

PRUDHOE TOWN COUNCIL
DRAFT Minutes of Ordinary Meeting, with Budget,
held in The Spetchells Centre at 6:00pm, 25th January 2017

PRESENT

Cllr Mrs J McGee (Chair), Cllr G Simpson, Cllr B Futers, Cllr A Gill, Cllr G McCreedy, Cllr A Piper, Cllr Ms J Rose, Cllr A Reid, Cllr Mrs E Burt, Cllr Mrs C Cuthbert, Cllr D Couchman, Cllr N McGee, Cllr G Price, County Cllr Mrs A Dale

1617/136 Apologies for Absence

Cllr E Dobson

1617/137 Declarations of Interest Cllr A Reid – member of West Area Planning Committee so will not take part in any discussion relating to planning applications.

1617/138 Youth Service Provision in Prudhoe John Smith (Northumberland County Council, Youth Service Manager) and Sharron Pearson (Northumberland County Council, Senior Manager Specialist Services) in attendance

Cllr Mrs J McGee read 2 items of correspondence; the first was the initial email from Mike Robbins (NCC Estates) that advised the East Centre would be closed and youth service provision moved to The Fuse; the second and most recent email stating that plans had been 'put on hold'.

Cllr Mrs J McGee said that the young people of Prudhoe had been very vocal in their objections and brought this to everyone's attention and as well as thanking them for attending acknowledged that they deserved a pat on the back. Cllr Mrs McGee restated that the email received from Mike Robbins on 4th January 2017 was the first the Town Council had heard about the plans. County Cllr Mrs Anne Dale advised that she also was not aware of the sale; this was echoed by Cllr Reid and Cllr Mrs Burt.

Cllr Mrs J McGee introduced Sharron Pearson, Northumberland County Council, Senior Manager Specialist Services and John Smith, Northumberland County Council, Youth Service Manager.

Sharron outlined that her role within Children's Services includes social work, looked-after children, adolescent services and early intervention and protection. John explained that he had been involved in youth work in and around Prudhoe for 16 years. Both acknowledged that they would be happy to answer any questions about youth service provision but that they would not be able to answer questions relating to estate services and the previously advised sale of the East Centre.

Cllr Mrs J McGee introduced Miss Elizabeth Lambert a young person who had contacted the council to ask if she could speak on behalf of the young people who attend The East. Elizabeth stated that she had been going to the East for many years and felt that those making the decisions have no idea what goes on at The East, how important it is to the young people who go there, and how special the building is to them.

Cllr Mrs J McGee thanked Elizabeth for her contribution.

Cllr McCreedy took the opportunity to thank the young people for their 'great efforts' and for how well they have promoted themselves and the group. He continued praising the efforts of the young people as a wonderful example of what youth work can achieve, emphasising that Youth Workers will have been working with the young people involved for years. Cllr McCreedy asked if the decision to put The East on the market was 'officer-led'?

John Smith (NCC) responded that the first he heard was in November, in a briefing about whether services delivered from The East could be transferred to The Fuse, then in early January they were told to move out as the building was going up for sale. In response to Cllr McCreedy, John stated that he did not know who led the decision but that he was informed it was part of a 'Town Plan'. Cllr Mrs Burt responded that a 'Town Plan' does not exist.

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John continued that he looked at The Fuse as an alternative provision “We simply do as we are told. The Fuse has some positives and some negatives, The East has some positives and some negatives, but we will provide the best service we can and it is Youth Workers that achieve what they do, not bricks and mortar.”

Cllr McCreedy asked if John agreed there should have been consultation; John responded ‘yes’ and offered that they were working on that now. Cllr McCreedy asked if John agreed that the success of the Youth Service in Prudhoe is because The East is in the centre of town. John agreed and stated that if they were given a brand new building in the Centre of town they would be grateful, but that The East is falling apart. Cllr McCreedy alleged that the wrong people were in attendance as they did not make the decision about the sale of The East and transfer of services.

Cllr Mrs Burt stated that she received the email about the sale of the building at the same time as the town council and this was the first knowledge she had of the plans. Cllr Mrs Burt reported that the responses to her immediate enquiries were that it was a good idea and people were happy to move. Cllr Mrs Burt asked the rhetorical question “What is the best solution for the Youth Service?” Cllr Mrs Burt asserted that Northumberland County Council has taken over The Fuse and they need to make it pay by moving as many services as possible to it; that the idea to move the youth service was good, but the delivery and consultation was not. Cllr Mrs Burt concluded that there needed to be consultation with the young people of Prudhoe about the service and if the result was that the Youth Service should continue in The East, money would be required to maintain the building.

