council we have actively communicated this consultation via our media and encouraged residents to engage in the democratic process, as we do for all Northumberland County Council consultations. Prudhoe Town Council placed the item on its most recent agenda and agreed that they wished to respond to the consultation formally, as a council.

It was agreed to respond stating that Prudhoe Town Council does not support Proposal 1 which is to reduce the maximum level of support for working age applicants from 100% to 92%. This 8% reduction in council tax support will affect the poorest in our communities on the lowest income.

Although it is appreciated that economies need to be achieved, the council finds it difficult to comprehend why savings would be made at the expense of the most vulnerable financially.

The Town Council is hopeful that an alternative to this proposal can be found.”

The Cabinet Report was received and supported on 13th November 2018, to date a formal consultation has not been received. A final decision will be taken in February 2019.

1819/125 County Councillor Reports

County Councillor Anne Dale advised that the bus shelter on Bearl View was complete and extended her thanks to the Community Partnership and the Town Council for considering to establish a working group on the Town Centre.

County Councillor Ken Stow advised that the roadworks for gas works at South Road would be completed in December ahead of schedule and that he was 99% certain that the works to install a safe crossing would be undertaken in the early part of next year.

Cllr Brenda Grey left the meeting.

1819/126 Land South of Regents Drive, Prudhoe

Following consideration of this matter the Chair expressed her support for the proposal indicating that she was of the personal view that Prudhoe needed another Supermarket, Councillor Russ Greig expressed the view that any s106 monies from the development could be put to use on an employment and skills plan to provide the additional training and skills required and related to the development. Councillor Bryan Futers expressed concerns that there did not appear to be any public transport link to the development. Councillor Jennifer McGee and Glenn Simpson both expressed concern about the impact that the development of an “out of town” retail park would have on the businesses in Front Street. Councillor Jennifer McGee said that she would prefer to see the development at the Legion site

PRUDHOE TOWN COUNCIL

AGREED Minutes of the ORDINARY MEETING held in Meeting room 1, The Spetchells Centre at 7.00pm on Wednesday 28th November 2018

to proceed first and feared that if this development were to proceed that the development of the Legion Site would not proceed.

It was AGREED to object to the development on the grounds that it would have a detrimental impact on the Town Centre The Town Council agreed to object to the development, by a marginal vote of 5 in favour/4 against, for reasons of the impact of the development on the town centre, again stating that the outline permission given for the town centre development (16/02083/OUT), as asserted in July 2016, should be the primary consideration for the good of the town.

Members were mindful that outline planning permission has been approved and put forward suggestions for section 106 agreements and ask that Northumberland County Council seek to agree with the developer. These were:

1. An Employment and Skills Plan (ESP) to align the opportunities for skills and jobs with residents, most specifically those in need of training and employment, and/or funding to equip residents with the required skills. An ESP could include making available locally; apprenticeships, employment and training initiatives, maximising local labour and work experience.
2. A Litter Strategy to mitigate against the additional litter that comes with fast food outlets.
3. A Local Travel Plan to ensure a town bus service is made available allowing all residents access to the development, not just car drivers.

Proposed Cllr Glenn Simpson Seconded Cllr Bryan Futers

1819/127 Accounts

a) Monthly Bank Reconciliation

It was AGREED to receive and note the circulated bank reconciliation statement.

Proposed Cllr Jennifer McGee Seconded Cllr Glenn Simpson

b) Statement of Expenditure

It was AGREED to receive and note the circulated statement of expenditure.

c) Accounts Payable

it was AGREED to endorse the payment of those accounts paid since the last meeting and authorise those accounts to be paid that were tabled

Proposed Cllr Jennifer McGee Seconded Cllr Glenn Simpson

1819/128 – Run Nation - Costs of Road Closure Account re Prudhoe Miners Race.

The RFO updated the meeting in relation to a meeting that had taken place with Run Nation regarding the increased cost of the road closure for the Prudhoe Miners Race. Following discussion on this matter,

It was AGREED that the Town Council would pay the amount that they had budgeted for of £1,150.00 in respect of the invoice submitted to Run Nation for the Road Closure connected with the event.

