

**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 13 July 2016**

**PRESENT** Cllr Mrs J McGee (Chair), Cllr G Simpson, Cllr A Gill, Cllr G McCreedy, Cllr Ms J Rose, Cllr A Reid, Cllr Mrs E Burt, Cllr E Dobson, Cllr G Price. In attendance: R Whinney (Clerk)

**1617/1010 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** Cllr Mrs C Cuthbert, Cllr Mrs N McGee, Cllr B Futers

**1617/1011 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** None

**1617/1012 RESIGNATION FROM MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEE**

The resignation of Cllr B Futers was received.

**1617/1013 APPOINTMENT TO MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEE**

Cllr G Simpson noted that the review of the remit of the Committee could lead to a reduction in the membership thereof, and Cllr E Dobson noted that there had to be a councillor who was prepared to serve.

With these points noted, **it was AGREED** that Cllr Mrs Burt be elected as a member of the Committee.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs J McGee Seconded: Cllr G Price

**1617/ 1014 ANNUAL RETURN TO EXTERNAL AUDITOR – EXTENSION OF TIME FOR SUBMISSION**

The Clerk reported that, following consultation with the Chair, he had approached the External Auditor with a request to extend the deadline for submission of the Annual Return, and that the External Auditor had agreed that the Return could be submitted to arrive no later than 1 August.

It was agreed to receive this update.

**1617/1015 PRUDHOE WALLED GARDEN GROUP**

Cllr Mrs J McGee requested, and the meeting agreed to receive this item for consideration.

Cllr Mrs McGee reported the Prudhoe Walled Garden Group's update to the Council, made by a member of the Group, as follows:

"I am writing to the Town Council on behalf of the Prudhoe Walled Garden Group. In recent months the group has been revitalised by new ideas put to the group by a local chef. We are therefore working hard to put together a clear vision for the future of the Garden. This includes a kitchen garden that caters for a wide range of people, from all walks of life, coming together to learn, work and most of all to enjoy the space. Mainly used as a therapeutic and learning space, Prudhoe Walled Garden will include a fully functional kitchen. The kitchen aims to develop and improve the skill sets of budding young cooks and help young and old from all backgrounds and abilities, to appreciate the benefits of growing and cooking your own produce. the Prudhoe Walled Garden and kitchen also looks to be the place where we can grow and craft edible goods such as preserves and breads for sale to local residents. Additionally it could provide a location for courses for residents wishing to engage with heritage crafts. Once fully functional we believe it could expand further and offer other opportunities.

At this point we believe it would be very helpful to have clear written expressions of support for the project and it would be particularly important in approaching potential users of the future services if the Town Council felt able to offer such support."

Cllr Mrs McGee noted that the request did not refer to any type, quantity or timescale of support, and she suggested that the Council should respond offering the support requested, and inviting the Group to attend a future meeting of the Council to present an update on its plans.

**It was AGREED** to respond to the Prudhoe Walled Garden Group, advising the Council's support for the vision, and inviting the Group to attend a future meeting of the Council.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs J McGee      Seconded: Cllr G Simpson

*It was resolved that, in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the press and public be excluded for consideration of the following item, in accordance with section 68 of the Council's Standing Orders:*

Proposed: Cllr Mrs J McGee      Seconded: Cllr G Simpson

#### **1617/1016 TOWN COUNCIL SUPPORT**

Hard copies of the information previously emailed to councillors was tabled and received.

Following a brief discussion, **it was AGREED** to engage the support of the professional recommended by the North-East Regional Employers' Organisation.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs J McGee      Seconded Cllr G Simpson

In respect of the questions asked by the Administrator, following a discussion **it was AGREED** to seek the advice of the Northumberland Association of Local Councils with respect to the proper way for the Council to consider this matter, noting that if it was found proper for the Human Resources Committee to deal with the matter, any councillor should be permitted to provide evidence to the Committee. **It was also AGREED** that the matter ought to be dealt with by the July Ordinary Meeting at the latest, by means of a special meeting of the Council if this was found to be necessary.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs J McGee      Seconded: Cllr E Dobson

In response to a question asked by Cllr A Gill, the Clerk confirmed that The Administrator had now been appointed as the Council's Responsible Financial Officer.

#### **1617/1017 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS EVENT**

At the request of the Chairman, the Clerk made a report on an approach by an external body regarding this event.

Following a discussion, **it was AGREED** to make a response to the external body expressing the Council's interest in a proposal that might be forthcoming.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs J McGee      Seconded: Cllr G Simpson

At this point, the meeting was declared re-opened to the press and the public.

