

PRUDHOE TOWN COUNCIL

**DRAFT Minutes of Ordinary Meeting held in The Spetchells Centre at 7:00pm,
30th November 2016**

PRESENT

Cllr Mrs J McGee (Chair), Cllr E Dobson, Cllr B Futers, Cllr A Gill, Cllr G McCreedy, Cllr Mrs C Cuthbert, Cllr Mrs E Burt, Cllr A Reid, Cllr Ms J Rose, Cllr D Coachman, Cllr Mrs N McGee, Cllr G Price

1617/089 Apologies for Absence Cllr A Piper, County Cllr Mrs A Dale

1617/090 Declarations of Interest Cllr A Reid – member of West area Planning Committee so will not take part in any discussion relating to matters that may come up in future planning applications.

1617/091 Public Participation

Cllr Mrs J McGee advised the meeting the residents Mr Nicholson and Mr Stoke of Otter cops, Halfway wished to make a representation.

Mr Nicholson presented a petition of 99 signatures of objection to the ISOS Housing plans to take down 15 garages in order to build 4 new houses on the site between High Shaw and Greener Court.

Mr Stoke continued that the plans included 28 spaces for cars, 8 of which were allocated to the 4 new homes. Mr Stoke was surprised that inspections of the area indicated no issues with parked cars on the estate, but added that these were carried out during the day when people were out, suggesting that it would be more appropriate to visit on an evening when residents were at home and cars were parked up. Mr Stokoe added that Acomb and Haydon Bridge had suffered a similar fate and it was his and others opinion that this would open the floodgate to more housing to be built on garage site at Halfway. Mr Stokoe described the poorly communicated consultation held in Edgewell Christian Centre; that many people on the estate were not aware of. At this presentation ISOS Housing indicated that a planning application would forthcoming in December and for this reason residents felt they should act quickly and appeal to the Town Council now.

Mr Nicholson relayed that he moved onto the estate in 1959 and that it was not developed to take the number of cars that families have now. Mr Nicholson calculated potentially 23 extra cars on the roadside if the garages were knocked down and a further 4 houses built, adding that insurance costs would also be higher for those no longer able to store their cars in garages. Mr Nicholson advised the council that he had spoken to the police regarding these plans. Mr Nicholson spoke about the play area that used to exist on the estate and the nearby football ground and open space; these were no more and recreational space on the estate was now minimal for young children, too small to go to Highfield Park alone.

Mr Nicholson was especially concerned about more traffic using Halfway Bank which already presented visibility problems with parked cars. Mr Nicholson reaffirmed that ISOS admitted to only visiting the estate during the day and added that the area that is planned for parking bays is already being used by residents as a parking area. Mr Nicholson concluded by saying that those petitioning against the plans hoped the Town Council would support them in their objection as the plans would result in an unsafe environment for children and young people.

Cllr Mrs J McGee advised that the council would accept the petition but reminded residents that at up to now a planning application had not been received and that the council were consultees only and that they were not able to comment until an application was in front of them. Mr Nicholson and Mr Stokoe were aware of this but were concerned that if an application was received in December, the council may not meet in time to receive it. When asked Cllr Mrs J McGee confirmed that the council had not been informed of the consultation event. Cllr Mrs Burt was not sure that ISOS was obliged to inform the council but that she had met with ISOS on hearing about them from residents.

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Mr Stoke and Mr Nicholson thanked the council and left the meeting.

1617/092 Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting, held on 26th October 2016

It was **AGREED** to receive the minutes as a true record.

