

PRUDHOE TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of Ordinary Meeting,
held in The Spetchells Centre at 7:00pm, 26th July 2017

PRESENT

Cllr Gerry Price (Chair), Cllr Andy Gill, Cllr George McCreedy, Cllr Carol Stephenson, Cllr Eileen Burt, Cllr Duncan Couchman, Cllr Ignasious Varghese, Cllr Angie Scott, Cllr Chris Cuthbert, Cllr Glenn Simpson, Cllr Jennifer McGee

County Cllr Gordon Stewart County Cllr Ken Stow County Cllr Anne Dale

1718/041 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Yvonne Ritchie, Cllr Russ Greig, Cllr Tracy Gilmore, Cllr Graham Robinson

1718/042 Declarations of Interest None**1718/043 DRAFT Minutes of Ordinary Meeting, held on 28th June 2017**

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

Proposed: Cllr Andy Gill

Seconded: Cllr Eileen Burt

1718/044 Matters Arising*1718/027 Children's North East*

An artist has been appointed to work with the young people and Amanda Gould on the entrance to The Spetchells Centre. Cllr Eileen Burt elaborated that when the library is open it is on the wall behind the shutter.

1718/030 County Cllrs Reports

The Town Council has not received a report of the Multi-Agency Meetings held regarding Youth Disorder. Cllr Gerry Price explained that this was police-led and maybe a report is not due.

Moira MacFarlane has provided a quarterly report from Northumbria CAB, as usual, and has asked if the Council can meet with the Trustee Board in early August, this item is on the agenda.

1718/033 Annual Return

The Annual Return was posted on 14th July and the notice for public inspection of accounts remains in place until 11th August.

1718/035 Castlefields Toddler Play Area

This item is on the agenda.

1718/036 Prudhoe East Youth Centre

This item is on the agenda.

1718/037 Road-Ends Toilets

This item is on the agenda. The work to refurbish the toilets started on 10th July and is on schedule to be completed for the beginning of August. Tony Bradley (Essity) has arranged an opening event which is scheduled to take place on Thursday 10th or Friday 11th August (tbc). It is expected that MP Guy Opperman will attend along with representatives of Essity and trade, all Councillors and County Cllrs will be invited along with NCC Team involved. Tony Bradley envisages a 'street food' catering vehicle so that members of the public will be invited and encouraged to join in.

A request for the transfer of the toilets to PTC has been sent and acknowledged but a response has not been received as yet. Cllr Gerry Price confirmed this was in abeyance. Cllr Jennifer McGee asked if the request was sent regarding Eastwood Park. The administrator confirmed that they were sent together but neither request had been answered.

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1718/040 *Human Resources Committee*

The Employee Code of Conduct and Performance Development Process need to be sent to staff with a covering letter outlining that from *(date to be inserted)* they will be considered part of the terms and conditions of employment. These should be signed, dated and held on file, this has not been fulfilled yet.

With respect to temporary grade for acting-up and backdated salary for acting-up, this has been carried out.

Monica Anderton has been engaged to clerk any Human Resource Committee Meetings, no other Clerking support has been agreed.

1718/045 **County Councillor Reports**

County Cllr Ken Stow commented that with regards to garages and West Wylam Shopping Centre this was an on-going issue with the landowner. Cllr Stow explained that NCC had collected dumped carpets as ISOS (now Karbon Homes) had not responded.

Cllr Stow advised that they were having weekly discussions with Gentoo and Highways Planners regarding Moor Road.

With respect Highways issues, Cllr Stow advised that details and a plan would be brought forward for West Road (Prudhoe West Academy) in regards a 20mph speed limit, additionally, Station Bank was being monitored for speed, just before the turning into Castle Road. The ongoing issue with regards to traffic issues on Highfield Lane, Cllr Stow detailed that temporary road markings will be put in place and will be monitored for 6 months.

Cllr Stow announced that the Local Area Meeting had agreed the Community Chest and details were now available online.

With regard to Cllr Gill's concern over speed bumps at Cheviot View being excessive, County Cllr Gordon Stewart has these inspected and they are legal.

The proprietor of Gilmore Estates has been supplied with sandbags in view of flooding and a camera has been put in the drain.

Cllr Eileen Burt discussed that in May the Town Council asked for assurances about the Low Prudhoe Development with respect to Arch, and again sought assurances that the Multi-Use Development would still go ahead.

