

PRUDHOE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting held in The Spetchells Centre at 7:00pm, 27th April 2016**Present**

Cllr Mrs Burt (Chair), Cllr A Gill, Cllr E Dobson, Cllr B Futers, Cllr A Reid, Cllr Mrs J McGee, Cllr Piper, Cllr G Price, Cllr Simpson, Cllr Couchman

1516/177 Apologies for Absence Cllr Ms J Rose, Cllr Mrs N McGee, Cllr G McCreedy, Cllr K Graham, County Cllr Mrs A Dale

1516/178 Declarations of Interest None

1516/179 Michael Michael (one minute silence)

The council held one minute silence to mark the passing of Mr Michael Michael

1516/180 Northumberland Community Voluntary Action (Northumberland CVA)

In attendance Anne Lyle, Marc Johnson the NCVA won the contract for

Anne thanked council for inviting herself and Marc to attend.

Northumberland Community Voluntary Action

Northumberland VCS Support Services

VCS Assembly

An inclusive, independent and influential voice for the Voluntary and Community Sector in Northumberland

- ▶ inform
- ▶ engage
- ▶ co-ordinate
- ▶ champion the views of the sector

Supporting Organisations

Overarching aim: To ensure organisations across Northumberland are operating safely and legally and are able to access a range of support around managing assets, finance, funding and trustees.

Support for Organisations & Trustees

Funded Service

- ▶ Development of online resources
- ▶ Signposting to other resources
- ▶ Dissemination of information
- ▶ Development of Trustees Network
- ▶ Training & Events

Advanced Organisational Development

- ▶ Bespoke training & development
- ▶ Financial support – accountancy, payroll

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Funding Advice

Funded Service

- ▶ Information on funding sources
- ▶ Identifying appropriate funding sources
- ▶ Support in completing applications

Advanced Funding Support

- ▶ Income / funding strategy development
- ▶ Consultation and evidence gathering
- ▶ Bid checking and editing service
- ▶ Bid writing service
- ▶ Fully managed income generation service

Volunteering

General Volunteering

- ▶ Online resources for general volunteering
- ▶ Volunteer co-ordinator support events
- ▶ Promotion of volunteering

Supported Volunteering

- ▶ Development of supported volunteering for those furthest from the Labour Market
- ▶ Developing a supported volunteering model for use in other areas
- ▶ Link to EU Funding Programmes

Other areas of work

- ▶ Develop VCS relationships with the private sector
 - Links to Chamber of Trade
 - Develop a VCS offer for the private sector
- ▶ Developing Town & Parish Council relationships
 - Attendance at NCC's T&PC conference
 - Other targeted meetings

Financial Context

- ▶ Commission April 2016 to March 2018 £137,500pa
 - A cut of around £65k from 2015-16
- ▶ Funding from Local Govt. has decreased significantly over last 10 years.
- ▶ Previous Big Lottery, Central Government and European programmes no longer available for VCS infrastructure
- ▶ Northumberland CVA deficit of £8k last year on total income of £333k

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Marc elaborated with respect to the funding advice available, explaining that many groups needed very little support but some benefit from accounts training. With a vast array of information on all funder, Marc can pass on the funding sources available to different groups and projects, as well as helping with applications. The ethos of the NVCS is always to try first and seek help to improve.

The NVCS offer different levels of support; some higher level support attracts a fee. Anne explained that up until four years previous a volunteer's brokerage service has operated through funding and although funding was no longer available the service had carried on and they would be doing a volunteer event in Prudhoe very soon. Anne described over 100 volunteering opportunities available and their support for those who wish to use volunteering as a pathway into employment. Anne added that there is European funding available and that NVCS are part of a bid with 6 others, for which Northumberland County Council are the accountable body, for £3.1 million that could be match funded by the National Lottery.

