

PRUDHOE TOWN COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of the Planning, Contract and Works Meeting held in The Spetchells Centre, Front Street, Prudhoe at 7:00pm on Wednesday 10 February 2016

PRESENT Cllr G Simpson (Chair), Cllr B Futers, Cllr Mrs E Burt, Cllr G Price, Cllr Mrs C Cuthbert, Cllr A Piper, Cllr Mrs N McGee, Cllr Ms J Rose, Cllr A Reid (arrived 1910) In attendance: R Whinney (Clerk)

1516/1072 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Cllr K Graham, Cllr Mrs J McGee, Cllr G McCreedy, Cllr A Gill, Co. Cllr Mrs A Dale

1516/1073 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Mrs N McGee made a declaration of personal (non-pecuniary) interest in planning application 15/04131/FUL and did not participate in the discussion or decision in respect of this application. Cllr G Simpson made a declaration of personal (non-pecuniary) interest in planning application 15/04131/FUL and did not participate in the discussion or decision in respect of this application. Cllr A Reid took no part in the consideration of agenda item 1516/1075, Planning Matters.

1516/1074 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING CONTRACT & WORKS COMMITTEE HELD ON 13 JANUARY 2016

It was AGREED to receive the minutes as a true record.
Proposed: Cllr B Futers Seconded: Cllr Mrs E Burt

1516/1075 MATTERS ARISING.

1516/1069 Signage: The Clerk reported that, following the meeting of Council representatives with NCC officers on Friday 22 January, NCC had responded positively to the Council's initiative, and it was anticipated that the items shown in bold in the report supplied with the agenda papers would be progressed by the end of the current financial year. The Clerk added that the discussion had not been treated as a one-off: additional signage could always be requested. Responding to Cllr B Futers, the Clerk stated that the sole sign suggested for removal was the brown tourist sign for Waterworld, located close to the Co-op petrol station on Front Street. This sign was identified in the report as being either confusing or unlikely to be useful by virtue of its location.

In response to Cllr Mrs C Cuthbert, the Clerk undertook to arrange a site meeting with the relevant NCC officer in Mickley to allow the issue of signage for Riding Dene Park to be addressed.

The report and progress on this matter was welcomed by the meeting.

1516/1076 PLANNING MATTERS

1. Planning applications considered

General – Prudhoe Hall Ward

Ref. 15/04131/FUL

Proposal: Extension to existing hospital creating a seclusion suite and de-escalation room with lobby, corridor and new internal store room

Location: Site between Redburn and Ferndene, Moor Road, Prudhoe, Northumberland NE42 5PB

Applicant: Mr John Carson, Northumberland Tyne & Wear NHS Foundation Trust, St Nicholas' Hospital, Jubilee Road, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne & Wear NE3 3XT

Response deadline: 9 February 2016

SUPPORT Proposed Cllr Mrs E Burt Seconded Cllr Ms J Rose

Prudhoe West & Halfway Ward

Planning Ref. 16/00120/VARYCO

Proposal: Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) of 15/03213/FUL – to permit lowering of garage floor level to accommodate local ground levels and inclusion of bedroom and rooflight windows in roof space above garage

Location: Land South of Edgewell Avenue, Edgewell Road, Prudhoe Northumberland (NE42 6HW)

Applicant: Mr Steve Donald (address given as Edgewell Court, Edgewell Road, Prudhoe - as above)

Response date: 10 February 2016

SUPPORT Proposed Cllr Mrs E Burt

Seconded Cllr Ms J Rose

2. Notifications of the Planning Authority in respect of planning applications Decisions

Prudhoe Hall Ward

Planning Ref. 15/ 03984/FUL – re-submission of 15/03356/FUL

Proposal: Proposed first storey extension to side and rear creating new kitchen / diner, master bedroom and bathroom

Location: 35 Park Lane, Prudhoe, Northumberland NE42 5LN

Applicant: Miss Nina Clark (address as above)

Response date: 4 December 2015

Northumberland County Council decided to GRANT permission

[The Council had responded supporting the application]

Mickley Ward

Planning Ref. 15/03775/FUL

Proposal: Construction of single storey cottage on land to the west of Blue Bell Cottage

Location: Land south-west of the Blue Bell Inn, Mount Pleasant, West Mickley, Northumberland (NE43 7LP)

