

Present

Cllr Bryan Futers, Cllr Tracy Gilmore, Cllr Chris Cuthbert, , Cllr Gerry Price, Cllr Carol Stephenson, Cllr Duncan Couchman, Cllr Jane Johnson, Cllr Chris Barrett, Cllr Ignasious Varghese, Cllr Glenn Simpson, Cllr Jonathan Wheeler

Shirley Ann Gaut (Clerk)

Stephanie Kirby (Deputy Clerk)

OM2223/076 Welcome by Chair

Meeting opened by Chair Cllr Bryan Futers.

OM2223/077 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Dot Dickinson, Cllr Angie Scott (and County Councillor for Prudhoe North), Cllr Kiran Bell, County Councillor Gordon Stewart (Prudhoe South)

OM2223/078 Declarations of Interest

To receive any declarations of interest.

OPM2223/079 Dispensations

None received.

OM2223/080 Public Participation

No items of public participation received.

OM2223/081 Friends of Eastwoods Park/Miners Lamp Community Café and Hub

Cllr Bryan Futers welcomed Russ Greig, Project Manager and trustee Alex Bond from Friends of Eastwoods Park/Miners Lamp Community Café and Hub.

Russ and Alex explained the 'cost of living crisis', some might not feel it, but we have all witnessed the rises in cost of food in our shopping basket. Likewise, the ominous wait of increased energy bills. Sadly though, the struggle to feed their families or heat their homes has been a reality for some time even before the 'cost of living crisis' term was coined.

Whilst their food bank is not the largest around. They are getting requests for support from more and more people. Individuals from all ages in life, increasingly those in retirement who are increasingly worried. What is more worrying, is that those they support through their food bank and other services are those who will be worst hit.

Households on pre-payment meters, who previously paid a higher price for energy anyway, because of having a pre-payment meter, akin to those whose credit rating is not the best, are often offered interest rates on loans at a higher rate. It is fair to say it costs you more to be poor!

They have recognised for some time that their food bank service is and has just been a sticking plaster of a bigger problem. They recognise that they do need to do more to look at the root cause or issues why people need help. But also have to ensure that people can 'live'. They have recently launched a Household Support Scheme. A fund of £10,000.00, they have secured this, which means they can provide small grants to individuals and households towards gas, electricity, solid fuel, or water charges. Sadly administering such a scheme is not an easy task for such a small organisation, but we know that people need more support.

Prudhoe has the second and third most deprived areas in West Northumberland, these being West Wylam and Oaklands. Life expectancy is reduced in these areas.

1 Chair's Signature/Initial

Russ explained they are able to apply on before of residents for Greggs Hardship Fund Grant which has been set up to help people purchase individual items that can make a huge difference to family life - such as beds, carpets or washing machine.

We are therefore looking to Prudhoe Town Council to help support us with our scheme. £10,000.00 will not go far in a town the size of Prudhoe, and this may mean that the Miners Lamp Community Cafe and Hub Eastwoods Park Eastwoods Road Prudhoe Northumberland NE42 5DT only support around 250 households in Prudhoe and Mickley. Given our town has over 5,000 households and around 12,000 residents it is not enough.

Since the Friends of Eastwoods Park was created, they have supported our town through Covid, between April 2020 and 2021 the first year of Covid. The charity spent nearly £80,000.00 on the direct delivery of services and support as part of a Covid response, this included £3,500 from Prudhoe Town Council. Not to mention redistributing over 35 tonnes of food which would have gone to landfill, and many many more tonnes of food which was donated to us to support people with food parcels.

Now facing an even greater threat than Covid, however finding grant funding is becoming increasingly difficult for many organisations like ours. Many charities such as the Miners Lamp are competing with each other to secure funding to support their communities. They would therefore like Prudhoe Town Council to increase their household support scheme from the £10,000.00 they have already secured with a contribution so they can help even more of those facing difficult choices this winter.

Cllr Bryan Futers explained the budget for 2022/2023 had already been set.

Cllr Christine Cuthbert suggested the council would be able to better advise financial position once the Finance Committee have met, regarding any possible financial contribution.

The councillors thanked both Russ and Alex for their time.

It was AGREED the councillors would contribute towards food parcels, there are various drop off points including the Miners Lamp Café which is accessible weekdays 10am-2pm and weekends 10-4pm.

OM2223/082 Draft Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 27th October 2022.

It was AGREED to receive the minutes as a true record; however it was noted report from County Councillor Anne Dale be removed as it was late/not presented at the meeting.

OM2223/083 Reports

a) Chair's Report

Cllr Bryan Futers gave the following verbal report:-

Remembrance Day Parade,

Highlight once again wearing Grandfather's medals, grandson marched with the Scouts, and I marched with my granddaughter with the Brownies.