Cllr G Simpson took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

#### **1617/1018 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING CONTRACT & WORKS COMMITTEE HELD ON 8 JUNE 2016**

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

Proposed: Cllr Mrs E Burt      Seconded: Cllr Mrs J McGee

#### **1617/1019 MATTERS ARISING.**

1516/1107 Eastwoods Park: Cllr Mrs J McGee reported that the meeting held on 7 July with representatives of NCC / Active Northumberland had made some progress, and she stated that a site meeting was taking place at the Park on 14 July, starting at 10.00am. She stated that a report would be brought to the July Ordinary Meeting.

1516/1100 Re: War Memorial / Lychgate – Faculty Application: the Clerk reported that the 28-day public notice period was about to expire, and that once this had happened the next stage of the process – the submission of the application to the Chancellor of the Diocese of Newcastle – could take place. This information was received.

## 1. Planning Notifications received

### Pre-application consultation

#### Prudhoe West & Halfway Ward

#### Planning Ref. 16/00232/PREAPP

Proposal: Full planning permission sought for the erection of 74 houses with associated landscaping and means of access

Location: Land to East of School, Highfield Lane, Prudhoe, Northumberland NE42 6EY

Applicant: Barratt Homes North East (Amy Ward), Barratt House, City West Business Park, Scotswood Road, Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 7DF

Response date: 26 July 2016

Cllr G Simpson read the letter from the resident listing a series of issues and requesting that the Council investigate and report on these.

Cllr A Reid advised the meeting that he would make no comment on this application.

Cllr G McCreedy stated that he endorsed the resident's letter, and stated that there was a lot of interest and concern in this matter, and that a public consultation was needed, with the opportunity for residents to make their views known.

Following a discussion, in the course of which Cllr Mrs J McGee presented the meeting with details of the concerns she felt regarding the project, **it was AGREED** to respond listing the Council's concerns as raised at the meeting and drawing on the Council's previous responses to the Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy in respect of development generally in this sector of the town, with the draft response to be circulated to all councillors before it was submitted to the Planning Authority. **It was also AGREED** that the developer and the Planning Authority be invited to attend a public consultation on the proposals.

Proposed: Cllr G McCreedy      Seconded: Cllr G Price

The Committee's agreed response to the pre-application consultation was as follows:

### **Mining / quarrying activity: safety and stability concerns**

Noting the long history of mining / quarrying operations in this location, *Prudhoe Town Council considers that* there must be exhaustive on-site investigation / testing of the condition and ground stability of the proposed development location, and full reporting of the findings, including the nature and scope of the ground stabilisation works that the history of the site suggests are required, especially since the site is understood to have lain disused for 45 years.

### **Water run-off and sewerage**

*The Council asks the following questions* in respect of water run-off and sewerage:

- (1) Has Northumbrian Water Limited been informed of this proposed development or asked to respond as a consultee?
- (2) What assessment has been made of the impact on *existing* drainage systems of the additional capacity required to deal with the sewerage generated by the proposed development? At what point would the flows from the proposed development be connected into the existing sewerage infrastructure?
- (3) What assessment has been made of the potential impact of the surface water run-off which would arise from the huge increase in hard surfacing generated by this large-scale housing development?

### **Highway access and traffic issues**

*The Council considers that* the existing road network in the area is inadequate to cope with the proposed development, both during any construction phase or subsequently. At peak times, Highfield Lane, in

origin a narrow country lane connecting the town with the hamlet of High Mickley, already copes with traffic levels at or exceeding its capacity. The majority of the additional traffic generated by the proposed development would travel into the town centre down the already congested route via Highfield Lane and South Road. Even the Planning Authority's own Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2015 (SHLAA 2015) states that "the level of traffic generated may result in capacity issues on the network (Highfield Lane)". There is no scope in the town's highway network as a whole for the "significant access and network improvements [that SHLAA 2015 suggests] would be required to support a development of this scale [that is, the large scale housing developments envisaged in the SHLAA of the sites south of Highfield Lane]."

*The Council considers that* the addition of the substantial volumes of traffic originating in this area as described in the Scoping Report would add significantly to existing safety concerns for motorists and pedestrians, centred around school crossing points and road junctions.

*The Council considers that* the roundabout shown in the document 'Draft Layout Plan' (meant to be 'Plan'?) is a cosmetic offering that will do nothing to increase road capacity: *the Council suggests that* a roundabout would create additional safety concerns for the many hundreds of children attending the local schools, particularly those being dropped-off / collected by car or coach, and having to cross the road at / in the vicinity of the roundabout.

*The Council questions* the data quoted in the Scoping Report supplied with the pre-application: this data would appear to be of dubious value, based as it is on a total of 65 dwellings rather than the 74 indicated in the application itself.