Cllr Mrs J McGee criticised the stance taken “everyone is saying that it was someone else’s decision”. Cllr Mrs McGee added that the lack of consultation was ‘abominable’, especially given the substantial grant and support the council have given the youth service over many years. Cllr Mrs McGee stated “Something needs to be taken forward and we need to involve the young people.”

Cllr Piper said “The powers to be at Northumberland County Council have failed when deciding to transfer the facilities to The Fuse; the young people deserve an apology.”

Cllr Futers said “We are looking for the answer and we want to get answers, the people here today haven’t got the answers.” Cllr Futers reiterated that the decision has only been ‘placed on hold’ and that it is based on assets not services. Cllr Futers argued that at this moment no-one is prepared to say why and stand up and ‘take the flack afterwards’, adding “I went to The East in the 1970’s, it was dropping to bits then but has stood the test of time.”

Cllr Simpson spoke of the future, stating “the baton should be taken and we should move forward, we have a youth forum and a civic forum and we should get on with it.” Cllr Simpson cautioned that service provision should be the key consideration when looking forward.

County Cllr Mrs Dale thanked the young people in attendance and especially those who created the Facebook campaign; stating that Facebook was how she heard about the decision. Cllr Mrs Dale said that it was very sad that no-one had engaged with the young people to ask what they would like and that they had not considered the ‘broader picture’. Cllr Mrs Dale went on to say that if The East is eating up money then there needs to be a way to run the service more cheaply, allowing investment in the people. Cllr Mrs Dale concluded that the town needed to move forward and look at opportunities; a ‘big picture approach’.

Cllr Price agreed that the handling of this decision had been completely wrong but purported that he felt the decision had been made and would be executed, but over a longer period of time. Cllr Price stated “The only way to bely the impact is to come up with some thoughts about what we can do; a town group decision process, not bottom line values, but society values.”

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John Smith responded to comments thus far from a Youth Service perspective. John described cuts that have resulted in 23% of the budget being lost, indicating that Prudhoe is the only town that has not been impacted upon because there is a great need and the youth workers in Prudhoe get very positive outcomes. John corrected the proposition by Cllr Mrs Dale that the cost of maintaining the building could be reduced to spend on people, John assured the meeting that repairs have always been paid for with external funding not core service funding, which is spent directly on the service for the young people. John reported that youth workers and young people have worked hard to raise money for the building, but that it has stopped for now. John concluding by saying "We cannot continue to raise the money that is needed to keep it going; if The East or a new centre is needed, everyone needs to think about how that will be funded. We haven't got a bottomless pit."

Cllr Mrs J McGee asked if it was true that there are funding streams that NCC cannot apply for. John responded that NCC work very closely with the voluntary sector and have an experienced person who is responsible for bringing money into the service. John added that the Youth Service will now be responsible for the rent and rates of the now vacant building that housed Adult Learning Services, as they are no longer there.

Cllr Reid spoke of his commitment to the funding of the Youth Service, with £5,000 support from his members allowance over the past 2 years. Cllr Reid wished it to be placed on record that funding for the building could not carry on; that the building is dropping to bits and has been haemorrhaging money for some time. Cllr Reid spoke about the difficulties faced that he could see no way out of; he advised there is a covenant on the land and a house behind, therefore it would be difficult to develop, stating that interested developers would also need to buy out the house behind The East which is part of the site. Cllr Reid summarised that these factors would make it difficult to sell, likening it to the Kingdom Hall that has been up for sale for some time, the result would be that the building would stand empty and would be a blot on the landscape. Cllr Reid believed it would also be impossible to attract the kind of money needed to improve the building, but also felt that if West Northumberland Youth Service were to move out, the building would deteriorate and again become a blot on the landscape. Cllr Reid confessed to being a layman but he could not foresee any easy way out.

On the matter of how the information was communicated, Cllr Reid stated that although he sits on the Capital Works Programme Working Group he did not know about the sale and was particularly pleased that the leader put a block on it, although acknowledged that Grant Davey may not appreciate the wider picture. Cllr Reid admitted that he may not visit The East as often as he should, but that he did visit 2 weeks ago and there were only 2 people in there, that a boxing ring is permanently set up for use once or twice a week and the garage is only open for 6 hours/week. Cllr Reid described the harsh reality of a diminished service as funds are not available and the likelihood of NCC continuing to provide the service in the future as remote. Cllr Reid proposed that Prudhoe Town Council, Prudhoe Youth Charity Shop and NCC find a way forward together.

