

PRUDHOE TOWN COUNCIL
DRAFT Minutes of Ordinary Meeting 28th March 2018

PRESENT

Cllr Gerry Price, Cllr Tracy Gilmore, Cllr Andy Gill, Cllr Chris Cuthbert, Cllr Angie Scott, Cllr Holly Kelleher, Cllr Jennifer McGee, Cllr Glenn Simpson, Cllr Carol Stephenson, Cllr Yvonne Ritchie, Cllr Duncan Couchman, Cllr Ignasious Varghese, Cllr Russ Greig (arrived at 19:10)

County Cllr Anne Dale, County Cllr Ken Stow, County Cllr Gordon Stewart, Mr Michael Thirtle (resident)

1718/163 Apologies for Absence None received

1718/164 Declarations of Interest None received

Following a request, the chair invited Mr Michael Thirtle (Prudhoe resident) to speak. Mr Thirtle reported that his recent Macmillan coffee morning, held at the Spetchells Centre, raised over £300 and he was especially grateful for the support of those who attended and donated items for the tombola and cake stall.

Cllrs gave Mr Thirtle a round of applause and congratulated him on his continued efforts in support of Macmillan.

1718/165 DRAFT Minutes of Ordinary Meeting (including Planning Matters), held on 28th February 2018

The minutes were received as a true record.

Proposed: Cllr Jennifer McGee

Seconded: Cllr Glenn Simpson

1718/166 Matters Arising
1718/142 Grant Aid 2018/19

Advice has been issued via email to assure that the decision taken in respect of Grant Aid for Northumberland CAB was taken in line with proper procedure.

Stephen Rickett's response is that it is not unusual for a recommendation from a group or committee to be discussed and amended and that there is no limit on amendments. A resolution can be carried on a second or casting vote of the person presiding at the meeting. It's in Paragraph 39 of Schedule 12 Local Government Act 1972

39(1) Subject to the provisions of any enactment (including any enactment in this Act) all questions coming or arising before a local authority shall be decided by a majority of the members of the authority present and voting thereon at a meeting of the authority.

(2) Subject to those provisions in the case of an equality of votes, the person presiding at the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.

Stephen also supplied the 'Order of Debate', attached. The decision stands and is valid as the result is always a vote and the chair had the casting vote on the 2nd amendment.

1718/156 Town and Parish Council Liaison Meeting

It was AGREED to write to the leaders of Newcastle City, North Tyneside and Northumberland County Council to take issue with the name 'North of Tyne' under the devolution deal in view that it is geographically incorrect and therefore does not feel inclusive of those south of the river.

The Council has received responses from all three leaders which will be formally received as correspondence at the end of the meeting. All three letters say the same; that this is a working title and they would welcome suggestions for an alternative name.

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No response has been received yet from Paul Jones on the double-charging issue in respect of cemeteries.

Cllr Glenn Simpson proposed that a name for the North of Tyne Devolution should be an agenda item and maybe go out to consultation.

1718/157 NCC Local Plan

It was **AGREED** to contact Mark Ketley to request a planning officer attends a meeting of the Town Council to answer questions on the New Local Plan and the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA).

Mark Ketley did respond on 5th March with the following:

"Thanks for your e-mail. I will discuss your request with our Planning Policy team manager, Joan Sanderson, and we will confirm in due course whether a Council representative will be able to attend a meeting of the Town Council."

We have since followed up the email to Mark Ketley, copied to Geoff Paul, on 13th and 21st March, but no reply has been received to date. The request to attend a meeting was slightly altered to ask for attendance at a Civic and Community Forum.

1718/159 Correspondence and Publications

Letter of complaint from Stocksfield resident about the non-resident rate levied in respect of an interment of ashes. A further letter has been sent and will be formally received in correspondence.

Corrections to minutes required as they state 2017 and have no Cllrs proposing and seconding.

1718/167 DRAFT Report of the Planning, Contract and Works Committee, held on 14th March 2018

It was **AGREED** to receive the report.

