

## PRUDHOE TOWN COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> July 2018 in meeting room 1 of The Spetchells Centre**PRESENT**

Cllr Tracy Gilmore (Chair), Cllr Gerry Price, Cllr Russ Greig, Cllr Angie Scott, Cllr Andy Gill, Cllr Chris Cuthbert, Cllr Jennifer McGee, Cllr Brenda Grey

Cllr Tracy Gilmore welcomed new councillor, Brenda Grey.

**1819/061 Apologies for Absence** Cllr Carol Stephenson, Cllr Bryan Futers, Cllr Holly Kelleher, Cllr Duncan Couchman

**1819/062 Declarations of Interest** None

**1819/063 URGENT ITEM – Disabled Parking**

Northumberland County Council consultation for accessible parking outside 15 – 17 Front Street was presented as an urgent item as the closing date for responses was 5<sup>th</sup> August.

**It was AGREED** to support the scheme.

Proposed: Cllr Jennifer McGee Seconded: Cllr Chris Cuthbert

**1819/064 DRAFT Minutes of Ordinary Meeting, held on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2018**

**It was AGREED** to receive the minutes as a true record with the amendments below:

Proposed: Cllr Andy Gill Seconded: Cllr Gerry Price

Legion did not request that the car park be resurfaced, amend (page 3).

Remove 'Cllr Jennifer McGee said she agreed at the first time of asking but time has passed now' with reference to Humbles Wood Play Space (top of page 7).

**1819/065 Matters Arising****Minutes of Ordinary Meeting 27<sup>th</sup> June 2018****1819/045 By-Election - Prudhoe West & Halfway Ward**

The election was uncontested and Brenda Grey is elected unopposed and as confirmed by Stephen Rickett (NALC) was able to take up the seat following signing the declaration of acceptance of office; this was signed on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2018.

**1819/046 Town Events Sub-Committee**

A meeting was scheduled with Richard Hunter for Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> July but this was cancelled due to illness. As it is unlikely that another will be possible until September, it is hoped that it will be possible to agree dates for those actions detailed in the performance management matrix via email.

Richard has advised that he has started the process for the road closure but that the course has still not been measured as he is trying to persuade the course measurer that only one side of the road needs to be measured. Richard has also advised that the police replied with some feedback from last year which he intends to address with them directly. A copy of the feedback from the police has been requested.

**1819/047 Road Ends Toilets**

Sarah met with CSN regarding the locks and the electrics at the road ends toilets on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> July and a new lock insert has been recommended and a quotation will be received; this is expected to be within the 1<sup>st</sup> tier of financial regulations and can therefore be agreed between the acting clerk and chair.

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On contacting the British Toilet Association for advice about the standards expected in the accessible toilet, quite coincidentally, I happened to speak with the person who has recently inspected all toilets in Northumberland; I explained my aim was to ascertain if the accessible toilet was achieving its purpose. It is quite fortuitous that he has recently inspected the toilets and is about to compile his report to send to NCC and I have therefore asked Greg Gavin (NCC) if this could be copied to us on receipt.

**1819/048 Youth Work Provision in Prudhoe****a) Summer Activities for Young People**

All those agreed to provide summer work are now booked up and the invoices received thus far have been presented for approval of payment.

Each provider will receive a feedback sheet and have been asked to ensure that all those attending as a result of the Town Council's funding complete one. We will ask the providers for the feedback sheets at the end of the holidays in order to evaluate success.

**b) Detached Youth Work**

This has not been actioned yet due to a lack of available time and the summer proposals being prioritised. A tender opportunity will be sent out over the summer period, taking into account that there is approximately £6,000 remaining in the Youth Provision budget.

**1819/049 Humbles Wood Play Equipment and Open Space**

Following the decision of the Town Council, an email was sent to Gentoo Homes, copied below:

Dear David

As you are aware the Town Council received all of the information provided by Victoria at the Ordinary Meeting last night with a view to taking a decision on the formal adoption of the open space and play area at Humbles Wood. As this is a new council, members were also made aware of the historical decisions pertaining to the site and although it was acknowledged that previous council meetings have voted in favour of taking on the area, the meeting last night voted against it.