Anne reported a desire to work more closely with the private sector, allowing them to put something back into the community via Social Enterprise. This would require an offer from the voluntary sector in the first instance; with further development it is hoped they can work hand in hand. There is a similar desire to develop relationships with Town and Parish Councils, Anne described that local councils have close links with community groups and they had attended the Town and Parish Council Conference last year and would continue to attend targeted meetings.

Cllr Cuthbert asked for further information on the charges for advice. Mark replied that in all instances the NVCS would try to equip a group or project with the skills to carry out what they need to themselves and that charging was not linked with ability to pay but to the level of service.

Cllr Dobson asked how smaller organisations could get the support they require whilst still remaining financially viable. Mark advised that there was still a great deal of work to do to get the message 'out' about the support the NVCS can offer and funding available, stating that the services needs promotion. It was AGREED that the town council could promote e-funding bulletins and upcoming events.

Cllr Mrs J McGee proposed that NVCS information could be promoted at the Council's Annual Town Meeting where Community Groups are specifically invited to come along.

Cllr Reid reported that trust funders had reduced by 20% and some lottery funding had ceased, he asked what affect this was having on the trends within the voluntary sector. Marc replied that there was vibrancy at the grass roots level as bids for smaller levels of funding are more accessible, but that medium-sized voluntary organisations were struggling.

Cllr Mrs Burt thanked Anne and Marc for attending the meeting and enlightening Cllrs on their role and functions.

1516/181 Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting, held on 30th March 2016

It was AGREED to correct the error on page 1 – Tim Smith not Tim Hills.

It was AGREED to receive the minutes as a true record

Proposed: Cllr B Futers

Seconded: Cllr Mrs J McGee

1516/182 Matters Arising

1516/172 Cllr Gill queried the length of time being taken to register title at Edgewell Cemeteries. The Clerk responded that the solicitor had indicated that the Land Registry was difficult to contact, then the case was transferred to another Land Registry. The Clerk advised at this moment in time the

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solicitor had confirmed the council would need to sign a 'sworn' statutory declaration specifically dealing with the loss of the original Title Deeds. The Land Registry may also ask for further information about what has been done in order to locate the missing Title Deeds. The solicitor will prepare the Statutory Declaration and send it to the Town Council for swearing. The Land Registry may choose only to register a 'possessory title' but this can be upgraded after 12 years to an absolute title.

1516/172 Cllr Gill advised that the administrator had ordered 'No Dogs Allowed' stickers for the two main notice-boards. The Clerk advised that a resident had expressed concern about the council's decision not to allow dogs into the cemetery. Cllr Mrs Burt acknowledged that this had come to the Cemetery Sub-Committee to answer. Cllr Futers advised that he had received a further email as he was known to the complainant. It was acknowledged that a formal response had been sent by the clerk.

1516/175 Cllr Mrs Burt advised that Northumberland County Council were grateful to the council for their letter regarding the Eastwood Park/School Planning Application.

The clerk reported that he had received a response from the Planning Training Officer that 'Planning Training' could be delivered in-house. Cllr Mrs Cuthbert said she had attended the sessions provided by NCC and they were very useful. **It was AGREED** that it would be worthwhile to have the training delivered immediately prior to a Planning, Contracts and Works meeting.

1516/183 Report of Planning, Contracts and Works Committee, held on 13th April 2016

Proposed: Cllr Mrs J McGee

Seconded: Cllr G Price

The clerk reported that NCC Neighbourhood Services had responded to the request to repair the play surface at Castle Dene Play Area and their response suggested that they were awaiting the loan of a jackhammer.

With respect to the hedging on the footpath at the south of Moor Road, towards Humbles Wood, the Clerk advised that he had requested this be cut back to allow safer passage for pedestrians.