Proposed: Cllr D Couchman

Seconded: Cllr Mrs E Burt

1617/093 Matters arising

p3. Festive Lights at Mickley

The Clerk advised that the Christmas Lights contractor had advised that lights could not be fitted in the trees at Mickley due to overhead electricity cables and they needed more time to come up with an alternative scheme, so sadly there would be no lit trees this year. Cllr Mrs Burt expressed disappointment and asked when the contractor was asked about installing lights at Mickley. The clerk advised that this was requested in the summer but that they had only recently visited the site, having previously looked on Google maps. In response to Cllr Mrs Burt, Cllr Mrs J McGee stated that the clerk had already communicated the council's disappointment to the contractor and no further action was required.

p3. CCTV Provision in Prudhoe

The clerk advised that he was still chasing information relating to the impact of CCTV on crime prevention. Cllr McCreedy suggested the council should request a meeting with the new Neighbourhood Inspector in view of recent anti-social behaviour and there needed to be more police presence in the town. Cllr Mrs J McGee suggested that this could be discussed at the next Neighbourhood Management meeting scheduled for December. The clerk responded that the Neighbourhood Management Meeting had been postponed following discussion with Cllr Price. **It was AGREED** to write to the Neighbourhood Inspector.

p3. Play Areas

The clerk advised that there had been no further progress relating to the transfer of the play areas but that works to Castle Dene Play Area surfacing should be completed soon.

p5. Northumberland County Council: Public Toilets at Prudhoe Road Ends

The clerk advised that following a response to NCC a meeting was held which would be reported later.

p5. West Mickley Play Area

The clerk reported that he, Cllr Mrs Cuthbert and Cllr Mrs J McGee expected to meet with 5 play providers.

1617/094 Minutes of Extra-Ordinary Meeting, including Planning, Contract and Works Committee, held on 9th November 2016

It was **AGREED** to receive the minutes as a true record.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs E Burt

Seconded: Cllr Mrs C Cuthbert

1617/095 Matters Arising

p4. Edgewell Cemeteries: Fees and Charges/Regulations

The clerk advised that the new fees and cemetery rules were now on the website.

p5. End of Meeting

Cllr Gill asked why the minutes reflected that Cllr Mrs J McGee made a statement but did not allude to the statement. The Clerk advised that this was in the confidential report of the meeting.

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p4. Public Seats

Cllr Mrs Burt asked if any progress had been made regarding the seat at The Falcon and at the bus stop at Priestclose Cottages. The clerk responded that he was not given to understand that this was a priority, suggesting that ward Cllrs may wish to visit the seat at The Falcon and make a decision. With respect to the request for a seat at the bus shelter at Priestclose Cottages, the clerk said permission would need to be sought from NCC to put a seat on the pavement. Cllr Mrs Cuthbert asked if a window could be put in the shelter as an alternative. This was deemed unachievable as the shelter was an old stone version. **It was AGREED** ward Cllrs would visit the Falcon seat.

1617/096 Minutes of Extra-Ordinary Meeting, including Planning, Contract and Works Committee, held on 22nd November 2016

It was AGREED to receive the minutes as a true record.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs E Burt

Seconded: Cllr Mrs J McGee

1617/097 Matters Arising

Cllr Futers stated that at the meeting he raised issue about having received the papers for the meeting the night before and the chair said that all members had received an email calling the meeting and the agenda was given at this time. Cllr Futers re-stated that the papers should be received 3 days before the meeting, especially if the council wished to restrict meetings to no longer than 2 hours, as Cllrs would be expected to have read the papers. Cllr Mrs J McGee agreed that Cllr Futers had a point.

1617/098 Human Resources Committee

The item was not discussed

1617/099 Standing Orders

It was AGREED to amend the Standing Orders to restrict meeting times to no longer than 2 hours, with a suspension to Standing Orders to allow an extension by 30 minutes only, if deemed absolutely necessary.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs E Burt

Seconded: Cllr Futers

1617/100 Council Vacancy

The Clerk advised that no request for a poll had been claimed and as it was less than 6 months to the end of the council's term, the council was not obliged, but may wish to commence a co-option process. Cllr Reid suggested that the co-option process included in papers was only advisory not statutory, to which the clerk agreed, explaining it was an advice note from the Society of Local Council Clerks. Cllr Reid proposed that the council should leave the position vacant to be filled by the natural election process in May, adding that nominations would open in early April.

