

**DRAFT minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Prudhoe Town Council
held in Room 1 of The Spetchells Centre on Wednesday 27th
February 2019 Commencing at 7pm**

PRESENT

Cllr Tracy Gilmore (Chair), Cllr Gerry Price, Cllr Andy Gill, Cllr Chris Barrett, Cllr Angie Scott, Cllr Brian Futers, Cllr Chris Cuthbert, Cllr Jennifer McGee, Cllr Brenda Grey, Cllr Glenn Simpson, Cllr Duncan Couchman, Cllr Ignasious Varghase, Cllr Carol Stephenson.

Also in Attendance County Cllrs Anne Dale and Gordon Stewart

Officers Town Clerk & Administrative Officer

Welcome

Prior to commencing the formal business of the meeting, the Chair welcomed the newly elected Councillor for the Castle and Eltringham Ward, Councillor Chris Barrett.

OM 1819/175 Apologies for Absence

None received.

OM 1819/176 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Scott declared a pecuniary interest in item 11 as she is employed by Northumberland NHS Trust.

OM1819/177 Draft Report of The Extra Ordinary Budget meeting held on 23rd January 2019

It was AGREED to RECEIVE the report as a true and correct record.

Proposed Cllr Jennifer McGee Seconded Cllr Russ Greig

OM 1819/178 Draft Report of the Planning, Contract and Works Committee held on 13th February 2019

With the exception that the details of Members in attendance be corrected to show that Cllr Gerry Price was also in attendance and the deletion of the fact that Cllr Angie Scott was shown in attendance twice. **It was AGREED to RECEIVE** the report for information only.

OM 1819/179 County Councillor Reports

Cllr Anne Dale extended her thanks to the Town Clerk for her work and assistance in relation to the installation of the defibrillator in Mickley. She expressed her aspirations for the young people of Prudhoe and said that she hoped that something could be done by working collaboratively in order to preserve the East Centre as it was the only building in Prudhoe owned by Northumberland County Council, she suggested that the Town Council extend an invitation to the relevant cabinet member to discuss the East Centre. These comments were welcomed by Councillor McGee, who said that she felt that the County Council should be investing financially in the East. Councillor Dale also went on to suggest that the Town Council speak further to the Citizens Advice about the increase in the numbers of Council tax arrears in Prudhoe. The Chair advised that the Town Council received quarterly reports from the Citizens Advice.

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Cllr Stewart also said that he was in support of what the Town Council was hoping to achieve in relation to the East Centre and in relation to the Citizens Advice he advised that following conversations he was delighted to advise the meeting that their drop-in advice sessions would resume in Prudhoe from March 6th. He advised that matters were progressing with the Planning Department in relation to the retail development at Low Prudhoe and that it had been discovered that there had been an error in the Local Plan in relation to the site to the rear of the British Legion club and that this was being amended.

Cllr McGee said that she was pleased to hear that the plan was to be amended as she thought that the site to the rear of the legion was important as it incorporated 10 retail units, 60 parking spaces and 30 homes. She went on to say that she felt that it was important to clarify that at earlier planning stages the Town Council had supported both applications and that the town Council were working jointly with Prudhoe Community Partnership on the Front Street. Councillor McGee indicated that some Members were disappointed and concerned that the full application for the site to the rear of the legion had not come back to the Town Council prior to the full application at low Prudhoe because some Members were concerned that if the Low Prudhoe development went ahead first, then the Town Centre development may not proceed.

Cllr McGee also sought an update on the former Factory Shop and Councillor Stewart advised that the County Planning Officers were working with the interested party.

Cllr McGee then raised with Councillor Stewart a concern that had been raised with her on behalf of a resident who had initially approached Councillor Angie Scott about a response that they had received from Gentoo Homes in connection with their application for social housing on Cottier Grange. Councillor McGee advised that the resident in question was a young person with a child who had been identified as being in priority need of housing as they were currently residing, with their child, with their own parents. Cllr McGee read to the meeting an extract of the letter that the resident had received from Gentoo declining their application for housing on the Cottier Grange site on the basis that they alleged *“The house keeping standards (of their parents’ home) were not up to the required standard with poor quality décor and an untidy garden and no sign of regular payments on your bank statement”*

The Town Clerk advised that she had sought clarification from Home Finder on this matter who had confirmed that the Gentoo policy did override the housing need criteria applied by Home Finder.