The council discussed the financial burden owning the area would bring to this council, expressing that within 3 years the £15,000 offered would have been used up on maintenance of the open space alone.

The debate did take place in a public meeting and the draft minutes of the meeting will be available on 19th July.

I know that this decision will not be received favourably; if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to come back to me.

Kind regards, Sarah Eden

The following response was received on 2<sup>nd</sup> July, but there has been no further communication since:

Dear Sarah,

Thank you for your email below relaying the comments of the Town Council.

We are currently in the process of seeking legal advice as Heads of Terms had been previously agreed in writing with the Town Council and we are unclear as to whether the Town Council are now able to walk away from this agreement.

Added to this is the s106 Agreement attached to the outline planning consent, which refers to the adoption of the area, so advice from Northumberland County Council will also have to be sought.

We will come back to you with a full response once we are receipt of the above advice.

Kind regards, Victoria

**PRUDHOE TOWN COUNCIL****DRAFT Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> July 2018 in meeting room 1 of The Spetchells Centre****1819/050 Prudhoe in Bloom**

Residential, church and school, gardens have been visited. Community entries are being visited on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> August and businesses w/c 13<sup>th</sup> August.

The high standard of residential gardens was commented upon once again and Vivienne Bolton repeated the recommended that the Town Council, or another, should facilitate an open gardens day for charity.

County Cllr Gordon Stewart has been in touch as private gardens are celebrated via Northumberland County Council. The discs are being passed on so that greater publicity is achieved.

**1819/051 Lychgate**

The Lychgate was officially opened on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> July by Mayor Tracy Gilmore and Rev. Dan Freyhan.

**1819/052 Memorial Seat for Scott Westgarth**

The seat in memory of Scott Westgarth was unveiled on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> July and there are letters of appreciation in correspondence.

**1819/066 DRAFT Minutes of the Extraordinary, Planning, Contract and Works Committee, held on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2018**

It was **AGREED** to receive the report (these will be presented to be received as a true record at PCW's Committee on 15<sup>th</sup> August).

**1819/067 County Cllr Reports  
County Cllr Anne Dale**

County Cllr Anne Dale explained that following a further collision outside the school, which had been discussed previously, the safety bollards that were knocked have been replaced and additional bollards installed.

Following a safety meeting with NCC Highways and the school head the suggestion to locate additional black planters (like those already in situ) along the wall as an additional safety measure. NCC has agreed to fund the purchase 5 of the planters for here and County Cllr Anne Dale would like the Town Council to consider paying for the planting and maintenance of these (this is on the agenda). As well as outside of the school, there is also a suggestion to locate 3 planters outside the houses to the west of Mickley Club as this would ease parking issues. The Town Council are also requested to plant and maintain these, following their purchase by NCC.

County Cllr Anne Dale reported that the Mickley school children had a lovely end of school party at Mickley Playing Fields.

Following a question from Cllr Chris Cuthbert, County Cllr Anne Dale agreed to check when the bus shelter at Mickley square was likely to be replaced and moved.

**County Cllr Ken Stow**

County Cllr Ken Stow advised that lighting schemes on Western Avenue were progressing and that the bus shelter base is in at Halfway (opposite Eltringham). With regards the parking scheme on Highfield Lane, this would be revisited shortly; it is reported to have had an effect. The parking scheme on Highfield Lane will be revisited; it has had an effect. Bollards that were recently reinstalled at Castlefields have been ripped from the ground.

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County Cllr Gordon Stewart reported that the business breakfast recently held at The Spetchells Centre was a success and hosted visitors from the rest of Tynedale as well as Prudhoe. Additionally a business event was held at The Fuse that unfortunately did not attract the numbers hoped for but this is not specific to Prudhoe. Liam Fox (Secretary of State for International Trade) is being consulted on bring jobs into the town and using the some of the great land available; Northumberland businesses are being promoted in London. The advertising boards on local roundabouts are now full.