Cllr Gill suggested that buildings are available at Oakland's House, also in the centre of town. Cllr Gill added that he thought it diabolical that staff were gagged and stopped from talking to and supporting the young people.

Miss Elizabeth Lambert repeated that it is The East building that means so much to the young people, and they really want to get that message across.

Cllr Mrs Cuthbert gave thanks to the young people and all those providing the service from The East, adding that each time she had visited she was impressed how they managed to deliver the service with the building in the condition it was.

Cllr Futers repeated that the building was not fit for purpose in the 1960's but that the service continued and young people gathered every evening. Cllr Futers raised concern that presently the

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service was not available every night and that if the building is there it should be used more regularly on an evening.

Cllr McCreedy agreed that The East has always been considered an 'old building' but the young people attending do not complain about it. Cllr McCreedy took the opportunity to express disappointment that having responded to the young campaigners that he would support them; MP Guy Opperman sent someone else to meet them and has not since made any public comment.

Cllr Price expressed that a lot of negativity was coming through when what was required was a proper business plan that addresses, in the first instance, what the building needs. Cllr Price reminded Cllrs what Elizabeth had said; that the young people value the building; that it is not just bricks and mortar. Cllr Price suggested the council should look for positive factors to move forward with.

Cllr Mrs Cuthbert asked if there was a record of how much money had been spent on the building since 1964. John Smith repeated that outside sources have funded all maintenance and repairs.

Cllr Mrs Dale stated that cuts have been made elsewhere to youth service provision and although Prudhoe has been saved previously, there will be more cuts to come. Cllr Mrs Dale said "We want the service to remain and to extend it, but not spend the money on the building." Cllr Mrs Dale went on to describe that there are other ways of delivering the service, a new capital asset perhaps, and revenue costs spent on operational hours. Cllr Mrs Dale concluded that a working group should be set up to come up with a long-term plan.

John Smith reiterated again that the budget is not spent on the building but on the young people and that all money raised to spend on the building is external. John added that there is no 'core service' budget within Adolescent Services so there are insufficient funds to run sessions every night. Cllr McCreedy interjected that the Prudhoe Youth Charity Shop has pledged to support a further 2 evening sessions at The East if Youth Workers can be recruited.

Cllr Piper asked for clarification as to how The East Centre can be described as costing NCC money, 'haemorrhaging money' as described by Cllr Reid, if it is all raised through external sources.

Cllr Mrs J McGee asked how current services provided by the Youth Service at The East could be provided at The Fuse. John replied that they would have to change; the service would have to be adapted and re-focused but added again that youth work is about youth workers and that is precisely why money is invested in people not buildings.

Cllr Mrs McGee asked if conflict with other users was a concern as The Fuse is a great facility and a community building used by others, including a cinema. John responded that this would be a concern, but that throughout Northumberland, the Youth Service provide a service where they are taking up a space and sharing that space with other users and that if the decision was that the service had to be provided from The Fuse, they would have come up with a plan to make it work, as they do elsewhere.

Cllr Mrs McGee thanked John Smith and Sharron Pearson for attending and as well as thanking the young people, assured them that this was not the end. Cllr Mrs J McGee proposed that the Council continue to look for answers to questions about the proposed sale of the building and how this decision came about, as well as talking about the future of Youth Service provision in Prudhoe.
 Proposed: Cllr Mrs J McGee Seconded: Cllr G Simpson

Cllr Mrs McGee concluded that she hoped the youth service would be provided in its current location but this would have to be discussed with NCC.

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1617/139 Planning Matters

Prudhoe West Ward — Planning Ref. 16/04574/FUL

Proposal: Proposed demolition of garages and erection of 4 no. dwellings with associated parking and landscaping

Location: Land west of 21 Linnheads, High Shaw, Prudhoe, Northumberland

Applicant: Mr Vince Walsh

Response date: 1 February 2017

Cllr Ms Rose indicated that local residents are very strong in their objections with respect to the parking and congestion, asserting that there is no room for more cars. Cllr Ms Rose presented photographs taken by residents of many cars already parked on the road and where spaces are 'deemed' to be being created.

Cllr Mrs Burt advised that she has requested that the planning decision is not 'officer-led' and that she has requested to speak at the planning committee.

Cllr Rose proposed that the council OBJECT to the plan to demolish the garages in order to erect 4 houses on the grounds that the area is already congested with parked vehicles and this would exasperate the problem, also there would be a loss of green space where alternative parking provision is planned.

