

PRUDHOE TOWN COUNCIL**Minutes of Ordinary Meeting held in The Spetchells Centre at 7:00pm, 25th February 2015****Present**

Cllr B Futers, Cllr G Price, Cllr E Dobson, Cllr A Gill, Cllr Ms J Rose, Cllr G Simpson, Cllr A Piper, Cllr Mrs C Cuthbert, Cllr Mrs N McGee, Cllr A Reid, Cllr Mrs J McGee, Cllr Mrs E Burt

1415/143 Apologies for Absence

Cllr G McCreedy, Cllr D Couchman, County Cllr Mrs Anne Dale

1415/144 Declarations of Interest None**1415/145 Martin Mannion**

Cllr Mrs Burt asked if Cllrs would observe one minute's silence as a mark of respect on the passing of this former councillor.

1415/146 West Northumberland Youth Service

Cllr Mrs Burt welcomed Mr Ashley Brown of West Northumberland Youth Service, acknowledging that his attendance was requested as part of the council's reinstated regular updates.

a) Youth Work in Prudhoe in year to date

Mr Brown described that over the past year West Northumberland Youth Service have successfully hit national targets with respect to contact and also with fundraising. Mr Brown was pleased to confirm £20k funding from SITA for improvements to the building and hoped to get further match-funding. All work carried out in the building will be driven by the young people.

Mr Brown was pleased to advise that The East was being accessed by a variety of different groups; a weekly lego group was attended by young people with special educational needs, a Morpeth boxing club would be visiting to use the facilities and the Princes Trust were operating from The East.

Mr Brown hoped that Cllrs would already be aware but celebrated the fact that The Prudhoe Town Council Young People's Forum (PTCYPF) were shortlisted for an award in Northumberland's Finest and although did not win, this was a great achievement and the young people attending to ceremony did the group proud.

The Princes Trust has been working with young people across West Northumberland and the youth service has been able to build on established relationships with young people. Recent work is the improvements made to the Prudhoe Badger, as well as work carried out at Adderlane First School.

Mr Brown identified that although he did not want to hark back to cuts, it was important to draw attention to the fact that all of the above achievements had been made despite the budget cloud they are working under. Mr Brown stated that all of the above had been achieved in a very difficult time, with the potential for very large cuts and staff uncertainty, as well as having had a county review. Another negative is the loss of Imelda from the Information, Advice and Guidance Team, Mr Brown described that this was due to a restructure but the impact at the East Centre would be huge. Mr Brown added that they needed to look at how they could continue to offer this service. Mr Brown emphasised that there were no young people on the street as he came into the meeting but there were lots of young people in the East Centre when he left, this was good news.

b) Progress and Update on Additional Funding Initiatives

Mr Brown acknowledged thanks that the report sent to the council had been distributed prior to the meeting and described achievement as 'a bit of a mixed bag'. With respect the PTCYPF, Mr Brown reported that the additional funding had resulted in greater contact with outside groups and more young people attending. The open evening was a success and the youth service has been working with schools; Mr Brown visited one of the schools himself and he was developing links with Prudhoe Community High School and now had the head teacher, Deborah Reeman, in his circulation list. With respect to environmental projects, they have been successful at putting a package together, (courses at Kirkley Hall, referred to in the report) but as is often the case, young people have gone on to do other things. Mr Brown confirmed that they were working with Paul Muto (Prudhoe Gardeners Association) and Laugh Waugh (Groundwork North East) on prospective projects and hopefully there were some young people interested in doing a chainsaw course, with a view to carrying out work at Castle Dene Allotments and Prudhoe Woods.

Mr Brown detailed that the Town Council supported £100 challenge had been sent out to a number of agencies; Ferndene, Highfield Middle School and Prudhoe Youth Football Club, stating that although the closing date was given to be 1st March, he expected to extend this as some projects were just gaining momentum. Mr Brown described that projects being carried out in the East Centre were interesting and it was good to see the young people attempting to gain profit and working out budgeting, etc. Mr Brown concluded that as previously suggested by the town council, they still hoped to have a celebratory event in the future.

c) Mr Brown did not feel able to offer any great detail on planned work and structures for 2015-16, but assured councillors that all staff are committed to the work they are doing.