Cllr Stewart advised that he had worked successfully with many individuals and that he was happy to work with anyone who had a housing concern.

Following further discussion and serious concern from Members **It was AGREED** that a representative of Gentoo be invited to a future meeting of the Council.

Proposed Cllr Jennifer McGee Seconded Cllr Glenn Simpson

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Cllr Chris Cuthbert raised with Cllr Stewart the issue of providing disabled parking bays in Prudhoe Town Centre he advised that this was being investigated, confirming that the new crossing on South Road would be completed during the school holidays.

Cllr Barrett suggested that at the same time the faded road markings near the school needed redoing.

Cllr Brenda Grey requested Cllr Stewart's support in having a dog waste bin installed at Tyne Riverside Park; the Town Clerk advised that correspondence on this had been passed to the relevant County Council officer.

OM 1819/180 Accounts

- a) **IT was AGREED** to receive the statement of expenditure 1st April 2018 – 19th February 2019
- b) **IT was AGREED** to receive the bank reconciliation 9th January – 8th February 2019
- c) **IT was AGREED** to endorse the payment of the circulated schedule of accounts paid since the January meeting and authorise payment of those accounts still due for payment as detailed on the circulated schedule.

Proposed Cllr Glenn Simpson Seconded Cllr Jennifer McGee

OM 1819 /181 Bob Stokoe Memorial Cup

Following Consideration of the previously circulated correspondence from Bridget Lawson, Activity Coordinator from Children and Young Peoples Services **IT was AGREED** that the Town Council would: -

- a) Help promote the event in the Town via the Town Council's website and Social media pages.
- b) Install Town Centre bunting in advance of the event.
- c) Organise and sponsor for the same sum as agreed in previous years, a "decorate your shop front" competition to support the event.

Proposed Cllr J McGee Seconded Cllr Tracy Gilmore

OM 1819/182 Prudhoe Miners Race

It was AGREED that Councillors Tracy McGee, Chris Barrett, Gerry Price, Angie Scott and Carol Stephenson would meet on an evening to review the aspirations of the Prudhoe Miners Race in order to agree recommendation(s) to full Council under what remit to seek "expressions of interest"

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OM 1819/183 Grant Aid 2019/20

It was AGREED that Councillors Tracy Gilmore, Gerry Price, Jennifer McGee, Chris Cuthbert, Russ Greig, Brenda Grey and Andy Gill meet on an evening to review the Grant Aid applications received in order to make recommendations to full Council in relation to the awards to be pledged.

OM 1819/184 Prudhoe Town Council /Prudhoe Community Partnership Liaison Meeting

It was AGREED to receive the report of the meeting held on 14th February 2019

OM 1819/185 Northumbria Specialist Emergency Care Hospital, Cramlington

Cllr Angie Scott had previously declared an interest in this item and took no part in the discussion that ensued and did not vote on this matter.

Concerns were raised by Cllr Jennifer McGee about matters she had personally witnessed whilst attending Cramlington hospital. Councillor McGee remarked that she had the highest regard for the hardworking hospital staff but that she did have serious concerns in relation to staff shortages, especially at night time; she was concerned about bed shortages; delays in bed allocation; long waiting times; delays in getting to see a doctor; and delays in the administration of pain relief to patients who were in obvious severe pain. She also expressed concern about the number of patients discharged only to be very shortly readmitted thereafter. It was queried as to whether the hospital was in fact operating how it was intended to when it was first planned and built. Councillor McGee's concerns were noted by the meeting and **IT was AGREED** to invite Sir Jim Mackie and /or representative(s) of Northumbria Healthcare Trust to a future Ordinary Meeting of the Council to discuss these concerns.