Resident, Mr Richard Stokoe, apologised for arriving late and added to the council's objection that residents felt strongly that ISOS have not conducted themselves in a professional manner, that consultation was poor and that there was a delay to documents being available on the planning portal, therefore the length of time people had to oppose the development was reduced.

Mr Stokoe went on to say that residents have communicated directly with ISOS and have had no response and he could not emphasise enough that the area should be visited during the evening to assess the situation correctly.

It was AGREED to respond Objecting to the application on the following grounds:

The development would lead to a further increase in vehicle traffic on the High Shaw estate, when there was already an excessive level of traffic there (demonstrated by photographic evidence supplied by residents). The recorded traffic levels gave rise to major safety concerns, because they were far greater than the designed capacity of the roadways and parking provision on the estate; Much of the 'additional parking provision' would be taken up by the vehicles that would be connected with the residents of the properties which were the subject of the application;

The current congested state of the roadways outside working hours would be worsened with yet further impact on the ability of emergency vehicles to access the estate at these times;

The effect of the proposed development would be to continue the erosion of amenity space in the area, space which would otherwise be available (for instance) for children to play in / on.

Proposed: Cllr Ms J Rose Seconded: Cllr Mrs N McGee

1617/140 Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting, held on 14th December 2016

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

Proposed: Cllr Mrs J McGee

Seconded: Cllr G Simpson

1617/141 Matters arising

1617/132 Castlefields Play Area; When asked if a meeting had been arranged with the developer and NCC regarding the play area, the Clerk advised that Bellway had responded and advised that Persimmons were also involved; therefore both developers would be required to attend.

1617/142 Report of the Planning, Contracts and Works Committee Meeting, held on 11th January 2017

It was AGREED to receive the report.

Proposed: Cllr G McCreedy

Seconded: Cllr E Burt

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The clerk advised that the 3 play providers engaged in design had been requested to submit tenders for the work at West Mickley Play Area.

The clerk advised that a report of the trees on Kepwell Road was awaited.

1617/143 Accounts

a) Monthly Bank Reconciliations - 10th December 2016 – 9th January 2017

It was AGREED to receive the information

Proposed: Cllr Mrs E Burt

Seconded: Cllr G Simpson

b) Statement of Budget and Expenditure from 1st April 2016 – 9th January 2017

It was AGREED to receive the statement

Proposed: Cllr Mrs E Burt

Seconded: Cllr G Simpson

Cllr Mrs Burt stated that there was a need to keep a closer eye on spending, as a number of headings were over-spent. The administrator responded that the reason for over-spending had been explained the previous month, and in some cases money had been moved from contingency.

Cllr Mrs Cuthbert questioned why there was over-spending on Office Rental and Rates. The administrator explained that in April 2017 the 50% discount presently received by the council for Office Accommodation will end and although this is anticipated in next years' budget, the invoice for the 1st quarter of 2017/18 will be received in March and therefore paid in this financial year, this was not accounted for.

c) Authorisation of accounts to be paid and endorsement of accounts already paid

It was AGREED to authorise the payment of accounts received since the December meeting as tabled in the Payments Schedule, **it was also AGREED** to endorse those accounts already paid.

Proposed: Cllr E Burt

Seconded: Cllr G Simpson

1617/144 Eastwood Park

It was AGREED to receive the report of the meeting held on held on 10th January 2017.

Cllr Mrs J McGee reported a very good meeting and emphasised how involved youngsters were in the consultation. Cllr Mrs McGee said the young people were very surprised at the cost of play equipment and Cllr Price added that some got out their calculators. Cllr Price also noted that the ideas of the young people were in keeping with the proposals sought by Sam Talbot (NCC).

Cllr Mrs McGee advised that there is £95,000 committed to the project for the redevelopment the play areas and although play surfacing and fencing was not included in the consultation, this would have to be carried out. The 2nd stage of the project would involve the rest of the park, including the bowls pavilion and main pavilion; money would need to be sourced for this.

Cllr Simpson stated that the scheme needed to include a way to keep dogs from the sports pitches and this should be factored into the design.

1617/145 Eastwood Park and Riding Dene Play Areas

Cllr Mrs J McGee reported that a favourable response had been received from Northumberland County Council with respect to the transfer of Eastwood Park and Riding Dene Play Areas. Cllr Mrs McGee detailed that County Cllr Mrs Dale was surprised not to have been informed of this request and she had an interest in Riding Dene at Mickley.