Cllr Stow advised that he had met with the Portfolio Holder for Developer and Regeneration and was pretty certain that the scheme will still go ahead. Cllr Stow elaborated that those projects that have a good business case are not under threat but with respect to the Low Prudhoe development the issue was finding tenants.

Cllr Jennifer McGee declared the statement she posted on Facebook with respect to the disappointment she felt that Eastwood Park was not progressed on time, adding that Cllr Russ Greig had done the same. Cllr Jennifer McGee stated that both Prudhoe County Cllrs had information available regarding the Eastwood Park development before and should have made it their priority as there was a lot of work put into getting it completed prior to the summer holidays.

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County Cllr Gordon Stewart responded that he was also extremely disappointed with the delay, adding that the park had been neglected for many years and he was pleased that finally NCC and PTC were working together to put that right. Cllr Stewart added that he had also asked for everyone to be kept up-to-date with the Eastwood Middle School project also.

Cllr Jennifer McGee asked if those looking at the Core Strategy could do so quickly as developers may take advantage of the time in-between. Cllr Jennifer McGee made specific reference to the site on Highfield Lane and described this as the worst place possible to locate 500 houses. Cllr Mrs McGee stated, "if there was a site in Prudhoe that could take this number of houses, I would support it, but this site is not appropriate".

Cllr Stewart responded that the issue of the present administration is the number of houses calculated as being required in the area and that this was with Strategic Housing; he accepted the comments.

Cllr Jennifer McGee commended the report put together by the Clerk raising the Council's objections to the Core Strategy stating that it was a good document and County Cllrs may wish to refer to it. **It was AGREED** to send copies,

County Cllr Anne Dale commented that she did not agree with the Core Strategy being withdrawn as it could have been modified. Cllr Dale added that she had experienced 50 houses being built in the Green Belt over the last 4 years and this current administration needs to realise that a supply of homes is required.

With regards to Mickley, County Cllr Anne Dale advised that the 20mph speed limit would be part of the Local Transport Plan Programme so will not be consulted upon, adding that there was an agreement for a pedestrian crossing.

Cllr Chris Cuthbert asked if the bollards outside of the school would be part of the whole scheme. County Cllr Anne Dale responded that they were on the plans that were presented during the consultation.

1718/046 DRAFT Report of the Planning, Contracts and Works Committee, held on 12th July 2017

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

Proposed: Cllr Andy Gill

Seconded: Cllr George McCreedy

1718/047 Accounts

a) **It was AGREED to RECEIVE** the monthly bank reconciliation statements 10th June – 9th July 2017

Proposed: Cllr Eileen Burt

Seconded: Cllr George McCreedy

b) **It was AGREED to RECEIVE** the Statement of Expenditure from 1st April 2017 – 20th July 2017

Proposed: Cllr Andy Gill

Seconded: Cllr Eileen Burt

c) Cllr Chris Cuthbert raised concern about escalating meeting room costs. The Administrator/RFO advised that the Council made the decision to hold all meetings outside of the Town Council office and that there had been more meetings held than in the previous year, mainly of the Human Resources Committee. Cllr Eileen Burt offered that this was necessary but that it was important to monitor.

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Cllr Jennifer McGee was concerned that the RFO was proposing to move money from the Events budget without first raising this with the Events Committee and asked if everything was committed for the events planned for the remainder of the financial year.

The Administrator/RFO responded that everything was committed for the Miners Race and the Christmas Lights Switch-On and although the Events Committee had requested additional funds for a replacement event for the Kite Festival, it had been agreed that this would not be possible this financial year. The Administrator/RFO added that it was a suggestion based upon money likely being unspent at the year-end but money could be moved from Contingency instead.

