

Report to Prudhoe Town Council meeting on 22nd February

PRUDHOE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Summary

To report on recent developments and to thank the Council for offer of grant for 2017-8.

58-59 Front Street

The keys for the two new shops on the former Windsor Bakery site were handed over last week after a series of frustrating delays. The tenant at 69 is Steven Ong, brought up in Prudhoe, who is transferring his hairdressing business from Greenside. Steven specialises in fashionable haircuts for the younger man. The tenant at 68 is Richard Marshall who is transferring his gaming business from Yorkshire and moving to Prudhoe to be near his parents. Richard has traded successfully for 5 years mainly through online business.

Some of the traders were not too pleased with the choice of tenants and the Partnership invited all the shop keepers to a meeting in January which aired their concerns and gave them an opportunity to raise other issues for the future of the town.

Spetchells Centre

The Partnership has renegotiated the repayment schedule of the mortgage with Social Investment Business which puts the monthly repayments on a much more manageable basis and offers the Partnership a 1:3 discount on additional capital repayments over the next five years.

It is holding quarterly meetings with tenants to respond to their issues. New fire regulations have been agreed and a fire drill carried out. It has started a facebook page and is producing a new marketing leaflet. There are discussions with two potential tenants.

The Centre Manager, Gail Jewett, starts her maternity leave in March and Julie Smith, currently working in Spetchells Centre for ISOS, has been appointed as locum manager.

Walled Garden

A meeting with Gentoo will have taken place on Monday 20th. The working party has come up with a number of ideas for activities in the Garden but the question of how to finance the running costs and maintenance of the Garden is still to be resolved.

Future Activities

Trustees have agreed a three year strategic plan, a risk assessment and a marketing analysis, all required for the SIB renegotiation. The strategic plan envisages managing Spetchells Centre in a steady state and to free time for new development work. If Spetchells Centre now pays its way, the shop rental should allow funds for some more development activity. In the meantime, the continued grant from Prudhoe Town Council is invaluable and much appreciated.

George Hepburn, Chair of Trustees – 15th February 2017