Applicant: Mr Geoff Yates (address as above)

Response date: 11 December 2015

Northumberland County Council decided to GRANT permission

[The Council had responded supporting the application]

It was AGREED to receive the notifications

Proposed Cllr G Simpson

Seconded Cllr B Futers

1516/1077 PLANNING AUTHORITY: OPERATION OF PLANNING PROCESS

Cllr Mrs E Burt stated that the report of the meeting with Mr M Ketley, the acting head of the NCC Planning Service, was an accurate record. Mr Ketley had been open, honest and helpful, and the portents for the future were good. She added that she and Cllr A Reid had met with Mr G Paul, Director of Planning and Economy, NCC, and she said that Mr Paul had agreed to revert to the Council with more information relating to the possible joint venture by ARCH and The Northumberland Estates at Low Prudhoe.

The report was received.

1516/1078 FLOODING AT TYNE RIVERSIDE: Ovingham Parish Council

Cllr Mrs E Burt reported that after an earlier approach she had received from the Chairman of Ovingham Parish Council, it now appeared that the Parish Council was planning a residents' meeting to take place in April. Cllr Mrs Burt noted that the first approach, which could have involved liaison with businesses at Low Prudhoe, had highlighted the Council's lack of a database of businesses, while Prudhoe Community Partnership's list was also not up to date. She suggested that, should a flooding meeting be organised where businesses were invited, the Council could produce and distribute flyers for the meeting.

It was AGREED to support the approach outlined above in principle as to the allocation of officer time and costs, in the event that a flooding meeting was organised.

Proposed Cllr Mrs E Burt Seconded Cllr Mrs C Cuthbert

1516/1079 GRASS-CUTTING SERVICE CONTRACT

The Clerk reported on the outcome of the enquiries that had been made as set out in the report supplied in the meeting papers, and in particular:

- That the grass-cutting specification for the Triangle (by Station Bank roundabout) was not appropriate by virtue of the rough ground

- That NCC had accepted that the Council should not have to pay for any cuts over and above those stated in the service contract
- That there were no 'cut and collect' areas at present
- That, if the Council did not pay for the grass-cutting in the areas covered by the contract, then NCC's obligation would extend only to the cutting of a 1.2 metre strip adjacent to the highway
- That NCC would be interested in tendering for the next grass-cutting contract, due to commence in 2017-18

Responding to Cllr Mrs Cuthbert, the Clerk confirmed that the Council would pay for all cuts carried out under the service contract *up to* the number agreed: it would not pay for cuts that had not been carried out.

Cllr Mrs Burt stated that the 1.2 metre strip referred to was what NCC were legally obliged to cut. She suggested that the Council might wish for some areas to be managed under 'cut and collect' for instance at the entrance to the town. Commenting, Cllr G Simpson stated that the principle of the Council paying for additional cuts in the specified locations had been established many years ago. He noted that the large areas at the Badger and Highfield Park took up a lot of the cost. In response to Cllr Simpson, the Clerk suggested that the number of cuts could be increased if required by negotiation with the contractor. The report was received and the following was agreed:

- To seek regular, possibly quarterly monitoring reports in respect of the grass-cutting contract from the contractor
- That the tender for the new contract should include quotations in respect of all areas for *cut* only and for *cut and collect*
- To ensure that up-to-date maps were supplied for the review of the service contract by the Council

The suggestion by the Clerk that the work of review of service contracts might best be carried out by a working group of councillors reporting to the Committee or to the Ordinary Meeting was welcomed as a positive recommendation.

1516/1080 ISOS HOUSING GROUP

Cllr B Futers stated that Isos tenants at West Wylam and Oaklands, for example, were facing being charged for grass and hedge cutting by their landlords, Isos Housing. He suggested that the Isos move to impose a service charge was in response to the decision by the Government to require housing associations to reduce tenants' rents: the service charge would 'claw back' income that would otherwise be lost. Cllr Futers that a small group (that is, of tenants) would end up paying for all residents to benefit. The Clerk noted that the recent report in the Hexham Courant had presented a clear explanation of the matter from Isos' perspective.

Cllr Mrs E Burt stated that County Council Dickinson was raising this issue with Isos, and she suggested that the Council could write to the NCC Portfolio Holder, County Councillor Allan Hepple to express its concern.

