

PRUDHOE TOWN COUNCIL
DRAFT Report of the Prudhoe Neighbourhood Management Meeting
held in The Spetchells Centre at 10:30 am, Wednesday 8th November 2017

The meeting was chaired by Cllr Gerry Price and attended by the following:

Cllr George McCreedy, Cllr Angie Scott, Cllr Russ Greig, Cllr Chris Cuthbert, Cllr Andy Gill, Cllr Eileen Burt, Cllr Jennifer McGee

Catherine Hubbard-Coates – NCC, West Northumberland Youth Service	Jill Keeler – Prudhoe Business Network
Iain Watt – Prudhoe Co-op	County Cllr Anne Dale – Mickley Ward
Phillip Rutherford – Karbon Homes	County Cllr Gordon Stewart – South Ward
County Cllr Ken Stow – North Ward	Paul Nagel – Gentoo Homes
Andy Olive – NCC, Highways	David Hunt - NCC, Neighbourhood Services
Geoff Cairns – NCC, Neighbourhood Services	Kris Westerby – NCC, Highways
Paul Turnbull – NCC, Environmental Enforcement	George Hepburn – Prudhoe Community Partnership
Brendon Ferguson – Gentoo Homes	

Apologies were received from Martin King (NCC – Highways) who is no longer looking after Prudhoe since its move from the Central area back into the Western area, now referred to as Tynedale.

Apologies were also received from Simon Packham who offered the following in his absence:

The **Community Safety Team** at Northumberland County Council is part of Public Protection department and sits within the Fire Service structure. Officers in Community Safety are the primary point of contact for dealing with issues of anti-social behaviour in the community. Some examples of the issues that we deal with are: anti-social behaviour by youths, dog barking, neighbour nuisance, motorcycle nuisance, graffiti, damage and arson risks. We also deal with issues that fall under the terms of statutory nuisance such as noise, smoke, odour and light.

We also have access to a number of dome CCTV cameras which we can deploy for short periods in areas where there are significant ASB problems. These cameras provide footage that can be used by ourselves to identify offenders and offences. The cameras can only be used when attached to NCC lighting columns.

We also work in partnership with the Police and housing associations to tackle crime and disorder across Tynedale. We hold a monthly meeting with these partner agencies and other professionals in the Tynedale area to discuss the current problems. The meeting discusses victims, offenders and locations and the intention is always to identify a partnership approach to tackling these issues.

Community Safety look to tackle problem individuals by the issue of a number of orders or notices such as Acceptable Behaviour Agreements (ABA), Good Neighbour Agreements (GNA), Community Protection Warnings (CPW), Community Protection Notices (CPN) and Noise Abatement notices. These are all tailored to the individual and the specific circumstances of the case.

Simon Packham is the Community Safety Officer for Tynedale and Ponteland on 01670 623726 or simon.packham@northumberland.gov.uk and the team leader is Emma Beniams on 01670 623812 or emma.beniams@northumberland.gov.uk

Northumberland County Council – Highways

- Inspections being carried out now and will take approximately 1 month to complete.
- 6,000 tonnes of salt have been stocked.
- The gritting route was tested that morning at 4:30 am.
- Prudhoe needs to be pushed to the forefront in terms of the Local Transport Scheme.

PRUDHOE TOWN COUNCIL**DRAFT Report of the Prudhoe Neighbourhood Management Meeting
held in The Spetchells Centre at 10:30 am, Wednesday 8th November 2017**

- There are large road surfacing and footpath issues.
- New Highways Inspector has visited Prudhoe along with cabinet member Glen Sanderson.
- A new Street Lighting contractor started work on Monday.

In response to Cllr Andy Gill's question about blocked gullies, Andy Olive offered that the gully cleaning route would begin in 10 days time. County Cllr Gordon Stewart stated that parked cars were an issue, although letters are sent out in advance. Kris Westerby mentioned that gullies have been found that NCC did not know existed and that all were being mapped on a software system.

County Cllr Gordon Stewart also took the opportunity to advise of the Flood Resilience meeting being held at The Adam & Eve on 13th November from 6pm – 7pm, hosted by the Environment Agency with a view to engaging those businesses at Low Prudhoe that have been most adversely affected by flooding.

In response to Cllr George McCreedy's question about the temporary traffic lights on Front Street, Kris Westerby said that he would find out the reason behind them.

