



Address: The Spetchells Centre

**AGENDA 8, a) Enc V**

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Town Mayor: Councillor Gerry Price

Executive Officer/Clerk to the Council: Richard Whinney

Mike Robbins MRICS  
Strategic Estates Manager  
Strategic Estates  
Northumberland County Council  
County Hall  
Morpeth  
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NE61 2EF

11<sup>th</sup> January 2018

CC. Cath McEvoy (Executive Director of Children's Services)  
Sharron Pearson (Senior Manager Specialist Services)  
Cllr Wayne Daley (Deputy Leader)  
Cllr Gordon Stewart (County Councillor, South Prudhoe)  
Cllr Ken Stow (County Councillor, North Prudhoe)  
Cllr Anne Dale (County Councillor, Mickley)

Dear Mike

This time last year the East in Prudhoe was being put up for sale, thankfully this was halted and over the past 12 months there has been discussions between a number of parties about the future of the building, and the youth service.

In May 2017, Prudhoe Town Council agreed to contribute £2,500 towards a 'Feasibility Study' into The East Centre as a Community Building, to be progressed with Prudhoe Community Partnership. At the Town Council's meeting last night the Feasibility Report on The East Centre was received formally for the first time, following many months of meetings between the parties.

In the first instance, some Town Councillors were concerned as to why the report had to be received confidentially and voiced that this had been raised on social media. Due to commercial sensitivity it was accepted that this was a decision by Prudhoe Community Partnership and discussion progressed. Councillors were assured to know that although the report was confidential and the item was being discussed under a section 68 (private and confidential) agenda item, that the outcome and reasoning would eventually be in the public domain as the Town Council is accountable to the public and needs to be transparent about its decisions.

The Feasibility Report was received very positively and Councillors agreed unanimously to formally request that Northumberland County Council transfer the East Centre to the Town Council. Councillors are enthused and motivated about the prospect of taking on the building and to ensure that it is used in perpetuity for the community, including the provision of youth services. The Town Council is keen to reach out to Community Groups who would like to use the building and appreciate that a business plan is required to take this exciting venture forward, this is something all Councillors present at the meeting showed a strong commitment to.

As a statutory body and the most local level of government it is strongly felt that Prudhoe Town Council is best placed to take on this public building to ensure continued community use, accountability to the public, and transparency.

We are sure you are aware of public feeling about the future of the building and feel it would be a great gesture if Northumberland County Council were able to respond promptly to this request. We believe that being assured that the building will eventually transfer to Prudhoe Town Council would be warmly welcomed by residents.

Can you advise if there is anything further you need at this stage and when it would be convenient to meet to discuss how we take this forward?

Yours sincerely

*Sarah Eden*

(for and on behalf of Prudhoe Town Council)