Proposed: Cllr A Reid

Seconded: Cllr A Gill

1617/101 Accounts

a) Bank Reconciliations 8th October – 9th November 2016

It was AGREED to receive the bank reconciliations

Proposed: Cllr Mrs E Burt

Seconded: Cllr E Dobson

b) Statement of Expenditure from 1st April to 24th November 2016

It was AGREED to receive the Statement of Expenditure

Proposed: Cllr Mrs E Burt

Seconded: Cllr Mrs N McGee

Cllr Mrs J McGee advised Cllrs that proposed movements of money between budget headings would come to the Council's December meeting

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c) Accounts to Pay and to be Paid. The schedule of accounts was tabled.

It was AGREED to pay the accounts listed and endorse those accounts already paid

Proposed: Cllr Mrs C Cuthbert

Seconded: Cllr Mrs E Burt

Cllr Mrs Burt commented that Miners Race t-shirts were more expensive than Miners Race medals and some adult runners had expressed that they would have preferred a medal to a t-shirt. **It was AGREED** this would be discussed at the next Events Committee meeting.

1617/102 Internal Audit

It was AGREED to receive the report of minor queries.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs E Burt

Seconded: Cllr A Gill

1617/103 Precept Notification

It was AGREED to receive the Precept notification requiring the council's precept demand and breakdown of budget figures by 27th January 2017.

Proposed: Cllr E Dobson

Seconded: Cllr Ms J Rose

Cllr Dobson asked for confirmation that the council's usual January meeting on the 25th January would be sufficient time to allow the data to be sent. The clerk confirmed that it would.

1617/104 Budget 2017/18

Cllr Mrs J McGee asked Cllrs for their ideas for additional budget considerations for 2017/18.

Cllr Mrs Burt suggested the following:

- Allocation of £5,000 towards Road Ends public toilets refurbishment
- Allocation for additional street lights toilets. Cllr Reid suggested the council would need between £700 and £1,000 per light.
- Allocation towards Castlefields Play Area.
- An environmental Investment in Oaklands Estate
- Allocation for expert planning advice in response to Highfield Lane planning application.
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Cllr Dobson suggested that there was a skills gap in the Human Resources Committee and an allocation of approximately £2,200 for 5 days consultancy of a Human Resources specialist would assist in the management of staff, a sickness policy and other matters.

Cllr Mrs Cuthbert asked if consideration could be given to increasing the £5,000 allocated for West Mickley Play Area to the actual cost of the project which would be known soon.

Cllr McCreedy suggested the council should think again about a dedicated environmental team and speak to Town Councils at Seaton Valley, Blyth and Cramlington who are doing it now. Cllr McCreedy also asked for consideration to be given to the cutting back of hedging on West Road, past the electrical sub-station as this was looking untidy. Cllr Mrs J McGee suggested this should be actioned now, rather than waiting till the budget process.

Cllr Mrs J McGee suggested an allocation towards the play area at The Copse as residents had reported this was very outdated. With respect to the Henry Travers Plaque, Cllr Mrs J McGee confirmed that money had been allocated in the current year's budget and as Henry Travers birthday was March 5th, it was hoped to be completed prior to then.

1617/105 West Road Speed Survey

Cllr Mrs Burt expressed surprise that the item was on the council's agenda since she was liaising directly with Northumberland County Council on the matter. In brief the results suggested that

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although traffic was speeding, this was only just above the 30mph limit and therefore not sufficiently fast to dictate action, however she was looking into other measures that could include an interactive speed sign. There is also the question of whether the stretch of road past Prudhoe West First School will become a 20mph zone, happening outside all Northumberland schools, however this could relate to Fair View.

Cllrs discussed the missing interactive speed sign, now thought to have been bought by Cllrs Reid and Simpson, Cllr Reid suggested that it was 8 years ago and the sign was most likely past redemption.

Cllr Futers mentioned that a mirror would be useful on the exit beside Prudhoe and District United Services Club, as the issue was not only of fast moving traffic but visibility also. Cllr Mrs Burt thought it likely that mirrors are put up by drivers not the County Council but she would find out.