In response to criticism of the temporary fixes to potholes, Andy Olive explained that when A-roads are inspected, which is monthly, any defects have to be rectified within 24 hours and throughout the West larger sections have been removed to then fill the pot hole, however, although it might be the case that a new surface is required, response times dictate the temporary fix, followed by a second visit.

County Cllr Gordon Stewart confirmed that they would be applying for funding from the pothole fund.

In response to Cllr Chris Cuthbert's question about the Safety Scheme at Mickley, Kris Westerby advised that there was a 6-week lead into the bus shelter move; the traffic lights would be the next priority and then the road safety issues. Andy Olive confirmed that the safety bollards had been delivered. County Cllr Anne Dale suggested that there was a change with respect to the safety bollards which she would discuss outside the meeting.

Cllr Ken Stow reported that the system of reporting street light failures had been poor but this was improving and Cllr Gordon Stewart acknowledged that cabinet member Nick Oliver was working on this.

In response to Cllr Jennifer McGee's report of the footpath on Station Bank being a state with intermittent weed growth causing a tripping hazard, Kris Westerby said he would ensure it was inspected.

Northumberland County Council – Neighbourhood Services

David Hunt advised that all Prudhoe staff were now managed from Hexham rather than Morpeth and that he and Geoff Cairns manage all staff at the Low Prudhoe depot and hold all Neighbourhood Services contracts. David Hunt confirmed that winter maintenance will begin now that grass-cutting is completed, that colleagues in Countryside have completed the Eastwood Park Play Area and that they would continue to work closely with the Town Council and with Prudhoe Waterworld who they also have a contract with.

In response to Cllr George McCreedy's question about grass-cutting on Western Avenue, David Hunt responded that the steep incline does cause NCC an issue as accidents have occurred that have

PRUDHOE TOWN COUNCIL**DRAFT Report of the Prudhoe Neighbourhood Management Meeting
held in The Spetchells Centre at 10:30 am, Wednesday 8th November 2017**

necessitated them looking at the risks of cutting generally with a mower. The cutting is now carried out by a tractor and flail so the frequency of cuts is less.

Geoff Cairns added that with respect to Western Avenue there is an issue with parked cars and some cuts cannot be made if cars block access, again it was emphasised that letter drops are carried out in advance. It was suggested the Town Council could support the letter drops by helping get the message across via social media.

Karbon Homes

Cllr Eileen Burt asked for an update on the plans to build at Edgewell and whether another meeting had been held at Edgewell Christian Centre. Phillip Rutherford stated that he was not aware of any recent meetings but that planning permission had now been given and the development would go ahead as planned.

In response to Cllr Russ Greig's comments about the poor standards of maintenance at Adderlane Gill and Castle Close Play areas Phillip Rutherford responded that the grounds maintenance had now been split into smaller units so a better standard could be expected moving forward.

In response to Cllr Russ Greig's comment that play equipment had been removed from Adderlane Gill 18 months ago, Phillip Rutherford explained that play provision was not top of the agenda for Karbon but they had replaced the playgrounds at Hedley Road, Wylam.

In response to Cllr Russ Greig's request for a grass-cutting schedule for next season, Phillip Rutherford explained that this could be provided but with an understanding that the weather has a big impact on whether the schedule is kept.

Cllr Gerry Price asked if there were any other schemes to build locally. Phillip Rutherford confirmed that other than High Shaw and Ovingham more locally there were some schemes in Hexham and Bellingham but nothing else in the Tynedale area.

In response to County Cllr Anne Dale's question about contact email addresses, Phillip Rutherford confirmed that replaced isos with karbon should reach those previously contacted.

Northumberland County Council – Environmental Enforcement

In response to Cllr Andy Gill's question about overgrown hedges and obstructive bins on South Road, Paul Turnbull explained that he was working with the legal department to come up with a letter to send out with respect to bins and that this was a county-wide issue. David Hunt responded with respect to the overgrown hedge, the highways department has sent a letter with a 28-day notice order, after 14 days there would be a knock at the door, following which NCC would cut the hedge and attempt to reclaim the money from the householder.

Paul Turnbull emphasised that they had the power to issue on the spot fines of £80 for littering and dog fouling and for fly-tipping, including garden waste £400.