1516/184 Accounts 2015/16

a) **It was AGREED** to receive the End of Year Bank Reconciliation for 2015-16

Proposed: Cllr G Simpson

Seconded: Cllr E Dobson

b) **It was AGREED** to receive the bank reconciliations 10th March – 31st March 2016 *with the note to amend the error contained in the bank reconciliation that incorrectly states Cllr Mrs C Cuthbert as County Cllr for Mickley, this should read County Cllr Mrs A Dale.*

Proposed: Cllr Mrs C Cuthbert

Seconded: Cllr G Simpson

c) **It was AGREED** to receive the statement of Budget and Expenditure up to 31st March 2016

Proposed: Cllr E Dobson

Seconded: Cllr G Price

1516/185 Accounts 2016/17

a) **It was AGREED** to receive the statement of Budget and Expenditure for 2016/17

Proposed: Cllr Mrs J McGee

Seconded: Cllr Mrs N McGee

b) **It was AGREED** to receive the statement of 'updated balances' and move this into 'Contingency' temporarily

Proposed: Cllr Mrs E Burt

Seconded: Cllr E Dobson

c) **It was AGREED** to endorse those payment in bold and approve further payments received since the March meeting (schedule of accounts was tabled)

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Proposed: Cllr A Gill

Seconded: Cllr Mrs J McGee

1516/186 Town Council Insurance

It was AGREED that further information was required in relation to the Town Council's insurance premium and that this should be included in the agenda for May. Cllr Mrs Burt asked if this was sufficient time to preserve cover. The administrator advised that the Council had 30 days from the date of the schedule to pay the premium, so as long as this was paid immediately after the Annual General Meeting in May, cover would be continuous.

1516/187 BDO: Notice of Annual Review of Accounts, year ending 31st March 2016

It was **AGREED** to receive the Notice of Annual Review of Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2016. Cllr Dobson raised concern about agree to receive something that was not included in the agenda papers. The clerk explained that the Annual Review Statement was received as correspondence at the May Meeting and would be received again when completed.

Cllr Gill asked about an internal audit. Cllr Mrs Burt responded that Cllr Mrs Harris and Cllr McCreedy had carried out a review of audit efficiency in the past, but that the requirement for it was removed and therefore the council took the decision not to create additional work by doing something that was not required. Cllr Mrs Burt concluded that the council could always choose to reinstate an internal audit, providing there were Cllrs who wished to take on the task.

It was AGREED to make the accounts of the council available from 27th June to 11th July 2016.

1516/188 Financial Regulations

It was AGREED to set up a working group to look at the Council's Financial Regulations. Cllr Reid and Price volunteered and Cllr Mrs Burt recommended contacted Cllr Ms Rose as she has a financial background.

1516/189 Tyne River Crossing

Cllr Mrs Burt reported that it was good to hear that Hedley, Broomley and Stocksfield, Ovingham and Ovington all support a new bridge across the Tyne and although Wylam Parish Council were less supportive of a new bridge, they did wish the council luck in their appeal.

Cllr Reid exclaimed that the fact that the bridge remains closed exasperates people's anger and makes this a very topical issue. Cllr Reid suggested something positive is required as the current situation is not meeting the needs of the present community, and plans to build more houses will bring more traffic. Cllr Reid concluded that it would be difficult for those on the front line as they will inevitably defend other schemes as having more priority, however the council should continue to fight for what is right for this community and encourage Gateshead and Northumberland to get together to agree a route.

Cllr Price suggested that the council should not sit on the letters received and they should be sent to Northumberland County Council, including the letter from a resident. Cllr Price also suggested that each supporting parish should be encouraged to execute a petition and the collaboration could continue to move this forward.

Cllr Futers was interested in the resident letter that claimed the Half-Moon Bridge at Wylam could be investigated as a crossing, suggesting this idea could be developed. Cllr Piper agreed, confirming that the Half-Moon was built as a model of the Tyne Bridge which has stood the test of time.

It was also AGREED contact those Parish Councils' who responded, to ask if their letters could be included in the letter to NCC and the Ministry of Transport, copied to MP Guy Opperman.