Cllr Reid made clear the council's appreciation of the work being undertaken by the youth service, especially in light of budget cuts. Cllr Reid added that there were likely to be further budget cuts and he hoped any proposals brought forward would meet expectations. Cllr Reid also took the opportunity to comment on the Prudhoe Badger that had recently been updated by young people working with The Princes Trust. Cllr Reid made the point that the Prudhoe Badger was created 25 years ago, and in his opinion it has more impact now than it did then. Cllr Reid stated that everyone he had come into contact with had been very positive about the project and the results were welcome. Cllr Reid also noted that the last upgrade had cost £10,000, this time NCC would not permit spending from his own County Cllr Capital Small Schemes Fund so he was grateful that the Princes Trust had managed the project and subsequently saved county council this money. Cllr Mrs Burt echoed what Cllr Reid said, agreeing that the Prudhoe Badger looked good.

Mr Brown was delighted to hear such positive comments, adding that he did not wish to take credit for the project that was executed by The Princes Trust, but he would happily pass these comments on.

Cllr Futers suggested West Northumberland Youth Service or The Princes Trust contact The Woodland Trust as there is work planned and underway in Priestclose Woods that might offer an opportunity to develop skills. *(Cllr Futers later gave the contact details for the Woodland Trust to Mr Brown)*

Cllr Dobson noted that although previously sceptical about the PTCYPF, he was delighted that further investment into it has worked and that the forum is coming on well. Also in respect to the PTCYPF, Cllr Price stated that the younger students attending from Highfield Middle School, and being encouraged to attend by teaching staff, were the ideal age to develop with the forum.

Cllr Mrs J McGee thanked Mr Brown for the report and declared that it was wonderful that the work of the youth service was going from strength to strength. Cllr Mrs J McGee added that she was pleased to have recommended that money be diverted to the PTCYPF as the last 2 meetings attended were 'amazing' and discussions 'quite diverse'. Cllr Mrs J McGee ended by asking Mr Brown to pass on the thanks of the council to the young people who represented the PTCYPF at the Northumberland's Finest Awards, adding that she had heard from Carol Quinn that they had made a great impression.

1415/147 Minutes of Ordinary Meeting, held on 28th January 2015

It was AGREED to receive the minutes

Proposed: Cllr A Gill Seconded: Cllr Mrs J McGee

1415/148 Matters Arising

Cllr Mrs J McGee referred to page 5, asking the Clerk if the 106 funding application for Highfield Park had been submitted. The clerk confirmed that the application would be submitted on Friday, following verification of the figures required.

1415/149 Report of the Planning, Contract and Works Meeting, held on 11th February 2015

It was AGREED to receive the report

Proposed: Cllr A Gill Seconded: Cllr Mrs J McGee

1415/150

a) Monthly Bank Reconciliations – to receive statements 10th January – 9th February 2015

It was AGREED to receive the monthly bank reconciliations

Proposed: Cllr G Simpson Seconded: Cllr E Dobson

b) Statement of Expenditure from 1st April 2014 – 19th February 2015

It was AGREED to receive the statement of expenditure

Proposed: Cllr G Simpson Seconded: Cllr E Dobson

c) Endorsement of accounts paid since January meeting, and authorisation of accounts to pay (listed in schedule of accounts to be paid, tabled at the meeting)

It was AGREED to endorse those accounts paid, and to pay those listed in the schedule of accounts (tabled)

Proposed: Cllr G Simpson Seconded: Cllr E Dobson

1415/151 Prudhoe Town Council Young People's Forum

It was AGREED to receive the minutes of the meeting held on 21st January 2015.

Cllr Mrs J McGee stated that the report showed that more young people were getting involved and attendance from other groups and schools was greater.

Cllr Mrs Burt drew Cllrs attention to the NEET figures, advising that this represented 'Not in Education, Employment or Training' and that it was a figure that was rising in Northumberland.

Cllr Price referred to the write-up on parking issues at Highfield Middle School, suggesting that this may be something the council should monitor and act upon. Cllr Mrs Burt responded that the situation may be exasperated at the moment, whilst part of West Road is closed, but that she felt these issues were sadly not uncommon, and she expected most schools suffered the same.

1415/152 Public Conveniences and Neighbourhood Services

It was AGREED to receive the report of the meeting held on 2nd February with Paul Jones
(NCC Head of Neighbourhood Services)

Cllr Mrs Burt advised that Paul Jones had requested a meeting with the chair and the clerk to discuss public conveniences. The meeting heard that public conveniences across the county will be reviewed in terms of suitability and value for money. Cllr Mrs Burt advised that presently there were two sets of toilets in Prudhoe that were opened, cleaned and locked each day. Cllr Mrs Burt presented that it was accepted that perhaps Prudhoe did not need two sets of toilets and the block at the Legion would have been taken out if the supermarket development had been approved, adding that both Waterworld and The Spetchells Centre have toilets also. Cllr Mrs Burt concluded that it was hoped counters would be put into the toilets to record use and a report would be forthcoming, adding that this was a cost saving exercise but no decision had been made yet. Cllr Gill asked should a response not have come to the full council to agree regarding toilets, as he believed that the last time this was mentioned, the council wished to retain both sets. Cllr Mrs Burt agreed that future reports would come to the full council, but this meeting had been requested of the clerk and the chair.