It was AGREED to move the following money as recommended by the RFO:

- ✓ £5,000 committed to the Road-Ends Toilets (now being covered in full by Essity) to be moved to cover AO Employment Costs
- ✓ £1,730 moved from expected underspend in the Events Budget to cover AO Employment Costs
- ✓ £500 moved from Office Rent and Rates to Room Bookings
- ✓ £1,500 from expected underspend in the Events Budget to cover Professional expenses for Asset Transfers
- ✓ £4,000 from expected underspend in the Events Budget to Play Areas to cover repairs and signage

Proposed: Cllr Eileen Burt

Seconded: Cllr Andy Gill

Cllr Jennifer McGee proposed that the bunting should be removed as soon as the Administrator returns from annual leave. **This was AGREED.**

d) It was AGREED to ENDORSE the payment of accounts made since the last meeting on the Schedule of Payments tabled and the **APPROVE** those payments listed to be paid

Proposed: Cllr Glenn Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Andy Gill

1718/048 Governance and Accountability

Cllr Eileen Burt proposed that Cllr Tracy Gilmore and Cllr Graham Robinson may wish to be part of the internal controls review that was carried out each year. It was discussed that they were not present to accept or decline and Cllrs present may wish to put themselves forward. With no-one coming forward the Administrator was directed to make the request of Cllr Tracy Gilmore and Cllr Graham Robinson. Cllr Eileen Burt.

1718/049 RoSPA Play Safety Report Summaries

Cllr Jennifer McGee stated that the report shows what was discussed and identifies that everything is either a low or medium risk. Cllr Jennifer McGee All of the actions have been taken and the proposed actions will be carried out.

It was AGREED to RECEIVE the summary of issues identified in the RoSPA Play Safety Reports, carried out in June on the following Play Areas: The Copse, Orchard Hill, Castle Dene and Highfield Park and Skate Park.

a) With regards to Orchard Hill, **it was AGREED** to look more thoroughly at the area and consult with residents as to whether this should have a play area or an open green space. **It was AGREED** to design a questionnaire.

b) With regards to The Copse Play Area, **it was AGREED** that a new bin should be installed, that the play equipment should be power-washed (already carried out) and that the seat should be replaced and repositioned not beneath the trees.

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- c) With regards to Castle Dene Play Area, **it was AGREED** to go back to the provider regarding the wet pour and to agree to add a preservative to the tyre swing.
- d) With regards to Highfield Park and Skate Park, **it was AGREED** to ask Dolan Plant Hire and Groundworks for a price to make the BMX track good, as this had been carried out by him in the past.

Cllr Chris Cuthbert suggested asking RoSPA or another to carry out their play safety check earlier in the year so that repairs can be made prior to the summer holidays. **This was AGREED.**

1718/050 Castlefields Play Provision

Cllr Gerry Price reported that in a meeting held between Bellway, Persimmon, NCC, himself and Cllr Chris Cuthbert, in which minutes were taken, the possibility that both developers would offer a lump sum to Prudhoe Town Council to take over and reinstate the play area or that the developer would reinstate the play area. Cllr Gerry Price continued that subsequently, on repeatedly contacting the Persimmon Homes to get a formal offer they have now added an additional area of land as shown on the map sent out with the papers. Cllr Gerry Price concluded that the proposal has changed and he considered the council were no longer able to move forward with it.

Cllr Jennifer McGee stated that the additional area was never mentioned and they were simply trying to off-load it onto the Town Council, adding that there have been flooding issues in this particular area.

Cllr Eileen Burt stated that the area in question was proposed for a play area but that at the time residents were opposed to it and it did not go ahead, now it is simply an open space with no physical amenity to the Town Council.

It was AGREED to write to the Managing Director of both Persimmon Homes and Bellway Homes and to reject the offer therein on the basis that this was different to that discussed.

Proposed: Cllr Chris Cuthbert

Seconded: Cllr Jennifer McGee

1718/051 Road-Ends Toilets

Cllr Gerry Price confirmed that the Road-Ends toilets would be re-opened on 24th August by MP Guy Opperman in a public relations exercise organised by Tony Bradley of Essity.

1718/052 Prudhoe East Youth Centre

Cllr Chris Cuthbert advised that she, Cllr Eileen Burt, Cllr George McCreedy and George Hepburn had met on several occasions regarding the feasibility study for Prudhoe East and they were onto the 3rd draft without agreement at present. Cllr Chris Cuthbert was hopeful that following the holidays of members of the group the draft would be agreed and the feasibility study moved forward.

Cllr Eileen Burt added that the difference of opinion is that parties do not agree whether the feasibility study should be based on the premise that the Youth Service is delivered from The East 'as a given' as neither PTC nor PCP control delivery of a Youth Service.