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Prudhoe Community Partnership - Cllr Mrs Burt reported that, as most members were aware, Rev. Hope would be leaving in May and at the Annual General Meeting on 17th May, a new chairman would be elected. Cllr Mrs Burt reminded Cllrs that there would be a final service for Rev. Hope at Mary Magdalene on Sunday 15th May, from 5pm and a presentation at The Spetchells Centre on Monday 16th May, from 5pm until 7pm.

Cllr Mrs Burt reported that there were on-going negotiations with the Windsor Bakery site and a pre-start meeting would be held soon with ISOS and the builders.

Northumbrian Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) – **It was AGREED** to receive the report. Cllr Mrs J McGee noted the increase in cases concerning Universal Credit and proposed that the council ask someone from CAB to come to a meeting to speak about its implementation. Cllr Mrs J McGee expressed concern that many previously weekly paid recipients would now have to cope with being paid monthly. **It was AGREED** to ask a representative of CAB to attend a future meeting to update the council on the implementation of Universal Credit.

Prudhoe Community Allotment – **It was AGREED** to receive the report

East Tynedale Community Forum – **It was AGREED** to confirm whether attendance at these meetings is limited to one member per council.

1516/191 Annual Town Meeting

It was AGREED to hold the Annual Town Meeting on Wednesday 18th May 2016, opening at 6:15pm, with formal business beginning at 7:00pm.

1516/192 Correspondence and Publications**Correspondence****1. Citizens' Advice Northumberland: operation as single legal entity**

Letter of 6 April from Moira Macfarlane, Chief Executive, Northumberland Citizens Advice Bureau (NCAB). The letter informs councillors that, as from 1 April 2016, DAWN Advice CAB became part of NCAB; completing the merger of the six CAB's operating in the county into a single legal entity, following which the operating name of the organisation has been changed to Citizens' Advice Northumberland.

It was AGREED to receive the information.

2. LOVE Northumberland Awards 2016

Letter dated 11 April from Nicola Wardle, Business & Customer Support Team Leader, Local Services, NCC, with A4 and A5 flyers. The letter launches the Awards for 2016 as "an event which aims to reward achievement of schools, community and voluntary groups through projects that preserve and enhance the environment.

It was AGREED to look into recommending Prudhoe Youth Football Club (PYFC) and Dragontale Theatre Group (DTTG) for awards.

It was later found that neither group were eligible for awards under this scheme as they were not 'environmental', nor were they project based.

3. Prudhoe War Memorial Project: Petition to Town Council

The Council was presented with a petition by residents of the town, accompanied by a statement reading as follows: "It is over two years since the council asked for volunteers to upgrade the Prudhoe Lychgate memorial. We [members of Prudhoe & District Local History Society] started this project to update names missing from the Lychgate ww1. Also soldier's names missing from the ww2 plaque inside the church, and soldier's names missing from other conflicts. We have given all

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the new names we have found of soldiers to the council as requested. From the people we have spoken to, the general feeling is that a new war memorial should be erected in the town. At a meeting, over one half years ago the chairwoman said they would put it to a vote by the people of Prudhoe. Up to now, we have no action on the memorial. If you agree with us, the upgrading group, would you kindly sign this petition.”

The petition as it currently stands contains 479 names, printed with signatures.

Notes: (1) The petition is tabled at this meeting (2) Please also see item 5, War Memorial/Lych Gate, below.

Cllr Reid expressed that it is quite legitimate to honour those who have fought and died for this country, however one could argue that the town already has 3 War Memorials; The Lychgate, The Royal British Legion Plaque on ‘The Glade’, and the house on West Road. Cllr Reid continued that the people at that time chose what they saw as a fitting war memorial, that this was paid for by public subscription so there was a strong feeling in support of it. Cllr Reid concluded that the present war memorials should be enough and should be honoured, rather than wanting something ‘grandier’.