Cllr A Reid stated that an Isos spokesperson had explained to him that the service charge was paid by tenants outside Tynedale. Cllr Reid noted that anomalies had arisen when council housing and amenity land was taken on by housing associations. He gave an example where a tenants' parking scheme in West Wylam was reportedly not being proceeded with by Isos because the facilities being provided would be used by tenants and non-tenants alike.

Following further discussion, **it was AGREED** to write to Cllr A Hepple, NCC Portfolio Holder for Planning, Housing and Regeneration to express concern at the introduction by Isos Housing of the tenants' service charge, and to seek NCC's response, with the caveat that if the response was not satisfactory, the Council could request Isos to attend a meeting with the Council.

Proposed Cllr Mrs E Burt Seconded Cllr G Simpson

1516/1081 CEMETERY & MEMORIAL SUB-COMMITTEE

Responding to Cllr G Simpson, the Clerk stated that was little to be added to the report concerning the registration of the Council's title to the Old Cemetery: having previously supplied all requested evidence and documentation, the Council was continuing to chase progress on the registration.

Responding to Cllr Mrs Cuthbert, Cllr B Futers stated that the Cemetery Attendant had reported that dog owners brought their pets into the cemetery, let them 'do their business' and then left without clearing up after their pet. Cllr Futers added that the Attendant had confronted some pet owners. Cllr Futers

suggested that the practice of other cemeteries be followed, while Cllr Mrs Burt suggested that the cemeteries were not an appropriate place for dogs. The Clerk advised that he was researching as to the practice elsewhere in respect of (i) dog fouling in cemeteries and (2) the admission of dogs to cemeteries provided they were kept on a leash. Cllr A Piper noted that there might well be occasions when people did wish to visit graves with their dogs.

It was AGREED to recommend to the Council that dogs be no longer be permitted in the cemeteries even if on a leash.

Proposed Cllr B Futers Seconded Cllr Mrs E Burt

Noting that the change in opening times related only to the information on the cemetery notice boards, and that the Cemeteries were meant to be open from 8am, **it was AGREED** to amend the notice boards to state the opening time as 8am

Proposed Cllr B Futers Seconded Cllr G Simpson

1516/1082 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

The Clerk referred the meeting to the update supplied with the meeting papers. He provided an update, obtained from the contractor, concerning the remote control equipment. This had established that the £800 purchase cost would buy *new* remote 'sender' equipment. This had a manufacturer's life of three years, but the contractor reported that by replacing the batteries, they had equipment of this kind which had lasted for ten years. Compared with the cost of renting the existing equipment at £480, the purchase cost would be absorbed in less than two years.

It was AGREED to purchase the new remote sending equipment from Christmas Plus at a cost of £800 plus VAT.

Proposed Cllr G Simpson Seconded Cllr Mrs E Burt

1516/1083 NORTHUMBERLAND WILDLIFE TRUST: PRIESTCLOSE WOOD – DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Clerk stated that the Northumberland Wildlife Trust had been required to produce a Management Plan for submission to the Forestry Commission, and that the Council was being given an opportunity to submit its comments to the Trust. Cllr G Simpson stated that he thought the Management Plan was reasonable, but that there was a balance to be struck between increasing public access to the reserve and ensuring the continued protection of sensitive areas in the reserve. Cllr B Futers spoke of the need to ensure that the existing paths were not overgrown. The Clerk noted that a significant part of the Draft Plan focused on the need to remove invasive, non-native species.

It was AGREED to respond to the consultation noting the need to strike the balance described by Cllr Simpson, welcoming the removal of non-native species, and urging that work also focus on improved access to the reserve and better signage.

Proposed Cllr G Simpson Seconded Cllr B Futers

1516/1084 METHODIST CHURCH 'JUBILEE' FLOWER BED

The Clerk advised that Option C was the option recommended by the Council's specialist landscape contractor, Hollybush Landscaping, as this would provide a permanent solution and make the incline of the bed shallower, and therefore easier and safer to maintain. Cllr Mrs E Burt noted that this was the town's 'stand-out' bed.

It was AGREED to accept Option 'C' in respect of the 'Jubilee' flower bed, involving the rebuilding of the external structure of the bed at a cost of £750 for materials, £1250 for labour, with the work to be carried out by Hollybush Landscaping.

Proposed Cllr Mrs C Cuthbert Seconded Cllr Ms J Rose

END OF MEETING