With regards the Low Prudhoe Development, County Cllr Gordon Stewart reported that although he seeks weekly updates form Northumberland Estates, there is nothing to report yet and no firm planning applications. There are two or three businesses interested in addition to a supermarket.

- West Wylam pipe has been cleaned of graffiti, all parties concerned are aware of youth disorder issues in this location.
- A multi-agency walkabout has taken place in West Wylam with Karbon Homes and others.
- Bollards in West Wylam and on Redwell Road have also been taken; why they are being targeted is a mystery as they are plastic and rubber.
- CAB is progressing well with their move to The Manors.
- Tender application for the bowls pavilion will be in the Hexham Courant on Thursday.
- Riverside Cafe tender has been agreed, but the winning tender has not been advised yet so this information is not in the public domain.
- Eastwood Park tennis courts should be in fit state within the week.
- WW shops rubbish removed again yesterday.
- Mortal Fools event at the Riverside was really good and well supported.
- Businesses are being encouraged to take part in Great Northumberland.
- Celebrated 10 Years of Prudhoe Groundforce.
- Dog walker's event planned at riverside as part of the Green Dog Walkers Scheme.
- Essity is doing work on the footpaths at the riverside.
- NCC communications will be including the wonderful gardens from Prudhoe in Bloom, with pictures taken by Moira Wooldridge.
- Moor Road but put back another month.
- Work being undertaken on the poor footpaths at Valley View.
- Working with residents to try and clear the old allotment site behind the Legion.
- Extensive work being carried out in the Legion car park.
- Drainage issues on have been sorted at Umfraville and further issues on The Lonnen have been reported.
- Humbles Wood play equipment bolts have come loose; the contractor has been advised.
- Land of Oak and Iron project will bring some good publicity and improvements for the area.

In response to Cllr Angie Scott, County Cllr Ken Stow agreed to chase up the South Road crossing issues and plans for a pelican crossing.

In response to Cllr Gerry Price, County Cllr Gordon Stewart advised that he was also very disappointed that the Youth Service review was still not available, one month after its scheduled release date but that he expected it would be on the agenda of the Family & Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 6<sup>th</sup> September.

In response to Cllr Jennifer McGee's question about the impact of Brexit on Northumberland and any plans to deal with the funding lost, County Cllr Gordon Stewart responded that the government had

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agreed to back up the money lost but with regards to plans these were agreed at a higher level, but the New Local Plan certainly aimed to promote employment and growth.

**1819/068 Accounts**

a) It was **AGREED** to receive the Bank Reconciliations from 9<sup>th</sup> June – 8<sup>th</sup> July 2018

Proposed: Cllr Andy Gill    Seconded: Cllr Russ Greig

b) It was **AGREED** to receive the Statement of Expenditure from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 – 18<sup>th</sup> July 2018

Proposed: Cllr Jennifer McGee    Seconded: Cllr Gerry Price

c) It was **AGREED** to endorse the accounts paid since the June meeting (*which were tabled*) and authorise the accounts to be paid

Proposed: Cllr Russ Grieg    Seconded: Cllr Angie Scott

**1819/069 By-Election - Prudhoe West & Halfway Ward**

The notice was not formally presented as the seat was already filled by Brenda Grey in an uncontested election.

**1819/070 Casual Vacancy – Castledene and Eltringham Ward**

It was **AGREED** to formally declare a casual vacancy in Castledene and Eltringham Ward and to notify the elections office

Proposed: Cllr Tracy Gilmore    Seconded: Cllr Russ Greig

**1819/071 Human Resources Committee**

It was agreed to appoint Cllr Brenda Grey as a member of the Human Resources Committee.