Cllr Simpson argued that this should not be seen as a competition between what we have and what is wished for, adding that if there is a group seeking something different then they should set up a public subscription and the council should let them go ahead and be supportive. Cllr Simpson reflected that in the early 2000’s there was talk of a ‘new’ memorial on the town square and there appeared to be a positive move then.

Cllr Futers agreed with Cllr Simpson and added that the location of the Lychgate was chosen as that was the centre of the town then, however it is not the centre of the town anymore, suggesting that if the group wishes to investigate a new war memorial, they would need to consider where it could be placed.

Cllr Mrs Burt stated that no-one could argue that the Lychgate project has not taken some time and that it would be worthwhile to update the petitioning group on the progress made thus far.

Cllr Mrs J McGee stated that the Lychgate is part of Prudhoe’s history that has been maintained by the Town Council over the years, adding that more and more people recognise this as the ‘place to remember’ on Remembrance Sunday.

It was AGREED to receive the petition and respond suggesting that those members of the ‘upgrading group’ that wish to see a new war memorial should research where this would be erected and how it would be funded and that the Town Council recognize the Lychgate as the town’s war memorial. **It was also AGREED** to update the group on the current situation with respect to the Lychgate/War Memorial Project.

4. Community Action Northumberland

Letter of April 2016 from Andy Dean, Chief Executive of CAN. The letter asks if the Council is willing to receive CAN News in an electronic version only.

It was AGREED to receive the letter and forward electronic news onto Community Groups when received.

5. War Memorial / Lych Gate at St Mary Magdalene Parish Church

An email was received on 21 April 2016 from the Secretary to the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) of the Diocese of Newcastle, Lucy Burfield. This email states “I can confirm that the DAC at their meeting today recommended approval of the addition of names to the lych gate war memorial

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at St Mary's church. As you will be aware, this does not give you permission to proceed with the work but allows you to petition the Chancellor [the lawyer appointed by each diocese to represent it in legal matters] for such permission.

The DAC were pleased with the nature of Peter Ashworth's [the consultant architect] designs but had two comments to make on the overall proposal:

- they strongly felt that the misspellings of names should **not** be corrected as the names are original carving on an historical artefact.
- the families of those whose names are to be added should be contacted to give consent for their relative's names to be added. It was appreciated that this might be difficult in some instances, and suggested that an advert could be placed in the local paper to demonstrate that consultation has been attempted.

Once I am in receipt of the Form 1A I will be able to issue the formal documentation to you to enable you to apply for the faculty permission. It would be useful for me to have Peter Ashworth's final documentation for our records when these become available."

Note: Form 1A is a form from the Diocese requesting information about the history, conservation status etc of the parish church. This has now been completed by Revd. C Hope and returned (27 April) to the DAC Secretary. The formal documentation referred to above will now be supplied by the DAC to the Council.

It was AGREED to receive the information and proceed

6. Northumberland County Council: Joint Area Committee and Parish / Town Council Meetings, 9 to 12 May, 6pm to 9pm

Letter of 21 April, sent on behalf of the Chairs of the four NCC Area Committees. The letter invites councillors to attend the above meetings, which will follow the format of an introduction by the meeting Chair, followed by use of the 'speed dating' format used at past such meetings, allowing each interested parish to meet with NCC officers for a limited time period. The topics covered will be

- Highways (Technical Services)
- Neighbourhood Services
- Street Lighting
- Planning / Section 106 agreements / affordable housing allocations

Cllr C Cuthbert confirmed that she would attend the West Area Meeting on Tuesday 10 May at Hexham Auction Mart. Cllrs were encouraged to contact the office if they would like to attend the Central Area Meeting on Thursday 12 May at Ponteland Memorial Hall.