In response to County Cllr Gordon Stewart's question about abandoned caravans, Paul Turnbull explained that this was a police issue if abandoned and a highways issue if causing an obstruction.

PRUDHOE TOWN COUNCIL**DRAFT Report of the Prudhoe Neighbourhood Management Meeting
held in The Spetchells Centre at 10:30 am, Wednesday 8th November 2017**

In response to Cllr Chris Cuthbert regarding at what point a vehicle becomes considered 'abandoned', Paul Turnbull explained that they contact DVLA with a view to contacting the registered owner and if there is no response then the vehicle can be crushed, but that this can take 2-3 weeks.

Prudhoe Community Partnership

George Hepburn outlined that PCP was a registered charity with an interest in initiatives that were good for the town. As well as managing The Spetchells Centre, George Hepburn outlined that they, in conjunction with Gentoo are working on the Walled Garden at Prudhoe Hospital and in conjunction with Prudhoe Town Council the future of the East Centre. Also, PCP would launch a 'Rate your Prudhoe' at the Town Fair to find out what people like about living in Prudhoe and what should be addressed; disabled access into Front Street shops was also being looked at.

George Hepburn stated that The Spetchells Centre was full and doing well with the police coming in at the end of the month. Other users/tenants include Northumberland Citizens Advice, West Northumberland Food Bank, Prudhoe Town Council, NCC Revenue and Benefits, Mortal Fools Youth Theatre, Red Hot Property Bureau, Prudhoe Library, Karbon Homes and many more community groups.

Prudhoe Co-op

Iain Watt described being as frustrated as others with the poor surfacing and lighting in the Co-op car park but that reports have been made and would be followed up.

From a Community point of view Iain Watt outlined the stores support for the Prudhoe Christmas Lights Switch-On, the Prudhoe Aged People's Treat, West Northumberland Food Bank, the British Red Cross and the new youth group Happy Faces. Iain Watt also celebrated membership funds from customer's purchases that created donations amounting to over £18k to local good causes.

In response to Cllr Gerry Price suggesting the Town Council could write to Head Office to raise concerns over the car park and lighting, Ian Watt responded that it wouldn't hurt.

County Cllr Gordon Stewart advised that he was looking at lighting for outside of the Spetchells Centre. Iain Watt advised that he was certain that prices had been sought previously and they were awaiting a response from whoever would foot the bill.

Andy Olive took the opportunity to mention that NCC Highways did outsource work like 'whites lines' so to keep them in mind for the car park.

Gentoo Housing

Cllr Eileen Burt expressed concerns over the effect of having Prudhoe Hospital Drive closed for such a long period of time and the effect of this on Moor Road and South Road. In response Brendon Ferguson explained that the constraint for the site is the narrow access and that they have begun work to reconstruct the spine road (Prudhoe Hospital Drive) which contains all the new sewerage systems and utilities. Brendon Ferguson acknowledged that the work should have been completed by now but that they have faced archaic infrastructure and being let down by contractors. Brendon Ferguson confirmed that one third of the spine road was complete and that the 2nd stage would allow the right of way to be opened as well as assuring that it was in their interest to have the road opened as soon as possible and they expected the right of way to be open by Christmas, then the rest by the spring.

PRUDHOE TOWN COUNCIL
DRAFT Report of the Prudhoe Neighbourhood Management Meeting
held in The Spetchells Centre at 10:30 am, Wednesday 8th November 2017

Paul Nagel stated that there was a general perception from members of the public that Gentoo are restricting access for the sake of it but that is not the case and they have tried to work with NCC and PTC to mitigate against this. Additionally Paul Nagel confirmed that they have worked with NCC to open up areas that would not have been previously open to the public as well as making improvements.

In response to Cllr Russ Greig's question, Brendon Ferguson confirmed that the Surface Water Drainage System was 95% complete and although the company had gone into administration they were aware of what was left to do.

In response to allegations about discharging into the burn, Paul Nagel assured that surface water has not been discharged into the burn and all allegations have been investigated by the Environment Agency and refuted, added to which they have improved the discharge system.

In response to Cllr Russ Greig's question about silt, Paul Nagel described that they have a gravel trap to reduce the silt and that when the gullies are built they will be regularly cleaned. Brendon Ferguson explained that across the site there was a great deal of area to absorb surface water as well as a bund. Brendon Ferguson made clear that there were absolutely no contamination issues but there has been hedge cutting that could discolour the burn.