1617/106 Cottier Grange Development: Construction Traffic

Cllr Reid stated that there was no option other than Moor Road for construction traffic visiting the Cottiers Grange site. Cllr Futers mentioned that he and Cllr Simpson had discussed the issue and proposed that construction traffic on South Road/Moor Road during school start (between 8am -9am) and finish times (between 3pm and 4pm) be restricted. Cllr Gill added that they could be encouraged to all use the same route; A695, Station Bank, South Road then onto Moor Road, avoiding the Oaklands, Highfield Lane and West Road.

It was AGREED to write to Gentoo, copied to Northumberland County Council requesting the above restrictions be applied.

Proposed: Cllr Futers

Seconded: Cllr A Gill

1617/107 Northumberland County Council: Local Services Liaison

Cllr Dobson reported that a liaison meeting between representatives himself, Cllr Price and Paul Jones, Director of Local Services & Housing Delivery, NCC had taken place on 3rd November for which a report was tabled. With respect to the road-ends toilets, Cllr Dobson echoed the reported £5,000 investment required to bring the toilets up to standard but warned that more money may be required following closer inspection.

Cllr Dobson reported that NCC would have to make £48 million of cuts over the next three years; £8 million in both 2017/18 and 2018/19 and £20 million in 2019/20. Although there may be little impact in the next financial year, service reductions were anticipated in succeeding years in areas of grass-cutting, street cleansing, public conveniences, care for the elderly, the youth service, non-commercial bus services and more. Cllr Dobson warned that the message was that Town and Parish Councils would have to consider how they budget and set precepts in the future, to cope with the expectations of the public.

Cllr McCreedy stated that this strengthened the argument for a dedicated neighbourhood team, funded by the Town Council.

It was AGREED to RECEIVE the report.

Proposed: Cllr Dobson

Seconded: Cllr Price

1617/108 Eastwood Park

Cllr Mrs J McGee reported that everything was moving along well with play providers who were coming forward with plans for Eastwood Park; pupils at Adderlane First School and Highfield Middle School would be consulted. The timeline tabled at the meeting suggested a completion date of April 2017 for phase 1 of the project; this is the development of new play areas and utilising the bowls

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pavilion. Cllr Mrs J McGee stated that there was no available funding for a Multi-Use Games Area and tennis court at present but that funding streams were being investigated.

Cllr Mrs J McGee advised Cllrs that she asked Mike Jeffries at the end of the meeting if NCC would be willing to transfer the play areas to the Town Council, previously discussed alongside Riding Dene, Mickley. Cllr Mrs McGee then proposed that the Town Council write formally to NCC to ask if a transfer could be discussed. **It was AGREED** to write to NCC. Cllr Mrs J McGee noted that Emma Evans and Sam Talbot had worked very hard on the project.

1617/109 Castlefields Toddler Play Area

Cllr Mrs Burt questioned the accuracy of the email received from Guy Opperman MP that stated the Town council had previously asked for a cash contribution from Bellway before adopting the play area. Cllr Mrs Burt stated that Bellway were asked by NCC to look at the play area and only when it was found to be unsafe, was the play equipment removed. Cllr McCreedy did not recall the Town Council being asked to take on this play area.

It was AGREED to arrange a meeting with Bellway and Northumberland County Council.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Burt Seconded: Cllr McCreedy

1718/110 Highfield Park Toddler Roundabout

It was AGREED to go with option 1 presented by Sutcliffe Play which was to remove the existing roundabout and replace it with an above ground roundabout. This would resolve the issue of the area flooding underground as there would be no underground workings to be affected. Additionally, all work would be carried out at no cost to the council.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Burt Seconded: Cllr McCreedy



1718/111 NCC Core Strategy

Cllr Mrs J McGee confirmed that there were no modifications for Prudhoe. **It was AGREED** to receive the report. There are no modifications for Prudhoe.