It was discussed that when the transfer of play areas was originally discussed in 2011, that both Riding Dene and Eastwood Park were included in discussion, but that a later change in administration removed them as part of a larger playing fields asset.

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Cllr Simpson stated that the direction of travel is known and it is right that the town council should look to take on these assets, adding that he saw no sense in passing revenue funding over to NCC.

Cllr Reid stated that this would not be without problems as he frequently heard complaints about football pitches at Riding Dene. Cllr Reid was reminded that the transfer involved only the play areas, not the playing fields.

It was AGREED to write to Northumberland County Council to request that Eastwood Park Play Area and Riding Dene Play Area are transferred to the Town Council.

Proposed: Cllr J McGee

Seconded: Cllr G Simpson

1617/146 Road-End Toilets

Cllr Mrs J McGee reminded that meeting that the agenda item did not concern the transfer of the toilets to the town council, simply to agree a £5,000 contribution towards the improvement of the toilets.

Cllr Mrs Burt asserted that she felt this was good money after bad and that she was not confident that NCC would maintain the toilets to the standard expected by the council. Cllr Mrs Burt stated that this was a short-term solution to a long-term problem and the council should seriously consider who should own them.

Cllr Futers supported Cllr Mrs Burt's assertion that the council should think about taking on the toilets and added that there could be an income stream if the toilets were brought up to standard, but that £5,000 was not a lot of money.

Cllr Gill asked who would maintain the toilets if the town council was responsible for them, stating that if this was a contract with NCC he could see no difference. Cllr Mrs Burt responded that if this was a town council contract it would go out to tender.

Cllr McCreedy asked for clarification that the town council would be taking over the asset and not simply the responsibility. It was AGREED this was a longer term solution.

Cllr Mrs Cuthbert asked what investment NCC was making. Cllr Mrs J McGee confirmed that the improvements were expected to cost £15,000 and that NCC were investing £10,000.

It was AGREED (in principle) to set aside £5,000 in the 2017/18 Budget to invest in improvements to the Road-Ends toilets and to look into a future asset transfer.

Proposed: Cllr E Burt

Seconded: Cllr G Simpson

1617/147 Defibrillator for Prudhoe

Cllr Futers described an incident in Prudhoe on New Years' Eve where the use of a defibrillator would have been valuable and potentially could have saved a life. Cllr Futers proposed that the council consider purchasing 2 public access defibrillators; 1 in 2017/18 and another in 2018/19. Cllr Futers added that the Hexham Courant had recently published information of where defibrillators are available and that there were none listed in Prudhoe.

Cllr Mrs Burt said she supported what Cllr Futers said but that she had paid for a defibrillator to be installed at Prudhoe Riverside, as this was necessary in order to progress the Park Run. Although she was assured that the ambulance service was aware of the location, she acknowledged that it is not recommended to travel more than 500 metres to gain access to one, in the case of an emergency.

Cllr Mrs Cuthbert supported the proposal and was surprised there was not one in the town already. Cllr Gill added that the Police Station could be considered a good location as they may be first to respond.

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Cllr Mrs McGee advised that in any event, you must call the ambulance service and they give you an access code. Cllr Mrs McGee stated that this could be added as an agenda item to a future meeting as it has not been considered previously in the budget and would affect the precept.

Cllr Futers replied that the budget had not yet been agreed and therefore no precept had been set. Cllr Mrs Cuthbert asked what the cost was likely to be. The administrator advised that the defibrillators endorsed by the Stephen Carey Fund cost £2,000. Cllr Mrs Burt stated the defibrillator installed at the Riverside had cost £3,500 but that included the case and installation.

Cllr Futers re-stated his proposal to include the cost of a defibrillator in the 2017/18 Budget. **It was AGREED** (A vote was taken with 13 in favour).

Proposed: Cllr B Futers

Seconded: Cllr A Gill

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 **Grant Aid Applications and Edgewell Cemetery quotations**, in accordance with Section 68 of the Council's Standing Orders:-

1617/148 Grant Aid Applications 2017/18 The following Grant Aid awards were approved:

1st Prudhoe Guides	£300
1st Prudhoe Scouts	£1,000
Carers Northumberland	£500
Community Crafters	£100
Dragon Tale Theatre Group	£600
Jack & Jill Pre-school Nursery	£238
Mickley Aged Peoples Treat	£250
Mickley Methodist Church	£0
National Autistic Society - Hexham Branch	£200
Northumberland Credit Union Limited, Prudhoe	£450
Prudhoe (PGA) Town Show	£750
Prudhoe Aged People's Treat	£750
Prudhoe Air Training Corps	£250
Prudhoe and District Local History Society	£1000
Prudhoe and District U3A	£200
Prudhoe Army Cadet Force	£250
Prudhoe Castle Bowling Club	£200
Prudhoe Community Allotment	£250