Proposed Cllr Jennifer McGee

Seconded Cllr Glenn Simpson

OM 1819/186 Reports from outside Bodies

a) East Tynedale Parish & Town Council Forum

Cllr Chris Cuthbert advised that the reference to Hexham in the matters arising part should refer to Prudhoe.

It was AGREED that the report be received.

b) Prudhoe Town Council Young People's Forum

Following considerable discussion and debate about the lack of clarity in relation to the role and remit of the forum and its interface with the Town Council and the Prudhoe Youth Project and the High School, Cllr Chris Barrett said that he would put these questions to Prudhoe Community High School and **It was AGREED** to receive the report of the meeting held on 17th January 2017 and invite a representative of the Forum to a future meeting of the Town Council.

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c) Prudhoe Youth Project

It was AGREED to receive the report of the meeting held on 16th January 2019

It was Further AGREED, in relation to the related tabled item of correspondence, that the Town Council confirms that they do require that the constitution of the Prudhoe Youth Project makes provision for two Town Council appointed Trustees.

OM1819/187 Correspondence & Publications

Correspondence

1. Northumberland Pride – letter from the organisation that was set up in 2017 to raise awareness of LGBT+ culture and heritage. The first Northumberland Pride was held in Alnwick in 2018 and was attended by 2,500 with a march by 500 people. The organisation was a winner of the Chronicle Champions Awards and a nominee in the National Diversity Awards. 2019 sees a celebration of WorldPride; 50 years since the Stonewall Riots with #Stonewall50 encouraging everyone to ‘come home for Northumberland Pride’. As well as asking the Prudhoe community to join the march on 1st June and attend the events throughout the week of Pride there is a request for financial support. **IT was AGREED** that the item be included on a future agenda so that consideration could be given as to whether the Town Council would make a grant under section 137 of The Local Government Act 1972.
2. A1 Alnwick to Ellington – consultation events on proposals for dualling Alnwick to Ellington, 25th February 2019 – 8th April 2019. **IT was AGREED** to receive this item for information only.
3. Northumberland Healthwatch – invite to board meeting on 12th March 2019, 10am in Hexham. This presents an opportunity to share experiences of health and social care in Northumberland directly with the board. Issues can also be raised directly with the Healthwatch Board via email (details have been given). Additionally, there is a February 2019 Newsletter and a survey with a closing date of 14th March 2019. The Town Council could consider attending the meeting and could also promote completion of the survey. **IT was AGREED** that those Members wishing to attend would inform the Town Clerk and to publicise the survey via the Town Council’s website
4. Northumberland County Council – Front Street resurfacing 11th March 15th March. **IT was AGREED** to receive this for information only, road closure details have been shared via the Town Council’s website and FB page.
5. Land of Oak and Iron (Cockshott Dene) – letter and detailed information relating to a project, backed by North of England Mining and Mechanical Engineers, Friends of Prudhoe Woods and Northumberland County archaeologists, to carry out a measured survey of the site and to plot all visible features. Following the plotting there will be a limited archaeological excavation, followed by a further investigation where necessary and further work to make safe and enhance the site. Running alongside the fieldwork will be a programme of research and it is hoped that Cockshott Dene will be enhanced in terms of local knowledge, overall appearance and safety, allowing it to move from the periphery to perform a more prominent role in

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communications, education and leisure for the town. Also, in view of the plans for a new Aldi site to the north, this represents a chance for Prudhoe to win a substantial community gain. **IT was AGREED** to receive this for information only.

6. Northumberland & Newcastle Society – request for support in objecting to the ‘soundness’ of the Northumberland Local Plan Publication Draft Plan in view that the area identified amounted to 66% of Northumberland’s available land mass, leaving residents very uncertain with regards foreseeable future wind turbine planning applications. **The Town Council has already responded to the Draft Plan.**

7. North East War Memorials Project – request for support to reach funding target of £45,000 to keep the NEWMP website going. **IT was AGREED** that the item be included on a future agenda so that consideration could be given as to whether the Town Council would make a grant under section 137 of The Local Government Act 1972

Publications

1. **Clerks and Councils Direct, March 2019**