Proposed: Cllr Jennifer McGee

Seconded: Cllr Glenn Simpson

1718/168 Co-option of Councillor onto Prudhoe West & Halfway Seat, Prudhoe Town Council

a) It was AGREED to RECEIVE the formal notification that no by-election has been called for Prudhoe West & Halfway.

Cllr Gerry Price made clear that anyone not successfully co-opted for this seat could still be considered for future vacancies.

b) Chris Barrett addressed the meeting in addition to the letter he had previously sent. He added that he was a site manager at Prudhoe Community High School and an Army Reserve.

Bryan Futers addressed the meeting in addition to the letter he had previously sent. He explained that it was an error on his part not to stand for election in May 2017 and he thought he would be better served as a Town Councillor than an annoyance to County Councillors.

Chris Barrett was proposed by Cllr Tracy Gilmore and seconded by Cllr Angie Scott.

Bryan Futers was proposed by Cllr Jennifer McGee and seconded by Cllr Andy Gill.

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c) It was AGREED by a majority to co-opt Brian Futers into the Prudhoe West and Halfway Ward seat.

1718/169 County Cllr Reports

County Cllr Gordon Stewart reported that the review of the Youth Service was still outstanding in terms of its publication. However, there were activities planned for the Easter holidays and the programme has been published online.

Fire and Rescue at Prudhoe Station requested a Facebook presence and this has been realised; Cllr Gordon Stewart reported that he was really please with retention and recruitment which was really good.

County Cllr Gordon Stewart commended the work of NCC workforce and farmers in the fight against the winter weather and its effect on the roads. There were still repairs to be carried out but central government funding would be forthcoming.

Before inviting questions County Cllr Gordon Stewart alluded to the damning reports about Arch in the press and expressed that he was appalled.

Cllr Yvonne Ritchie reported that she has used the online reporting system to report a pothole and it was attended within 2 days.

County Cllr Ken Stow advised that the bus stop requested on West Road (opposite Eltringham) would be installed jointly by himself and the Town Council and he was liaising with the office about this.

County Cllr Anne Dale advised that the pelican crossing was due to go in now that weather disruptions were over. Litter on both the A68 and A69 was described by County Cllr Anne Dale as a major problem and she reported that she has been in touch with the portfolio holder and had an acknowledgement back. Cllr Anne Dale advised that she had been out collecting litter for over 2 hours from the A695 and there was still more and that this issue was a major drain on the tax payer and the result was horrific.

Cllr Anne Dale described that blocked gullies are another issue which adds to the problems associated with surface water later on.

With regards to the lighting contractors, County Cllr Anne Dale described the situation as exasperating, with residents not getting answers and a total lack of consultation. Also, issues with utility companies who come in and leave a mess, creating an issue for NCC and costing tax payers.

1718/170 Accounts

a) It was AGREED to receive the Bank Reconciliations from 10th February – 9th March 2018
 Proposed: Cllr Andy Gill Seconded: Cllr Glenn Simpson

b) It was AGREED to receive the Statement of Expenditure from 1st April 2017 – 22nd March 2018
 Proposed: Cllr Glenn Simpson Seconded: Cllr Gerry Price

c) It was AGREED to endorse the accounts paid since the February meeting and to authorise the accounts to be paid (*which were tabled*)
 Proposed: Cllr Glenn Simpson Seconded: Cllr Chris Cuthbert

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1718/171 West Community Safety Hub

It was **AGREED** to receive the information from the West Community Safety Hub and it was acknowledged that although it was disappointing that these useful meetings would no longer be held, that the invite to a monthly meeting from Acting Sergeant Sharon Walton was a welcome alternative. Cllr Gerry Price confirmed that he was now able to attend the monthly meeting scheduled with County Cllrs, Police and the Community Safety Team and a report would be brought back to the council.

1718/172 Dog Fouling

Cllr Angie Scott reported that Wylam Parish Council have recently appointed an Enforcement Officer. Cllr Gerry Price responded that at a recent meeting at County Hall the cost of employing an Enforcement Officer was indicated to be approximately £36k.

Cllr Yvonne Ritchie stated that Wylam was significantly smaller than Prudhoe and it would be a full-time job to cover Prudhoe. Cllr Yvonne Ritchie went on to describe that Newcastle City Council has recently asked children to design posters to raise awareness about dog fouling.