Prudhoe Community Band	£750
Prudhoe Community Choir	£200
Prudhoe Community Events Support Group	£750
Prudhoe East Centre Motor Project	£750
Prudhoe Gleemen	£200
Prudhoe Ground Force	£50
Prudhoe Leisure Group	£500
Prudhoe Over 50s Forum	£250
Prudhoe Pathforce	£150
Prudhoe Town Twinning Association	£400
Prudhoe Town Women Football Club	£750
Prudhoe Walled Garden Project	£1000
Prudhoe Youth Football Club	£1000
Radio Prudhoe	£250
Spetchells Conservation Group	£200
Sport Tynedale	£250
Tyne Valley Canoe Club	£750
Tynedale Hospice at Home	£1000
Violet Shock Theatre Company	£500

1617/149 Edgewell Cemetery

a) **It was AGREED to APPROVE** the award of the contract to supply and erect "Diamex" square top fencing panels fixed to 102x44mm RSJ posts set in concrete at 2.750mtr centres (all steel work galvanised and polyester powder coated RAL6002 green) @ 1.8m x 50m to:

D and M Fencing, Blyth, Northumberland

At a NET Cost of £4,413.50

Proposed: Cllr A Gill
 (Cllr Mrs E Burt abstained)

Seconded: Cllr Mrs J McGee

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- b) It was **AGREED to APPROVE** the award of the contract for road works at Edgewell Cemetery; Car Park – plane off high spots & dispose of arisings – sweep area and apply tack coat – supply and lay close graded surface course (@128 sq. Metres); Roadways – sweep clean & dispose of arisings – regulate corners with dense binder course – supply and lay close graded surface course (@ 660 sq. Metres) Kerbing – supply and install *round-topped* pin kerbs with concrete foundations and haunchings (@437 linear metres @£18.50 / linear metre) to:

Debmat Surfacing Limited, Ryton, Tyne & Wear

At a NET Cost of £17,768.50

Proposed: Cllr A Gill

Seconded: Cllr Mrs C Cuthbert

Public session resumes

1617/150 Budget 2017/18

- a) to receive and consider the draft budget for 2017/18 and approve actual budget allocations, (including the use of section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 to pay for the TV Licence Grant Scheme)

Consideration was given to the draft budget presented.

Cllr Futers asked where the defibrillator cost should be reflected in the budget. Cllr Reid responded that this would be an asset so should come from the Asset Reserve Fund (ARF) or the Contingency Budget. The administrator advised that the Contingency Budget was for unexpected expense, not planned spending and that the ARF is held separate to the budget and usually is not expected to be drawn on in that year. The administrator recommended that the defibrillator could be added to the 'Environmental Improvements' heading. Cllr Futers described that he was not concerned where it was reflected, only that it was included somewhere.

The clerk suggested that if the council did not wish to make a financial impact on the draft budget presented, that it could include the cost of a defibrillator in environmental improvements as a known scheme in place of the unknown scheme that was 'Oakland's Improvements'; suggesting that if a scheme came later in the year, the money could be moved from contingency.

Following discussion it was **AGREED** to commit £3,000 in Environmental Improvements for the purchase and installation of a public use defibrillator, alongside the £5,000 for Road-Ends toilets.

The Budget was **AGREED** as follows:

	2017/18
MANAGEMENT & SUPPORT	
Gross Salary - Executive Officer	£37,306
Employers NI & Pension for EO	£7,384
Gross Salary - Administrative Officer	£25,951
Employers NI & Pension AO	£4,909
Chairman's Allowance	£1,000
Office rental and rates (PCP)	£10,680
Office Sundries and Stationery	£3,500
Meeting Hire (PCP)	£2,000
Audit Fee	£1,500
Insurance PTC	£4,000
Subscription	£1,700
Travel - councillors & staff	£250
Professional Expenses	£4,000