Paul Nagel commented that he appreciated the site was not the most public and that members of the public could not see exactly what is going on but they hoped that by working with NCC and PTC they could demystify this. Paul Nagel went on to state that they could not develop the site without closing it for health and safety protection but that they still had unauthorised access on a daily basis and this put people at risk.

In response to Cllr George McCreedy and Cllr Jennifer's concerns about the poor state of the road as a result of construction traffic assurance was given that a conditional inspection was carried out beforehand and any obligations would be met.

In response to Cllr Jennifer McGee's request for assurance that the road would definitely be opened by June 2018, Brendon Ferguson responded that they would have serious issues commercially if this did not happen as there were 50 houses in the first phase.

Concluding Brendon Ferguson commented that he hoped that when people were able to come onto the site they would appreciate the quality, adding that the natural environment was a big pull towards Cottier Grange.

With respect to the negative feedback often expressed by members of the public with regards to the site, George Hepburn suggested the Facebook page promote good news stories.

West Northumberland Youth Service

Catherine Hubbard-Coates described a new programme being delivered from the East Centre and the welcome news that following the return from maternity leave of a youth worker the Health drop-in at Prudhoe Community High School had been reestablished. Catherine Hubbard-Coates also promoted the volunteering within the Youth Service that helps with work experience and the work on-going with domestic abuse.

PRUDHOE TOWN COUNCIL
DRAFT Report of the Prudhoe Neighbourhood Management Meeting
held in The Spetchells Centre at 10:30 am, Wednesday 8th November 2017

Cllr Gordon Stewart took the opportunity to identify that although communication is an issue in the past, the Northumberland Youth Service now has a Facebook Page, a rebranded National Citizenship Service page. Catherine Hubbard-Coates stated that the Youth Service could not use Facebook due to Safeguarding issues and NCC policy.

In response to Cllr Russ Greig's question about how the Youth Service expect to engage with young people if they do not use social media, Catherine Hubbard-Coates responded that they used flyers and schools.

Cllr Eileen Burt made the point that the Youth Service was living under a false sense as people do not know what is going on at The East and that it was the same group of people attending regularly rather than reaching out to new young people. Catherine Hubbard-Coates acknowledged that this was the case with most Youth Services.

Jill Keeler agreed adding that she had a teenager and a younger son and she was not aware what was available. Everyone agreed that social media was the way to go.

County Cllr Gordon Stewart said that Jill Keeler made a good point and it was worth outlining what was available. Catherine Hubbard-Coates explained that as well as open sessions, which were usually themed there was now a project night and this week was looking at child exploitation. In response to County Cllr Gordon Stewart's question about measuring success, Catherine Hubbard-Coates said that it was usually much later in life, possibly in the world of work but that case studies are always anonymised.

Prudhoe Business Network

Jill Keeler described that the newly formed Prudhoe Business Network, initiated by County Cllr Gordon Stewart, meet bi-monthly as well as having had a recent breakfast meeting with Arch. They have designed a new Visit Prudhoe Facebook page for which the 'soft launch' will be discussed at the next meeting. Jill Keeler explained that although County Cllr Gordon Stewart had set them off, they were self organising now. County Cllr Gordon Stewart commented that it was essential that the Prudhoe Front Street businesses thrive rather than just survive.

In response to Cllr Chris Cuthbert's question about membership and attendance at meetings, Jill Keeler acknowledged that it was more difficult to get long standing businesses interested but there were a lot of new businesses and businesses at Low Prudhoe and some long established like Anne Blakeburn (Ball's Restaurant & Tearoom) were very interested; 15 to 20 people usually. New businesses are engaged. Anne Ball has attended, 15/20 people and some from industrial estate.

Cllr Jennifer McGee asked what the feeling of those local businesses involved about the developments at Low Prudhoe. Jill Keeler explained that the consensus was that the Front Street should be the priority.

In response to Cllr Chris Cuthbert's question about engaging with those outside of the business network, Jill Keeler explained that the forum was about businesses being able to speak freely and be able to manage themselves.

Before the meeting closed any Cllr Gerry Price took the opportunity to thank everyone for coming, Kris Westerby took the opportunity to push the Apprenticeship schemes that NCC have on offer.