Cllr Tracy Gilmore responded that posters had already been tried by most schools, for dog fouling and other issues, but they did not work.

Cllr Andy Gill suggested that Prudhoe could liaise with other parish councils and look at employing an enforcement officer with combined funds.

Cllr Holly Kelleher supported the pursuit of an enforcement officer or warden as acknowledged that members of the public and even the volunteers she worked with at Prudhoe Parkrun did not feel empowered to challenge behaviours. Cllr Holly Kelleher suggested that the collection of fines could support salary costs.

Cllr Jennifer McGee proposed that the item be added to the April Planning, Contracts and Works Committee for further discussion, reminding members that there was no allocation in the 2018-19 budget for such expense and staff capacity was another issue.

1718/173 Town Council Representative on Prudhoe Community Partnership (PCP)

Cllr Gerry Price reported that the constitution of PCP states that their membership requires a Town Councillor representative.

Cllr Yvonne Ritchie described that colleagues may recall she made comments previously in relation to the confidential nature of documents, but that she had put her comments to Chairman, Mr George Hepburn, and changes will be made. Cllr Yvonne Ritchie elaborated that minutes will not be made public but members will be more involved.

Cllr Yvonne Ritchie proposed that the Town Council invite Mr George Hepburn to make a case for why Prudhoe Town Council should elect a Cllr to be a representative on PCP Committee.

Cllr Russ Greig agreed with the proposal as members may be reticent due to the confidential nature of PCP business.

Cllr Jennifer McGee described that the Council used to get regular information from PCP, and that this had not been the case for some time. The previous chair also made presentations at Council meetings. Cllr Jennifer McGee explained that a Town Council representative on Prudhoe Community

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Partnership should be Town Council representative, carrying the views of the Town Council and reporting back to the Town Council, stating that in the past the lines have been blurred. Cllr Chris Cuthbert agreed that the lines have become blurred, explaining that the Town Council representative becomes a trustee of PCP. Cllr Chris Cuthbert reminded members that constitutions can be amended.

It was AGREED to contact PCP chair, Mr George Hepburn and ask him to attend a Town Council meeting to clarify the position of a Town Council representative and explain how we can ensure the role of Cllr is not compromised.

1718/174 Pizza Oven on 'The Glade'

Cllr Russ Greig responded to the request for a pizza oven on 'The Glade' with the statement that there were already a number of food outlets who pay business rates to be in the town. Cllr Jennifer McGee agreed that there were already negative comments about the number of takeaways.

Cllr Holly Kelleher also discouraged the idea of street food that would result in litter and the congregation of people on the Glade, as well as detracting from the pizza shops already in the town. Cllr Holly Kelleher went on to say that she would welcome a street trader at the Prudhoe Parkrun on Saturdays and Sundays as the realisation of cafe facilities at the Riverside building was taking a very long time and there was a growing market every weekend.

Cllrs Andy Gill, Glenn Simpson and Gerry Price also agreed that the Town Council should politely decline. **It was AGREED.**

1718/175 East Centre Feasibility Group

It was AGREED to receive the report.

1718/176 East Centre Working Group

Cllr Gerry Price went through the recommendations in the report of the meeting held on 5th March 2018.

It was AGREED that the group could consist of non-councillors and that George McCreedy would be invited to be involved.

It was AGREED that the group would act as an advisory committee with the following terms of reference:

That the Prudhoe East Centre Advisory Committee is tasked working towards and completing the Community Asset Transfer of the East Centre, from Northumberland County Council to Prudhoe Town Council. That in working towards this aim the committee engage with the local community to establish the need for the building(s), the community benefits of the building(s) and future use, as well as how best to promote the building(s). The committee will identify how the building(s) should be managed in the future and whether there is a need for a separate charitable trust. The committee will look at sources of external funding available.

It was AGREED that all reports of meetings would come to the full council for recommendations to be approved.

It was AGREED to adopt an Equal Opportunities Policy at the earliest opportunity.

It was AGREED to hold a Civic and Community Forum on 19th April with The East and the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment as topics for discussion.