### **Landscape and amenity**

The Council notes that the location of the proposed development is a field with a long-established Public Right of Way running through it. The right of way provides the whole settlement with free access to the clear open space of Prudhoe Moor. *The Council considers that* the impact of the potential loss of this amenity land, and of the impacts on wildlife habitats (principally those of bats, hedgehogs and birds) in these sites, must be assessed by way of an exhaustive on-site ecological survey.

*The Council recognises and supports* the concerns of existing residents with regard to the impact on their amenity of any development of this site.

### **Infrastructure**

*The Council requests that* Northumberland County Council, as the Planning Authority, demonstrates that it is working with service providers to understand the local infrastructure needs, to assess the quality and capacity of existing infrastructure, and to deliver assessed quantified infrastructure needs in a timely fashion. This requirement, stated in the National Planning Policy Framework, applies to the follows elements of infrastructure:

- Transport
- Water supply
- Waste water and the treatment thereof
- Energy (including heat)
- Telecommunications
- Utilities
- Health
- Social care
- Education
- Flood risk

*The Council considers that costs relating to the necessary improvements in these sectors in relation to the additional demands created by the proposed development must be met by the developer in the form of section 106 undertakings / funding.*

### **Planning Authority's own assessment of site 2337**

*The Council questions the wide discrepancy in the assessments of the proposed development site, which is numbered 2337 in the County Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), and in particular how the precise, factual observations and conclusions of the 2014 SHLAA have been superseded by the speculative assessments of the 2015 SHLAA, as set out in the two following paragraphs.*

The 2014 SHLAA stated as follows in respect of site 2337: Comment on suitability "Not suitable: Attractive, peripheral greenfield site to south of settlement, close to schools. Poor sight lines on highway due to bends and gradient, in location close to school entrance, prevents housing. Restricted water capacity." The site was coloured red on the site map, indicating that it had been completely discounted for housing development purposes.

However, in the 2015 SHLAA, now noting "developer interest in the site" the land at 2337 has now been designated as Suitable, as follows "Attractive, peripheral greenfield site to south of settlement, close to schools, not in the Green Belt. Access gained off Highfield Lane. Poor sight lines on highway due to bends and gradient, in location close to school entrance. The level of traffic generated may result in capacity issues on the network (Highfield Lane), particularly if considered as part of a larger scheme in conjunction with adjacent sites. Significant network and access improvements would be required to support a development of this scale. Would benefit from wider masterplanning to consider the cumulative impact of identified deliverable and developable SHLAA sites in the surrounding area. Restricted water capacity. Site is located in a Coal Authority development high risk area. Therefore a Coal Mining Risk Assessment will be required." The site is now coloured green to indicate deliverability in the next 6 to 10 years.

### **Public interest and previous applications**

*The Council notes the extensive interest / concern aroused in local residents by the issue of this pre-application, and it was agreed that the Council should contact both the Planning Authority and the developer to urge public consultation in respect of any development on this site. It was also stated that previous applications in respect of much smaller-scale development of this site had been refused, and further denied on appeal.*

The Council will be contacting both the Planning Authority and the developer under separate cover to request that they attend a public meeting with the Council to allow residents to make their views known.

### **Prudhoe West & Halfway Ward**

#### **Planning Ref. 16/01484/CCD**

Proposal: Proposed single storey extension to front elevation and various internal alterations. Proposed single storey rear extension to create two additional classrooms

Location: Highfield Middle School, Highfield Lane, Prudhoe, Northumberland NE42 6EY

Applicant: Mr Richard Oades (address as above)

Response date: 25 July 2016

**It was AGREED** to respond SUPPORTING the application

Proposed: Cllr G McCreedy      Seconded: Cllr A Gill

## **Mickley Ward**

### **Planning Ref. 16/02050/FUL**

Proposal: Erection of a dwellinghouse

Location: Land Adjacent to the Hemmel, Hallyards Farm, Stonybank Way, West Mickley, Stocksfield Northumberland NE43 7LR

Applicant: Mr and Mrs Tim Healy (address c/o agent)

Response date: 18 July 2016

**It was AGREED** to respond SUPPORTING the application

Proposed: Cllr Mrs J McGee      Seconded: Cllr E Dobson

## **2. Planning Notifications received**

### **Prudhoe West & Halfway Ward**

#### **Planning Ref. 16/01519/VARYCO**

Proposal: Variation of Condition 3 (Approved Plans)

Location: 33 Otterburn Way, Bewick Grange, Prudhoe, Northumberland NE42 6RD

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Granville Kelly (address as above)

Response date: 2 June 2016

**Northumberland County Council decided to GRANT permission**

[The Council had responded Supporting the application]

### **Prudhoe Hall Ward Planning**

#### **Ref. 16/01395/FUL**

Proposal: Installation of one rooflight (1000mm x 1500mm) in flat roof over kitchen and installation of one rooflight (600mm x 600mm) in flat roof over bathroom

Location: 23 Moorlands, Prudhoe, Northumberland NE42 5LR

Applicant: Mr Roy Douthwaite (address as above)

Response date: 1 June 2016

**Northumberland County Council decided to GRANT permission**

[The Council had responded Supporting the application]

### **General – West Wylam Ward**

#### **Planning Ref. 16/00635/CCD**

Proposal: Demolition of former vacant school, caretaker bungalow and associated buildings on site. Modifications to access points onto site, removal of vegetation and hardstandings and installation of new football pitches (grass) including sports fencing and netting. Installation of 70 new car parking to east of site on council owned playing fields.