Cllr Simpson expressed that it was clear why the future of toilets would be brought into question and he believed that in the future most toilets would be closed as health and social care rightly favoured spending. However, Cllr Simpson was keen to point out that it was also likely that there would be a poker game between towns and parishes, and if the case was that whoever shouts the loudest gets to keep their toilets, Prudhoe should be making its case.

Cllr Mrs J McGee pointed out that although it was expected that the Legion toilets would be knocked down as part of the supermarket development, the supermarket was expected to have public toilets to compensate. Cllr Mrs J McGee stated that although she could appreciate the budgetary demands on public services, she believed that Prudhoe was a service centre as well as having a large population. Cllr Mrs J McGee counselled that at least one set of toilets should be retained and those at the roads ends have been there for a long time and should be protected.

Cllr Mrs Burt concluded that the council should expect a further report from NCC.

1415/153 Sports Provision to receive report of meeting on 12th February with Active Northumberland and Prudhoe Youth Football Club, and agree any action to be taken. **It was AGREED** that this item be subject to section 68 and be taken at the end of the meeting.

1415/154 Prudhoe Castle Exhibition

It was AGREED to receive the report of the Prudhoe Caste Exhibition, along with the suggestion that a further 'art exhibition' be held.

Cllr Mrs J McGee suggested that the council ask Prudhoe Community Arts Group if they would be interested in hosting an art exhibition. Cllr Mrs Burt agreed that this was an excellent idea, and that perhaps it was something that could happen bi-annually. Cllr Rose added that the U3A had a thriving photography group who may be interested in getting involved. **It was AGREED** to contact Prudhoe Community Arts Group with this suggestion.

1415/155 Prudhoe Footbridge over level crossing

Cllr Mrs Burt asked for the re-painting of the footbridge at Prudhoe Station to be on the agenda as a result of this being mentioned by the chair of Ovingham Parish Council. Ovingham Parish Council would be writing to Northern Rail to make the request and it was hoped that 2 letters would be more

persuasive. **It was AGREED** to write to Northern Rail to request that the footbridge be re-painted 'racing green' to match the soon to be re-painted Ovingham Bridge.

Cllr Mrs Burt also suggested that this would be an appropriate time to invite Northern Rail to a meeting of the council, to update on Prudhoe Station. **This was AGREED.**

1415/156 Reports from outside bodies

Northumberland County Council – Cllr Reid reported that the budget had been agreed and there would be a 1.9% increase in council tax. There was a planned £3,000,000 capital scheme that would see some investment locally at Waterworld and potentially some council homes being built in Prudhoe. Cllr Mrs Burt added that it was also hoped that money would be found to ensure that the Sports Hall at Prudhoe Community High School was a 4-court size. Cllr Reid concluded that there are some widespread capital schemes and funding is not always 100% County, other match funding is expected, adding that Prudhoe is not being overlooked.

Cllr Gill asked if the £500,000 for Waterworld was all county funding. Cllr Reid replied that the £500,000 was all County money but that did not rule out that other external funding would be applied for.

Cllr Mrs J McGee expressed that if Prudhoe expected new housing as set out in the Core Strategy, there was a need for additional facilities. Cllr Mrs McGee made a case for capital investment in The East Centre. Cllr Reid responded that what had been outlined was only a 3-year programme and he would hope that over time more facilities would be added and he and Cllr Mrs Burt would make sure Prudhoe got its fair share.

1415/157 Correspondence and Publications

Correspondence

1. Northumberland County Council: Town & Parish Liaison Working Group (TPLWG)

Letter dated 29 January 2015 from Cllr D Ledger, Deputy Leader, NCC. The letter reflects on the success of the work of the group and other initiatives since September 2013, including the Town and Parish Councils' Conference. Cllr Ledger reports that "the team of peers who recently carried out a Corporate Peer Challenge of the County Council for the Local Government Association identified positive relations with Town and Parish Councils as a strength." Cllr Ledger states "in strengthening relationships, we have been keen to ensure that we build upon existing relationships and are not replacing what had proved to work in the past."