Proposed: Cllr Tracy Gilmore    Seconded: Cllr Angie Scott

Cllr Brenda Grey TG/AS

**1819/072 Prudhoe East Centre**

a) It was **AGREED** to receive the report of the meeting of the East Centre Advisory Committee, held on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2018

Proposed: Cllr Russ Greig    Seconded: Cllr Angie Scott

b) Following the recommendation of the Acting Clerk, the Cllr Tracy Gilmore proposed that the Community Asset Transfer Application for Prudhoe East Centre should be deferred. **This was AGREED.**

The Acting Clerk advised that following feedback from NCC Strategic Assets and Policy Team it was clear that the Town Council was not in a position to make the application at this stage; as she had previously discussed with the chair, there were too many unresolved questions relating to structure, finance and the business plan itself. The Acting Clerk advised that in order to complete the Community Asset Transfer Application the Town Council would need to enlist an architect and draw up plans as well as costs for what it hoped to achieve, as well as agreeing how the building would be managed. Much of the advice in the comments from the policy team relates to the impact on 'The Spetchells Centre' and there is a clear steer towards working together.

It was **AGREED** to convene a meeting of the East Centre Advisory Group.



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**It was AGREED to SUPPORT** the scheme for an additional 8 Mickley Planters on the A695, 5 outside Mickley First School and 3 west of the pelican crossing, at a cost of £552 in 2018/19 and £784 in subsequent years.

Proposed: Cllr Angie Scott

Seconded: Cllr Jennifer McGee

**1819/074 Phase 2; Cottier Grange Street Naming**

**It was AGREED** to respond positively to the names Spinney Gardens, McCoull Drive and Pavilion Close. **It was also AGREED** to reluctantly accept that although on numerous occasions Woodland View and Field Close have been opposed due to there being numerous other 'woods' and 'fields' in the town, that they that these are supported by others, including the Prudhoe and District History Society whom the Council recommended should be consulted.

**1819/075 Silent Soldier at Western Gateway**

The Acting Clerk gave an update on the RBL Silent Soldier that was installed at the western gateway, from Prudhoe to Mickley; visible from the A695 which members were aware had been damaged. The Acting Clerk reported that these commemorative features were very difficult to source nationally and in view of this John Baron, who installed the silhouette soldiers on behalf of the council, had promised that if a replacement could not be sought, he would make a replica. John Baron, along with countless other members of the public, was outraged and very upset that this mark of respect was no longer in place and in view of everyone's disappointment, John has pledged to do what he can.

**It was AGREED** to pass on sincere thanks to John Baron.

The Acting Clerk also updated that the vandalism was reported to the police and they have appealed for information, but nothing has been forthcoming.

**1819/076 TVLS Scheme**

The Acting Clerk advised that although the Television License Scheme operates during reduced days/hours now, over the last month with Prudhoe in Bloom, site visits to the toilets, play areas and Edgewell Cemetery, as well as meetings and telephone calls (whatever might make the Acting Clerk not immediately available) the result of there being no-one available to refund claimants when they come into the library has resulted in much negativity towards the Karbon Homes desk and the Acting Clerk when reached. On the previous day, the Karbon Homes adviser and the Acting Clerk were subject to rude and aggressive behaviour from a member of the public.

The Acting Clerk acknowledged that the service is inadequate if residents come in and there is no-one available to administer the refund, therefore recommended that the council consider suspending the scheme until the office is fully staffed.

**It was AGREED** to suspend the scheme until further notice and until the office was sufficiently staffed to allow proper administration and to review the times when claims can be made

Proposed: Cllr Chris Cuthbert

Seconded: Cllr Gerry Price

**1819/077 Reports from Outside Bodies**

No reports were given.