7. Prudhoe Community Arts Project: Shop Window Competition

Email, received on 25 April, sent on behalf of the project (previously forwarded to councillors), as follows: "...at the last Working Group Events meeting, there was talk of asking if the local businesses would have some sort of display in their windows to mark the Queen's 90th birthday. The idea would be that it would be judged in late May (not yet sure by whom) and the results announced at the Community Fair on 5 June. It was agreed that I would contact the Town Council to see if this looked like a starter and whether any assistance could be offered. Please could you consider whether this could run; I'm sorry that it's rather short notice."

It was AGREED to respond stating that the council felt it too short notice to do anything as well as having missed most of the Queen's Birthday celebrations.

8. Prudhoe Parish: Revd Charles Hope – Invitation to Final Service

Email, received on 25 April, sent on behalf of the Prudhoe Parochial Church Council and congregation (previously forwarded to councillors), with invite to service and tea afterwards, on Sunday May 15th at 5pm.

It was AGREED to respond with those Cllrs wishing to attend.

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Letter, dated 25 April 2016, from Reuben Morgan, Programmes Officer, (Members' Small Schemes), Technical Services, NCC. The letter confirms that NCC have approved the request made by County Councillor Eileen Burt "for a contribution towards the costs of constructing a new access footpath at Highfield Park, Prudhoe...and therefore a contribution of £5,000 has been made towards these costs." The Council is requested to respond accepting the conditions attached to the letter, so that the payment can be made by NCC to the Council. Once the scheme has been completed, the Council is requested to provide a scheme monitoring report.

It was AGREED to receive the letter and to commence the tender process for the work to be carried out.

10. County Council Members' Local Improvement Schemes 2016-17: Contribution Towards Purchase and Installation of Purchase and Installation of New Play Equipment and Refurbishment of Public Areas at Eastwood Park, Prudhoe

Letter, dated 25 April 2016, from Reuben Morgan, Programmes Officer, (Members' Small Schemes), Technical Services, NCC. The letter confirms that NCC have approved the request made by County Councillor Tony Reid "for a contribution purchase and installation of purchase and installation of new play equipment and refurbishment of public areas at Eastwood Park, Prudhoe ...and therefore a contribution of £15,000 has been made towards these costs." The Council is requested to respond accepting the conditions attached to the letter, so that the payment can be made by NCC to the Council. Once the scheme has been completed, the Council is requested to provide a scheme monitoring report.

It was AGREED to receive the letter and to follow-up request for meeting regarding Eastwood Park Play Provision with Sam Talbot and Kathy Keadie.

Tabled Items

1. Society of Local Council Clerks: The Clerk magazine, March 2016
2. Royal Horticultural Society: Grass Roots – The RHS Community Update, Issue 25, Spring 2016
3. Community Action Northumberland: Northumberland CAN, News magazine, Spring Issue, March 2016
4. Northumberland Association of Local Councils: NALC eNews, April 2016, Issue No. 49
5. Ville de Mitry-Mory: L'Evolution magazine, Avril 2016. The accompanying pro-forma letter from the Mayor of Mitry-Mory highlights reports in the magazine on "Art H Battle" (a dance competition), FootStyle Cup (bringing together football, juggling, and acrobatics), information on new traders in Mitry, and (with the arrival of spring) a focus on the management of green spaces..
6. Northumberland County Council: Waste – copies of two recently-issued leaflets (1) How to dispose of hazardous household waste (2) Commercial waste services (note: copies of both are on display and available in the Library at the Spetchells Centre)
7. BDO (External Auditor) – Local Council Spring Briefing

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

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Four contractors were sent tender documents for fencing to the South-West corner of Edgewell Cemetery. Two quotations were returned with more or less identical fencing.

It was AGREED to offer the work to Wearside Fencing, as quoted at £3,563.

Proposed: Cllr A Gill

Seconded: Cllr Mrs J McGee

The administrator left the meeting as the discussion concerned this role. The clerk took the minutes for this item.

1516/194 Personnel Committee

The matter was discussed.

It was AGREED to defer and remit further discussion of all these matters to a future meeting of the Personnel Committee.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs E Burt

Seconded: Cllr A Reid