Cllr Angie Scott reported that she had been approached by residents of Prudhoe who drew comparisons with youth provision over the summer at Prudhoe East, compared to that provided by Corbridge Youth Initiative and Hexham Youth Initiative, in that Prudhoe fairs very badly. Cllr Angie Scott added that she was told that the year 5 intake would all be sent information about sessions at The East and that this has not been carried out.

Cllr Cuthbert reviewed the information brought along by Cllr Angie Scott about activities in Corbridge and Hexham compared with Prudhoe and asked 'why are things not happening?'

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Cllr Jennifer McGee suggested the Council ask Ashley Brown to attend the next council meeting so concerns can be expressed and an update on service provision can be given.

1718/053 Citizens Advice Northumberland

Cllr Eileen Burt proposed that the Council request a meeting with CAB Northumberland to raise concerns about the threat to face-to-face drop-in sessions. Cllr Eileen Burt stated that telephone and email may suit some users but the drop-in sessions in Prudhoe were extremely busy.

It was AGREED to ask if CAB would be able to attend prior to the next Planning Contract and Works meeting and in view of the annual leave of the Administrator that Cllr Jennifer McGee should be copied in to receive the response and schedule the meeting.

Cllr Jennifer McGee proposed that the Council should write to MP Guy Opperman regarding the long wait times for Universal Credit. Cllr Jennifer McGee stated that it was appalling that people were waiting 10 weeks for any money to be paid. **It was AGREED** that the Administrator in consultation with the Chair would send a letter following return from annual leave.

1718/054 Water Provider

This item was removed as the information provided was inaccurate.

1718/055 East Tynedale Parish & Town Council Forum

It was AGREED to agree to endorse a contribution of £300/year to support the meetings of the East Tynedale Parish & Town Council Forum

Proposed: Cllr Chris Cuthbert

Seconded: Cllr Jennifer McGee

1718/056 Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership (TVCRP)

It was AGREED to receive the invite to the Annual General Meeting of the TVCRP on 5th October 2017 and noted that Cllr Yvonne Ritchie and Cllr Gerry Price were representative members. Cllrs discussed the time commitment required to be a member of the board, as candidate nominations have been requested; Cllr Price stated that he would not be putting himself forward as he had enough to deal with as Chair of the Council.

1718/057 Reports from outside bodies

Prudhoe Community Partnership – Cllr Eileen Burt advised that there were 2 new trustees, both local business people and that training would commence in September.

1718/058 Correspondence and Publications

Correspondence

1. Letter from a resident regarding parking on Castlefields Drive, sent to Ward Cllrs and copied to Town Council. **Cllr Gerry Price advised that this had been passed to County Cllrs and would be on the agenda for the Neighbourhood Management Meeting in September.**
2. Fire & Rescue Plan 2017-2021 – formal consultation from 10th July – 1st September (emailed to all Cllrs) **This was emailed to Cllrs to respond independently.**
3. Letter from Diana Carney (Clerk to Wylam Parish Council) addressed to Vanessa Bainbridge, NHS Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group, regarding the process being followed to assess the impact of the proposed closure of Riversdale Surgery in Wylam on healthcare infrastructure in the Tyne Valley. **Received for information only.**

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4. Barclays Bank - Confirmation of Signing Arrangements for Cllr Russ Greig and removal of Cllr Eileen Burt and Tony Reid. **Received for information only. Cllr Russ Greig to action becoming authorised for internet banking.**
5. Jack and Jill Pre-School – closure letter and thanks for the support. **Received for information only.**
6. Local Transport Plan Programme 2018-19 – letter from Richard McKenzie requesting Town Council's top three highways and transport priorities to be considered for inclusion in the Local Transport Plan Programme 2018-19. **To be included on September Ordinary Meeting Agenda.**

Publications

1. Campaign to Protect Rural England – Summer Newsletter 2017
2. NEREO Annual report 2016/17
3. The Clerk SLCC July 2017 Magazine
4. Clerk & Councils Direct July 2017
5. L'evolution – July-August 2017
6. NAMM June 2017

It was AGREED to RECEIVE the tabled items.

To approve a motion, that in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the press and public be excluded for consideration of the following items, in accordance with Section 68 of the Council's Standing Orders:-

1718/059 It was **AGREED** to receive the Confidential Minutes of Ordinary Meeting, held on 28th June 2017 as a true record

Proposed: Cllr Andy Gill

Seconded: Cllr Eileen Burt

END OF MEETING