West Northumberland Foodbank

The service purchase food vouchers from local businesses which can then be passed to their users. G&F Threadgold are really enthusiastic and have become part of the scheme. I also contacted Just Meat at Low Prudhoe; West Northumberland Foodbank have confirmed since

my visit they are positive about becoming involved as they are already part of a similar scheme in Newcastle.

I also had an opportunity to meet with Essity and have advised they already support the scheme, however I will contact West Northumberland Foodbank to see if they are still receiving donations, if not Essity will resume donations.

Essity – Apprenticeships

Invited to attend a launch of their own Apprenticeship Scheme on 23 November 2022. Training will be in-house, rather than being outsourced to external providers. This has been developed as it was recognised there is nothing of its kind in the North East. Very much a proud Prudhoe moment.

The Headteacher from Prudhoe High School, the European Director of Essity, representative from Swedish Consulate was also present. It is envisaged that young people across Europe will be trained at Prudhoe, becoming a centre of excellence,

b) Clerk's Report

The Clerk gave the following verbal report:-

Remembrance Parade Sunday 13 November

Blue skies and the sun shone for Prudhoe's Remembrance Parade. Many gathered to watch the Parade led by North Tyneside Pipe Band, from the Legion Car Park to Front Street, along to Lychgate War Memorial at St Mary Magdalene Church. To commemorate those who have fallen.

The Church Service followed the laying of wreaths, the first wreath was laid on behalf of His Majesty the King, representing the Lord Lieutenant of Northumberland, Deputy Lieutenant Rodrica Straker, followed by Cllr Bryan Futers, Mayor of Prudhoe on behalf of The People of Prudhoe.

Wreaths were laid on behalf of The Royal British Legion Prudhoe and District Branch, Armed Services, and local groups/organisations. This year with new additions included North East Ambulance Service, and Councillor Tracy Gilmore laid a wreath on behalf of the animals.

Office Door

Officer door has been now replaced with part glass panel.

c) County Cllrs Reports

The following written reports were received:-

County Cllr Angie Scott (Prudhoe North)

Drill Hall – NCC will hopefully have an update in December regarding this building.

Property on West Rd – (Old Butchers) An officer from Public Protection has been out to the site.

The feedback is that the premises is secure apart from one window which it is stated is not accessible.

Efforts are being made to find a current owner and advise to get the window boarded up before winter arrives.

No issues were highlighted in terms of the structure of the building.

Karbon Homes have been contacted about an issue with parking around Errington Place.

Tyne riverside Café are holding a Christmas Charity Market Sunday 27th November 10am till 3PM In aid of the Angie Scott Xmas appeal.

The Angie Scott Xmas Appeal is running again this year! The appeal is to support local families – Lots of donations have already been donated. We are working with Fiona from Friends of Eastwood Park and the family hub.

Cllr Chris Cuthbert asked what donations are required. Cllr Tracy Gilmore also asked how donations are allocated. **It was AGREED** The Clerk will contact Cllr Angie Scott to ascertain.

County Cllr Gordon Stewart (Prudhoe South)

County Councillor report to Prudhoe Town Council 24th November 2022.

County Cllr Gordon Stewart also thanked Prudhoe Town Council for the floral and light displays.

Borderlands deal

Progressing .

See dedicated webpage-

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Economy-Regeneration/Programmes/Borderlands-Place-Programme/Prudhoe-Borderlands.aspx>

Land south of Broomhouse lane - Planning applications

- Housing - Application has now been submitted.
- I am in support of the buildings on the site, but not this application because of concerns over access.
- Extra care centre- This is still in a pre app stage.
I believe this will be submitted.

The Haven

Work is on schedule.

Gentoo

I am in very regular contact with Gentoo dealing with residents queries and other matters relevant to the site.

Humbles Wood play area

Gentoo & NCC Planning - Legal teams are in discussions

Prudhoe Walled Garden

Discussions between NCC Planners, Gentoo & Homes England have commenced and some positivity at this time.

Road repairs.

Umfraville Dene entrance.- Major issues at the hammer head Northumbrian Water are dealing.

Park Ave large patch

Fix my street website is being considered by NCC offering a better service to the public.

Moor road safety improvements

PTC have been informed.

Cockshott Dene

Improvements well received.

ASB

Many reports are being made about M Bikes/ Quads/ Electric scooters. - The Police are aware

Dropped kerbs

I am keen to increase the number of dropped kerbs around my ward, several have already been installed

Cost of living

PTC is encouraged to signpost residents to support available

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Home.aspx>

I am in regular contact with partners / professionals / residents re this issue.

In addition supporting those seeking employment. Incl working with professionals and businesses.