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RECREATION & LEISURE SERVICES	
Prudhoe in Bloom	£1,400
Civic Events	£8,000
Play Areas	£27,000
Allotments General	£3,000
Highfield Park	£8,566
The GLADE (power supply)	£300
Christmas Lights (SLA)	£8,000
Eastwood Park Play Area	£30,000
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	
Formal Bedding, Planters & Hanging Baskets	£37,879
Roundabouts & Shrubbery	£4,830
Grass cutting	£6,570
Kepwell	£500
Environmental Improvements	£8,000
Bus Shelters	£2,500
Seats	£2,000
Litter Bins	£1,000
CEMETERIES	
Cemetery Contractor (SLA)	£11,000
Cemetery Repairs & Development	£3,000
GRANTS & SUBSIDIES	
Grant Aid	£16,156
Prudhoe Community Partnership	£5,500
CAB	£10,600
Youth Service	£20,000
Civic & Community Forum	£1,000
TV Licence Scheme	£12,000
OTHER SERVICES	
Remembrance (Poppy Wreath)	£360
War Memorial (Lych Gate)	£15,000
Town Council Development	£4,500
Contingency	£15,000
GRAND TOTAL	£367,842

- b) It was **AGREED** to hold **£30,000 in the Asset Reserve Fund**. In 2016/17 the ARF was valued at £55,000; £30,000 has been removed to the Eastwood Park heading for the development of Play Areas and a further £5,000 added as a contingency for the Lychgate War Memorial project.
- c) It was **AGREED** that **projected balances of £63,272** would be used to off-set the Precept, resulting in a **Precept Demand of £304,570**.

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1617/151 Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership (TVCRP)

It was AGREED to endorse the decision that Prudhoe Town Council take up full membership of the Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership.

Cllr Price noted that having attended the management meeting the previous week, he expected the cost of membership to be no more than £10.

It was AGREED to move a motion to **suspend Standing Orders** to allow the meeting to advance by 30 minutes in order that all business is concluded.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs J McGee

Seconded: Cllr A Reid

1617/152 Northumbria Police

It was AGREED to receive the report of the meeting held on 18th January 2017.

Cllrs Futers, McCreedy and Cllr Mrs Cuthbert reported a very positive meeting and a real interest in engagement.

Cllr Gill reported that an incident reported to the police by a resident and later followed up by him had not been handled well. The resident, who is elderly, was told there would be a patrol and a visit on Friday, this had not happened. Cllr Gill described that the situation has worsened and that the elderly resident is afraid, the Co-op have called the police twice since, and a complainant's daughter has been verbally abused on the way home from school.

Cllr Mrs Burt said that the matter should be escalated to the West Northumberland Safety Hub.

1718/153 Report from outside bodies

Prudhoe Community Partnership (PCP) – Cllr Futers asked why the shops were still not open. Cllr Mrs Burt responded that PCP was experiencing difficulty having a way-leave signed by the Co-op in Manchester; as a result there was no electricity supply.

Prudhoe Pathforce – **It was AGREED** to receive the report of the meeting held in November.

1718/154 Correspondence and Tabled Items

Correspondence

1. Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership: Annual General Meeting

Agenda and Notice of AGM, 19 January 2017, plus Chairman's report.

RECEIVE

2. Environment Agency: River Tyne Flood Recovery Map

Email of 20 December 2016, with map, update on work around Prudhoe and Ovingham.

Further reports are expected to be issued to complement the map. **RECEIVE and add to future agenda.**

3. North-East Regional Employers' Organisation (NEREO): Membership

Letter of 20 December 2016 advising that the Members of NEREO have agreed to admit the Council to the NEREO Advisory Service; the first year's cost of membership (£295) is included in the fee for the work in respect of officer job evaluations, to be invoiced once complete.

RECEIVE

4. Northumberland County Council: East Centre

Email of 4 January 2017 from NCC Estates Department, advising that the services located in the East Centre were to be re-located to the Fuse Media Centre. The letter advised that the move would "not affect the services being provided to the people of Prudhoe." A subsequent email from the Estates Department, NCC, received on 25 January, notes "the sale process has been put on hold so far as we are concerned."

RECEIVE (*already discussed in detail*)

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5. Northumberland Association of Local Councils (NALC): Elections 2017

Four documents received (10 January) from NALC in respect of the 2017 local council elections covering:

- Elections and Purdah for Parish Town and Community Councils
- Timetable for Parish, Town and Community Council Elections, 4 May 2017
- A Parish Council with no or too few members: Emergency Procedure 2017
- All-out County and Parish Council elections, 4 May 2017 (supplementary information)

RECEIVE, agreed to forward to Cllrs, place on Website and arrange public meeting.