1718/112 December Meeting

It was AGREED that the council would meet again on 14th December 2016 for a combined Ordinary Meeting with Planning, Contracts and Works and that the agenda would be kept to a minimum.

1718/113 Report from outside bodies

Northumberland County Council – Cllr Reid reported that Prudhoe Community High School was officially opened by teacher Mr Gary Marshall and that the school was now classified as ‘good’ by Ofsted and the building was living up to expectations. Cllr Reid concluded that Prudhoe Community High School was a good school that the town should be proud of.

Prudhoe Community Partnership – Cllr Mrs Burt reported that the shops would be ready to for new tenants on 5th December, a delay from 21st November. As a goodwill gesture PCP had offered new businesses free rent until January so if they were able to get open in time for Christmas this would be a bonus.

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Cllr Mrs J McGee stated that at previous meetings of the council, they were assured that PCP would get businesses that were lacking in the town and this could not be said of a barber shop as there were about 10 hairdressers already. Cllr Mrs Burt responded that of the 6 businesses interested in the lease, these were the 2 that impressed and were most viable. Cllr Mrs Burt confirmed that the 2nd shop was being leased to a Games outlet.

Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership – Cllr Price gave a full report of a meeting held in Hexham on 25th November.

Cllr Price reported that Northern Rail has taken over the franchise and compared with no investment over the previous 10 years there was now expected to be Government grant funding available to improve services, stations and rolling stock.

- Increased daily services in 2017
- Wi-Fi, cushioned seats and bookable seats from 2018-19
- Express service from Middlesbrough to Carlisle in 2019
- Prudhoe Station to be 1 of 3 for priority upgrade
- Network Rail to deal with footbridge repair, move ticket machine
- A ticket office at Prudhoe in 2019, due to passenger numbers
- Directional signs in town to rail station
- Better co-ordination of bus meets train service
- Discussions to improve car park at Prudhoe Station (belongs to NCC)
- An increased in the number of Security Officers (with police authority) working on trains and in stations

Cllr Price concluded that Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership want to have Corporate Members of the Management Committee with voting rights and that they would be writing to the Town Council regarding this, they will write the council regarding this; there would be a small fee.

Cllrs commended the thorough report given by Cllr Price.

Prudhoe Pathforce – It was agreed to receive the minutes. Cllr Ms Rose report that there was also a meeting the previous Monday but the minutes would be received at a later date.

Town Twinning – Cllr McCreedy although not a member of the Town Twinning Committee any longer reported that it looked like 2017 would be very busy with up to 50 visitors coming in September who may wish to take part in the Miners Race.

Cllr Mrs Burt reported that Town Twinning was made up of a very small number of very dedicated members and the biggest problem posed was finding accommodation for visitors. Cllr Mrs Burt suggested that if there was anything the council could do to relieve this pressure they should consider it.

1718/114 Correspondence and tabled Items

Correspondence

1. Traffic Issues, B6395 West Road, Prudhoe: Email from resident

The Council has been copied into a thread of emails from a resident concerning the parking of cars on both sides of the road on the double yellow lines below Prudhoe West First School.

The resident states that this is being done by parents / carers dropping children off. The resident suggests that there is a real and significant danger posed by this behaviour.

Prudhoe West First School has responded to the resident, stating that it liaises on an ongoing basis with the police and parking enforcement officials, and that tickets have been issued to

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offenders. The school notes that it has raised the issue with this Council and with the local Member of Parliament. On this occasion (6 November), the resident has followed suit.

It was AGREED to receive (no further action required)

2. Sport Tynedale Awards

Email of 14th November from Edward Heslop, Chairman of Sport Tynedale. Representatives of the Council are invited to the Annual Awards Evening, taking place at the Wentworth Leisure centre, Hexham, on Sunday 11 December, starting at 6.00pm.

It was AGREED to respond that Cllr McCreedy and Cllr Gill would attend on behalf of the council.