OM2223/084 Financial Update

To receive reports and raise any questions

a) *Schedule of Accounts Paid/To be Paid*

It was AGREED to endorse those accounts paid via delegated authority, and approve those accounts to be paid, since 27th October 2022 (enc)ⁱⁱ

b) *Bank Reconciliation*

It was AGREED to receive Bank Reconciliation from 8 October - 9 November 2022 (enc)ⁱⁱⁱ

OM2223/085 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), year ending March 2022

a) *External Auditor Report/Certificate*

It was AGREED to receive External Auditor Report/Certificate, with no matters requiring action. Attention was to that the smaller authority did not comply with Regulation 15 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 as it failed to make proper provision during the year 2022/23 for the exercise of public rights, since period for the exercise of public rights did not include the first 10 working days of July. As a result, the smaller authority must answer 'No' to Assertion 4 of the Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23 and ensure that it makes proper provision for the exercise of public rights during 2023/24.

b) *Notice of Conclusion of Audit*

It was AGREED to post Notice of Conclusion of Audit on the Town Council's website, alongside Annual Governance and Accountability Return, year ending March 2022.

OM2223/086 Internal Auditor, year ending March 2023

It was AGREED to appoint Susan Saunders of Scothcoulthard Bookkeeping Services as Internal Auditor for year ending March 2023.

OM2223/087 Budget 2023/2024

It was AGREED budget preparation for 2023/2024 including projects, funding, and reviewing current budget in view of setting precept, will be postponed until a Finance Committee meeting has taken place.

OM2223/088 Grant Aid 2023/24

a) **It was AGREED** Grant Aid will be launched 6th February with a deadline of 10th March 2022. Notification will be sent to groups/organisations in January to advise applications will be open February.

b) **It was AGREED** the following Councillors will review Grant Aid applications in the first instance and make recommendations for awards of Grant Aid to the full council:-

- Cllr Bryan Futers
- Cllr Tracy Gilmore
- Cllr Chris Cuthbert
- Cllr Carol Stephenson
- Cllr Chris Barrett

OM2223/089 Meeting dates 2022/2023

It was AGREED the following meetings will be held:-

a) 15 December 2022, this will be a joint meeting with Planning, Contract and Works Committee.

b) 2023 the Ordinary Meeting will continue to meet at 7pm on the fourth Thursday of each month, and the Planning, Contract and Works Committee meeting will continue to meet at 7pm on the second Thursday of each month.

OM2223/090 Highfield Skatepark

To consider the following:-

a) Flooding - email sent to Canvas regarding recent flooding, request for solutions, this issue should have been built into the original design and build. The Clerk noted that additional drainage was not in the original plan. **It was AGREED** to seek professional advice regarding drainage onsite.

b) Fencing of the skatepark with designated entry points and access for wheelchairs, local contractors to be contacted. **It was AGREED** this will be considered as a future project.

c) Landscaping – local contractors to be contacted re tidying up/removal of concrete/stone from topsoil. **It was AGREED** to contact local companies to quote for work to be carried out.

OM2223/091 Borderlands Update

Cllr Tracy Gilmore and Cllr Chris Cuthbert confirmed they had attended a meeting on 13 October 2022, they agreed that it is a very lengthy process. Surveys have been completed and information generated at meeting will be fed back.

It was AGREED Cllr Chris Cuthbert would forward the meeting minutes to all Councillors.

OM2223/092 Prudhoe Town Football Club

It was AGREED the Clerk will seek legal advice regarding request to update current lease name change to Prudhoe Town Football Club from Prudhoe East End Association Football Club.

OM2223/093 Correspondence

To receive, and to agree any matters to be added to future agenda:-

- a) West Northumberland Sports Awards – email invitation to attend Thursday 8th December 2022 at QE High School Hexham 6pm (*email circulated to councillors*) – **It was AGREED** Cllr Tracy Gilmore will attend, and provisionally Cllr Duncan Couchman.
- b) Northumbria Police Neighbourhood Officer – address any policing issues. **It was AGREED** to invite to a future meeting.
- c) Copy of letter sent to Go North East from resident regarding 10,10B and 686 Services. **It was AGREED** to invite a representative from Go North East to a future meeting.

OM2223/094 Exclusion of the Press and Public

It was AGREED to agree to approve a motion to invoke Standing Order 2d) to exclude the press and public, in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, permitted under Schedule (12A) Local Government Act 1972.

OM2223/095 Staff Salary and Holiday Entitlement

It was AGREED the new pay scales for 2022-23 be implemented from 1 April 2022 and with effect from 1 April 2023 increase in paid annual leave.

OM2223/096 Highfield Skatepark

It was AGREED to endorse the final invoice from Canvas Spaces for completed works to date.

Meeting Ended.