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1. Northumberland Age UK, letter requesting donations and also promoting the Age UK Annual Dinner at Woodhorn on 5<sup>th</sup> October. The event is in support of the loneliness campaign and tickets are priced at £55 and include live music, 3-course meal and a drinks reception. Other suggestions in the letter are that the council could host a coffee morning, promote the services of Age UK and also information about The Friendship Line. **It was AGREED to RECEIVE** and forward to Parish Hall.
2. Resident Letter regarding the cemetery gates being left unlocked from April 2019 and new pathway into old cemetery. Concerns about any damage/vandalism as a result of gates being left unlocked and also concern about any remains in unmarked graves where the new path would be. **It was AGREED to RECEIVE** the letter and to respond that locking the gates does not prevent damage as entry can still be gained, that all other Northumberland cemeteries are left open. Also, to respond that before commencing any work in Edgewell old cemetery (south-east corner) that investigations would be carried out and if remains were found this would be handled sensitively and with respect.
3. Northumberland Credit Union – letter outlining a transfer of engagements to NE First Credit Union. If the transfer is approved the date of any changes will be from 1<sup>st</sup> October.

**RECEIVED**

4. Letter of thanks from Philip Middleton for the Scott Westgarth Memorial Seat. **RECEIVED**
5. Email received from Scott's Mum Rebecca Marshal "**Just wanted to say a big thank you to you and to all of the Prudhoe Councillors for the beautiful memorial seat for my Scott. It means so much to us all, thank you Rebecca**" **RECEIVED**
6. Thank you card from Anne Dodd and Peter Nicholson for the card and flowers wishing them both well. **RECEIVED**
7. Karbon Homes, letter outlining the six contractors that have been appointed to work in the North East Region and those working in the immediate towns and villages and most specifically in Prudhoe belong to Glendale Countryside Ltd. **RECEIVED**
8. Northumberland County Council, Statement of Principles, invite to be part of the consultation process which runs from 6<sup>th</sup> July to 14<sup>th</sup> September. Although the letter does not say so, this concerns the 'Draft Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Principles 2019 to 2022' which must be reviewed and published every 3 years. **RECEIVED**

**Publications**

1. Clerks and Councils Direct, July 2018, Issue 118
2. Campaign to Protect Rural England, Summer 2018
3. Society of Local Council Clerks, July 2018

**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:-***

**1819/078 DRAFT Confidential Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2018**

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

Proposed: Cllr Russ Greig

Seconded: Cllr Jennifer McGee

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The Acting Clerk advised that the new Town Council logo is in use.

**1819/080 Town Seats**

**It was AGREED** to offer the contract to restore and paint the town seats to Scorpion Joinery at a cost of £2045 for the Town Council seats.

Proposed: Cllr Jennifer McGee    Seconded: Cllr Tracy Gilmore

The cost of the seats in Eastwood Park, to be reimbursed by Northumberland County Council would be £1165; the Acting Clerk would seek approval from Northumberland County Council before work on these was offered.

The cost of the seats at Priestclose Cottages, to be reimbursed by Karbon Homes, would be £333; the Acting Clerk would seek approval from Karbon Homes before work on these was offered.

**1819/081 Push Fraud**

**It was AGREED** to update the Financial Regulations to state that any bank account changes advised must be followed up with a phone call.

*The Acting Clerk left the meeting and Cllr Russ Greig took the notes.*

**1819/082 Staffing Matters**

Cllr Greig as Chair of the HR Committee gave an update on the recruitment of the Clerk/EO following agreement on the recruitment process adopted by the Council.

Sarah Eden as Acting Clerk was invited to express an interest in the vacancy by submitting her CV for consideration. She was provided with a copy of the Clerk's Role Profile and Person Specification.

Cllrs Greig, Cllr Price (Vice Chair) and Cllr Gilmore (Chair) carried out a thorough review of the Acting Clerk's CV in conjunction with the Role Profile and Person and an interview was conducted on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> July. Following this, the interview panel were unanimous in their recommendation to appoint Sarah Eden as Clerk to the Council.

The recommendation was put to the vote and agreed by a majority, with 2 abstentions.

**It was AGREED** to offer Sarah Eden the role of Town Clerk/Executive Officer with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2018. Cllr Russ Greig would arrange an offer letter.