Proposed Cllr Russ Greig Seconded Cllr Tracy Gilmore

PRUDHOE TOWN COUNCIL

AGREED Minutes of the ORDINARY MEETING held in Meeting room 1, The Spetchells Centre at 7.00pm on Wednesday 28th November 2018

1819/129 Interim Internal Audit Report

IT was AGREED to receive and note the circulated Interim Internal Audit report dated 18th October 2018

Proposed Cllr Jennifer McGee Seconded Cllr Glenn Simpson

1819/130 Draft Budget

The Chair set out her proposals for setting of the 2019/20 Budget in line with her proposals circulated with the agenda.

It was AGREED that the Chair's previously circulated proposals for the setting of the 2019/20 Budget be confirmed, to include a budget priorities item on the December meeting.

Proposed Cllr Tracy Gilmore Seconded Cllr Russ Greig

1819/131 Casual Vacancy – Castledene and Eltringham Ward

It was AGREED to formally declare a casual vacancy in Castledene and Eltringham Ward and to notify the Elections Officer.

1819/132 Cemetery & War Memorial Committee

- a) **It was AGREED** to receive and note the report of the meeting held on 19th November 2018 and endorse the agreed actions.
- b) **It was AGREED** to receive and agree the proposed changes to Edgewell Cemetery Service Level Agreement for commencement from April 2019

Proposed Cllr Jennifer McGee Seconded Cllr Tracy Gilmore

1819/133 Armed Forces Memorial Seats

Members gave consideration to the report of the Clerk in relation to the outcome of the local fundraising initiative to purchase two commemorative seats to recognise the service and commitment of our local armed forces, past and present and had due regard to the consultation exercise that was undertaken on social media by the fundraisers seeking the views of the public as to where the seats would be best situated.

It was AGREED that subject to all necessary consents and permissions the Town Council would, accept the ongoing future maintenance responsibility for the two Memorial seats that would be located at the bus stop adjacent to the Dr Syntax Public House and in the Glade area of Front Street.

Proposed Cllr Jennifer McGee Seconded by Cllr Glenn Simpson

1819/134 Prudhoe Town Council/ Prudhoe Community Partnership Liaison Meeting

It was AGREED to receive and note the report of the meeting held on 8th November 2018 and that the issue of the two Town Council nominees for the Prudhoe Youth Forum be placed on the next Council meeting agenda.

1819/135 Town Council Meeting Start Times

Members discussed the proposal from Cllr Tracy Gilmore that Council Meetings should commence at 6pm, some Members advised that they would have difficulty in attending meetings at 6pm.

PRUDHOE TOWN COUNCIL

AGREED Minutes of the ORDINARY MEETING held in Meeting room 1, The Spetchells Centre at 7.00pm on Wednesday 28th November 2018

It was AGREED that the meeting time should remain at 7pm except on those occasions when there was a presentation on the agenda from an outside body and in those instances the meeting should commence at 6.30pm with the presentation being the first item on the agenda.

Proposed by Councillor Jennifer McGee Seconded by Councillor Glenn Simpson

1819/136 Reports from Outside Bodies

a) East Tynedale Local Councils Forum

b) Essity Community Consultation Meeting

c) Youth Forum

d) Prudhoe Community Partnership

It was AGREED that the Town Council would receive and note the previously circulated reports of the outside bodies and that in relation to the Youth Forum that Councillor Price would make enquiries to ascertain the level of Youth activities that are taking place within Prudhoe in terms of sessions provided and numbers of attendees. **It was further AGREED** that in relation to the Town Survey undertaken by the Prudhoe Community Partnership that the Town Council's proposals for membership of the suggested working group to address the need for town centre improvements be considered as an agenda item for the next meeting of Council.

Proposed by Jennifer McGee Seconded by Cllr Gerry Price

1819/137 Correspondence and Publications

It was AGREED to RECEIVE the following items of formal **Correspondence**

1. County Cllr Glenn Sanderson, 7th November 2018. Letter outlining the announcement about car parking improvements in the County with investment plans to create hundreds of new spaces and to refurb existing car parks. An emphasis on NOT introducing parking charges in town centres but introducing charges in the most heavily used tourism and railway car parks to generate income for future investment and to safeguard front-line staff.

The Cabinet Report was received and supported on 13th November 2018, to date a formal consultation has not been received. A final decision will be taken in February 2019.

It was AGREED to RECEIVE the following **Publications**

1. Clerks and Council's Direct – November 2018
2. NAMM News – October 2018
3. Bulletin, War Memorials Trust – November 2018
4. The Wylam Globe – Autumn 2018
5. Allotment & Leisure Gardener – Issue 4, 2018
6. The Clerk - November 2018