It was AGREED that the results of the East Centre survey would be presented at the Annual Town Meeting on Thursday 17th May.

All other proposals were **agreed** (refer to report).

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1718/177 Democracy Working Group

It was AGREED to receive the report of the Democracy Group Meeting held on 19th March 2018.

Cllr Glenn Simpson raised concerns about a further group being formed when the Town Council already has 10/11.

Cllr Russ Greig clarified that there was no intention of this being a permanent group; that it was about setting the systems in place, following Cllr Yvonne Ritchie's earlier proposals to engage more effectively with the community.

1718/178 Prudhoe Town Council's Young People's Forum

It was AGREED to receive the email from Ashley Brown (Northumberland Youth Service, Lead Professional) outlining the commitment of the Youth Service to the Young People's Forum and their desire for Cllr Gerry Price to chair the meetings.

Cllr Gerry Price confirmed that there were 15 people at the last meeting and hopefully this would grow with the next meeting scheduled for Wednesday 18th April at Highfield Middle School (including School Council), beginning at 4:00 pm.

1718/179 Correspondence and Publications**Correspondence**

Cllr Gerry Price read out the letter he sent to outgoing Cllr Eileen Burt.

1. Stocksfield resident grievance regarding cemetery fees levied for non-residents. An agreed response was sent following the February Ordinary Meeting, a further letter has been received on 3rd March 2018, as attached. ***It was AGREED to respond advising that the Town Council had no means of making an exception on this occasion but the Cemetery Sub-Committee would be reviewing the fees table and taking the comments made into account.***
2. Lychgate Schedule of Works – written schedule of works was received at the February Ordinary Meeting, this more useful schedule includes the dates of work. ***AGREED to receive***
3. The National Allotment Society Northern Region Meeting – date was 24th March but this was sent to Councillors previously. The agenda included a revised code of conduct, constitution and standards and procedures. ***It was AGREED to RECEIVE and check with PGA that they have revised documents.***
4. Peter Jackson, Leader NCC – response to letter regarding devolution name, sent following agreement at February OM. ***It was AGREED to add this to the April agenda.***
5. Nick Forbes, Leader Newcastle City Council – response to letter regarding devolution name, sent following agreement at February OM. ***(as above)***
6. Norma Redfearne, Elected Mayor of North Tyneside – response to letter regarding devolution name, sent following agreement at February OM. ***(as above)***
7. New Review of Ethical Standards in Local Government, both LCPAS and NALC have asked Town Councils to support the consultation and to respond. ***It was AGREED to email the link to Cllrs for individual responses.***

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-ethical-standards-stakeholder-consultation>

It was AGREED to RECEIVE the following tabled Publications

1. The Clerk, March 2018
2. N.A.M.N News – February 2018
3. Le bilan - Prenons le temps d'en parler! (*trans: Let's take the time to talk about it!*)
4. L'évolution, March 2018
5. Clerks & Councils Direct, March 2018

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*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:-*

1718/180 Road Ends Toilets Contract

It was AGREED to approve that the Purple Cleaning Company be awarded a 3-year contract for the Road Ends toilets cleaning, opening and closing at a sum of £.

1718/181 DRAFT Confidential Minutes of the Ordinary meeting, held on 28th February 2018

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

Proposed: Cllr Jennifer McGee

Seconded: Cllr Yvonne Ritchie

The processes followed during and after the meeting were questioned and **it was agreed** that a review of Standing Orders was required.

1718/182 DRAFT Confidential Minutes of the Extraordinary item of the Planning Contract and Works Committee, held on 14th March 2018

It was AGREED to RECEIVE the minutes as a true record with a minor amendment to be requested of Monica Anderton.

Proposed: Cllr Jennifer McGee

Seconded: Cllr Yvonne Ritchie

Cllr Angie Scott left the meeting.

1718/183 Staffing Matters

It was AGREED to request Anne Dodd to work additional hours to cover the annual leave of the Acting Clerk over Easter, to cover the TVLS refund scheme hours.

It was also AGREED to request Anne Dodd extend her 8 hours/week contract for a further 2 months.

The Acting Clerk left the meeting for further discussion of staffing matters.