The letter mentions the "regular meetings" with main towns and service centres [these include Prudhoe], and 'clusters' of smaller councils. These meetings provide "a forum in which to:

- Consider opportunities for joint development and improvement of services
- Review and improve performance
- Identify key issues – short, medium and long term challenges and objectives"

The TPLWG has also (1) overseen the development of a revised Local Council Charter (2) been instrumental in the supply to local councils of the Local Services Who's Who, and (3) in monitoring the asset transfer process. The letter urges local councils to take advantage of "these strengthened relationships and improved communication channels" instead of using NCC Area Committees' public questions to raise issues, noting that this is not an efficient way to "a speedy resolution".

Cllr Ledger concludes by encouraging ongoing liaison with the Locality Development Team, and hopes that 2015 will see continued building on the successes of the TPLWG.

RECEIVE

2. Gateshead Council: Public Consultation on New Planning Guidance relating to Design Quality of New Housing Developments

Letter dated 2 February 2015 from Mr N Wilkinson, Spatial Development, Gateshead Council, advising of the consultation on guidance for developers. The draft of the "Gateshead residential design code supplementary planning document" is available at www.gateshead.gov.uk with the consultation running from 2 February to 15 March.

Responses / comments etc can be made to

- Online portal – <http://www.gateshead.gov.uk/consultation>
- Letter – to Spatial Planning and the Environment, Gateshead Council, Civic Centre, Regent Street, Gateshead NE8 1HH
- Email – ldf@gateshead.gov.uk

RECEIVE, Cllrs invited to contact the office for further information if they are interested in responding to consultation.

3. Gateshead Council: Public Consultation on Proposed Planning Changes for the Location of New Hot Food Takeaways

Letter dated 2 February 2015 from Mr N Wilkinson, Spatial Development, Gateshead Council, advising of this consultation. "As part of our ongoing efforts to improve health across Gateshead, we are looking to introduce new measures that will ensure that new hot food takeaways are only opened in suitable areas." The document that has been prepared "would allow Gateshead Planning Committee to consider extra issues when considering applications for new hot food takeaways. These include the number of hot food takeaways in a community or the proximity to schools and other places that large numbers of young people visit."

The draft of the document is available at www.gateshead.gov.uk with the consultation running from 2 February to 15 March.

Responses / comments etc can be made to

- Online portal – <http://www.gateshead.gov.uk/consultation>
- Letter – to Spatial Planning and the Environment, Gateshead Council, Civic Centre, Regent Street, Gateshead NE8 1HH
- Email – ldf@gateshead.gov.uk

RECEIVE and Cllr Reid to enquire as to whether this is something NCC will be looking at.

4. Grant Aid – Responses to Notice of Award

The council has to date received responses from the following organisations, giving wholehearted thanks to the Council for their financial support for the financial year 2015-16:

Northumberland Citizens Advice Bureau

Prudhoe Youth Football Club

Prudhoe Castle Bowling Club

Prudhoe Motor Project

Prudhoe Community Allotment

East Tynedale Girl Guiding

Prudhoe Town Show

Prudhoe Town Women's Football Club

Community Crafters

Prudhoe Community Choir

Prudhoe Community Events - separate responses in relation to (1) the Arts Week (2)

Prudhoe Community Radio (3) the Community Street Fair

Army Cadets – Prudhoe Detachment

Carers Northumberland

Prudhoe Community Band

Dragon Tale Theatre Group
Prudhoe & District U3A
Prudhoe Aged People's Treat
Mickley Aged People's Treat

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Tabled Items

1. Mitry-Mory – L'évolution – municipal information magazine for Mitry-Mory, February 2015
2. Campaign to Protect Rural England, North-East, NEwsletter, Spring 2015 (Feature of Prudhoe Ground Force team on front cover, and three-page feature on the group's work). A non-party manifesto for the 2015 General Election is also supplied.
3. Northumberland Residents' Festival "our people, our places" 21-22 March 2015: leaflets (*including vouchers*) and posters (advertising "free or reduced entry to many of Northumberland's top attractions" (1) Prudhoe Castle is *not* included in the leaflet (2) Northumberland Leisure Centres – Special Residents' Weekend offer: Buy one get one free – includes Prudhoe Waterworld.

Please note that these vouchers can be accessed and printed off online (proof of address must be presented to show residency when using the voucher). A link has been placed to the Festival on the council's website.

It was AGREED to RECEIVE the tabled items

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 item, in accordance with Section 68 of the Council's Standing Orders:-

1415/158 Sports Provision

It was AGREED to receive report the report of the meeting on 12th February with Active Northumberland and Prudhoe Youth Football Club

It was AGREED that future meetings regarding parks should separate Riding Dene Play Area (Mickley) and Eastwood Parks (West Wylam)