3. Her Majesty's Privy Council: Churchyard at Parish Church of St George, Mickley

Letter of 17th November from Melanie Knowles, Privy Council Office, enclosing a copy of an Order in Council dated 16th November, giving notice that burials should be discontinued in a number of churchyards, including that at St George's Church, Mickley, Northumberland. This is subject to exceptions including (i) the interment of the bodies of family members in graves already occupied (ii) interments in unused plots where the grave plot has already been purchased. In both cases this is subject to no part of the coffin being less than one metre below the surface level of the ground adjoining the grave.

It was AGREED to receive (no further action required)

4. Prudhoe Aged Peoples Treat

Letter of week commencing 14th November from Wilton Holmes, Secretary, conveying the invitation of the Treat Committee to all Prudhoe town councillors to this year's Treat, which is being held at the Prudhoe Social Club, South Road, Prudhoe on 6th, 7th, and 8th December. Tea will be served at approximately 3.15pm, followed by prize draws, raffles, bingo, and entertainment. Councillors are requested if possible to attend on the day allocated for their ward. The administrator confirmed that West Wylam ward was being catered for on Tuesday, Prudhoe Wards on Wednesday and Castle Dene wards on Thursday.

Cllrs could contact the office or Wilton Holmes directly if they wished to attend.

5. Northern Powergrid: Electricity Supply - Wayleave

Letter of 28th November from Wayleaves Administration, Northern Powergrid, enclosing the counterpart wayleave agreement No. 75305 of 9th June 2016 by which the Council as owner of the Edgewell New Cemetery, granted Northern Powergrid a wayleave in respect of the electricity supply to Edgewell Court.

It was AGREED to receive

Tabled Items

1. Ville de Mitry-Mory: L'Evolution magazine, Novembre 2016
2. Society of Local Council Clerks: The Clerk Magazine, November 2016, Vol 47, No. 5
3. Clerks & Councils Direct magazine, November 2016, Issue 108
4. National Allotment Society: Allotment & Leisure Gardener, Issue 4 of 2016
5. War Memorials Trust: Bulletin, No. 71, November 2016
6. Royal Horticultural Society: Grass Roots – The RHS Community Update, Issue 27, Autumn 2016
7. National Association of Memorial Masons: NAMM News, September / October 2016

It was AGREED to receive the tabled items

It was AGREED 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 items, in accordance with Section 68 of the Council's Standing Orders:-

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1718/115 Confidential Minutes of Ordinary Meeting, held on 26th October 2016

It was AGREED to receive the minutes as a true record.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs E Burt

Seconded: Cllr A Gill

1718/116 Confidential Minutes of the Extra-Ordinary Meeting of the Planning, Contracts and Works Committee, held on 9th November 2016

Proposed: Cllr Dobson

Seconded: Cllr Ms J Rose

The clerk reported that all contractors had now been notified of the outcome of procurement processes.

1718/117 Confidential Minutes of Extra-Ordinary Meeting, held on 22nd November 2016

The clerk advised that Cllr Piper requested the minutes be amended to state that he had voted against the decision with regard to the Formal Floral bedding contract and that he did not abstain, as was recorded. The clerk confirmed that this was the case and the record would be amended.

The clerk reported that Cllr Piper had raised issue with his spoken word not being recorded, but that the clerk had checked his notes and could not corroborate the statement. Cllr Mrs J McGee stated that the minutes of a meeting are not required to be verbatim but simply to record how the council has come to a decision and the decision itself, adding that during the course of a meeting everything cannot be written down and things can be missed.

1718/118 Confidential Minutes of the Human Resources Committee Meeting, held on 26th July 2016

It was AGREED to receive the minutes

Proposed: Cllr E Dobson

Seconded: Cllr E Burt

1718/119 Confidential Minutes of the Human Resources Committee Meeting, held on 23rd September 2016

It was AGREED to receive the minutes

Proposed: Cllr E Dobson

Seconded: Cllr Mrs C Cuthbert

Cllr Dobson took the opportunity to advise members that at the Human Resources Committee Meeting on 17th November he was elected chair. Cllr Dobson confirmed that the minutes of that meeting would come to the December Ordinary meeting.