Location: Eastwood County Middle School, Broomhouse Road, Prudhoe, Northumberland NE42 5EJ

Applicant: Mr Mike Turner, Northumberland County Council, County Hall, Morpeth, Northumberland NE61 2EF

Response date: 9 May 2016

**Northumberland County Council decided to GRANT permission**

[The Council had responded Supporting the application]

**It was AGREED** to receive the notifications

Proposed Cllr A Gill      Seconded Cllr G McCreedy

## **1617/1021 CEMETERY & MEMORIAL SUB-COMMITTEE**

Cllr A Gill stated that two meetings had taken place. He noted that David Hunt and David Robson of NCC had attended the first of these, at which it had emerged that they had not had sight of the service contract for the cemeteries, which had been agreed with the previous NCC officers responsible. Cllr Gill noted that more grass-cutting was now taking place, and that the grass was now maintained to a better standard. He referred to problems with bin-emptying at the cemeteries, which had been affected by damage to NCC's equipment in the floods of late 2015. He reminded the meeting that the signs promised for the

cemeteries by the end of financial year 2015-16 had yet to be installed, and it was noted that this could be raised at the meeting of the Neighbourhood Management Group on 20 July. Cllr Mrs E Burt noted that she could raise the matter at the meeting of the Central Area Committee on 14 July. Lastly, Cllr Gill noted that a resident who had complained at the exclusion of dogs from the cemeteries had had a letter published in the Hexham Courant.

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

Proposed: Cllr A Gill                      Seconded: Cllr G Simpson

#### **1617/1022    HIGHFIELD PARK: PEDESTRIAN ACCESS – TENDERS AND FUNDING**

Cllr Mrs E Burt stated that she was disappointed at the lack of progress on this matter. She stated that she wanted to see the access installed before the Kite Festival. Cllr G Simpson stated that the matter was not controversial, and requested action, and it was agreed that a report should be brought to the August meeting of the Committee.

#### **1617/1023    HIGHFIELD PARK: INSTALLATION OF SEATS**

Cllr G McCreedy echoed the views of Cllr Mrs E Burt in the preceding item, stating that nothing had happened regarding these seats. He noted that there was shortage of seats in the park over the holidays, and urged that the seats be installed as soon as possible. He advised that the Motor Project at the East Centre would be spray-painting the seats in the near future at a cost for materials of £250.

It was agreed that this matter should be prioritised, with the addition to the works of the seat that had previously been removed from the junior play area to the NCC Low Prudhoe depot for safe keeping.

#### **1617/1024    LITTER BINS: RE-DEPLOYMENT**

Following a discussion, **it was AGREED** that the single bins to be re-deployed in the town from Highfield Park should be installed at – the Falcon – Stonyflat Bank – Station Bank.

Proposed: Cllr G Simpson                      Seconded: Cllr Mrs E Burt

#### **1617/1025    FORMER WINDSOR BAKERY SITE: BARRIER PLANTERS AND STANDALONE PLANTERS**

It was agreed that councillors with suggestions for the re-positioning of these planters pending the demolition / building works at the former bakery site should contact the Clerk.

*It was resolved that, in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the press and public be excluded for consideration of the following item, in accordance with section 68 of the Council's Standing Orders:*

Proposed: Cllr Mrs J McGee                      Seconded: Cllr G Simpson

#### **1617/1026    EDGEWELL CEMETERIES: SIGNAGE**

Cllr A Gill stated that of the three quotations sought for the alterations to the signage within the cemeteries, two had been received.

Following a brief discussion, **it was AGREED** to accept the quotation for the amended signage from Robin Watson Sign & Design at a cost of £795.00 plus VAT.

Proposed: Cllr A Gill                      Seconded: Cllr Mrs E Burt

Cllr A Gill raised the issue of vehicles not belonging to visitors to the cemeteries being parked in the car park at the New Cemetery. The Clerk suggested that the new signage, which would explicitly state that the car park was for the use of visitors, would make it easier for the council to require non-visitors to remove their cars from the car park.

**END OF MEETING**