6. Resident enquiry: Cottier Grange Development – Construction Traffic on Moor Road

Approach from local resident in December 2016, forwarded by local Member of Parliament's team (5 January), regarding report in Hexham Courant (9 December) which gave the impression that the Town Council had agreed that construction traffic could use Moor Road to access the development site. The letter also refers to the unsuitability of the road for heavy traffic, danger to pedestrians, the need for hedges to be cut, and the condition of the footpath. The Council's letter to the Hexham Courant, correcting the misunderstanding, has been published in the latest issue of the paper, and a response has been sent to the resident setting out the actual role of the Council. The matter has also been shared with the ward county councillor (Cllr Reid). **RECEIVE**

7. Northumberland County Council: Unauthorised Obstructions on the Highway

Letter of 10 January from Ruth Bendell, Infrastructure Manager, NCC, with two accompanying documents. These are:

- 2016 Guidance for Placing and Enforcing Unauthorised Obstructions on the Highway. "This guidance "[sets out the assessment methodology used] to determine whether unauthorised obstructions present a danger or potential danger to highway users." The report notes that "unauthorised obstructions can include anything that is placed within the highway and is not authorised through the Highways Act, for example A boards, pavement cafes, goods for sale."
- Report to the NCC Local Services (Urban Rural) Cabinet Advisory Group, "[providing] Members feedback regarding the recent consultation that has been carried out regarding draft guidance for managing unauthorised obstructions within the highway." **RECEIVE, agreed to add to February Ordinary Meeting**

7. Gentoo Homes: Cottier Grange Development - Temporary Stopping-up of Public Right of Way

Email of 16 January from Brendon Ferguson, Acting Head of Development, Gentoo Homes. The email explains why a stopping-up order has been sought from NCC, and granted in respect of the public right of way crossing the Cottier Grange site from east to west, to permit major preparatory infrastructure works (alteration to the high voltage electricity main, and installation of main site outfall sewer). The order has been requested to run from 30 January to 30 June, though it is hoped the work will be finished earlier. The email refers to improved access to the Stanley Burn via a new set of steps, and to the possibility of further improvements to the footpath running along the burn. **RECEIVE and check improvements**

8. Gentoo Homes: Cottier Grange Development – Interference with Development Works

Email of 20 January from Brendon Ferguson, Acting Head of Development, Gentoo Homes raising concern regarding break-ins at the development site, with a request to hear the Council's views as to how best to address the reported issues. The email concludes by asking if a joint article in the Hexham Courant or other social media, perhaps in conjunction with the police, would help get the safety message across. **RECEIVE and respond that site security is not the council's responsibility**

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9. Northumberland County Council: Highfield Lane - Traffic Consultation

Emailed letter of 24 January from Dan Fraser, Programmes Officer (Highway Safety) NCC, launching a fresh consultation in respect of the possible introduction of parking restrictions to Highfield Lane. The email notes that “the responses we received [to the previous consultation] showed that the majority of consultees who responded agreed that there was a problem that needed to be resolved, but didn’t think that the proposed plan was the best solution.” The latest proposals are aimed at bringing about the following:

- “Allow[ing] parking around the school, which will alleviate pressure on surrounding residential estates, as well as reducing traffic speeds”
- “The introduction of passing places will improve traffic flow and road safety”
- ‘No Loading’ restrictions “will also restrict vehicles from stopping on the single yellow line during the school drop off and pick up periods preventing dangerous and inconsiderate parking.”

RECEIVE and agreed to add to February Planning, Contract and Works agenda

Tabled Items

1. Ville de Mitry-Mory: L’Evolution magazine, Janvier 2017
2. The Wylam Globe: Newsletter of Wylam Parish Council, Issue 123, Winter 2016
3. National Association of Memorial Masons: NAMM News, October / November 2016
4. Clerks & Councils Direct magazine, Issue 109, January 2017
5. Society of Local Council Clerks, The Clerk magazine, Vol.48, No.1, January 2017
6. Northumberland County Council: Archaeology in Northumberland, Volume 22

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:-

1718/135 Confidential Minutes of Ordinary Meeting, held on 14th December 2016

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

Proposed: Cllr J McGee

Seconded: Cllr A Gill

1718/136 Human Resources Committee

In the absence of the Human Resources Committee Chair; Cllr Dobson, Cllr Reid updated the meeting in respect of job evaluations being carried out.

Cllr Reid reported that following 2 meetings in January and a further meeting scheduled for 9th February, it was expected that a report would be received at the February Ordinary Meeting and the matter could be brought to a close; the council were also made aware of additional costs for independent clerking.

Cllr Mrs J McGee thanked the HR Committee and the staff for the time and effort put into the evaluation.