



Minutes of meeting of joint working party with Prudhoe Town Council on future of town centre held at Spetchells Centre on Tuesday 7th May at 7pm

Present: Cty Cllr Anne Dale, Doreen Elwell (chair), Elizabeth Evans, Cllr Tracy Gilmour, George Hepburn, Cty Cllr Gordon Stewart, William Thompson, Iain Watt,

Apologies: Cty Cllr Ken Stow, Jill Keeler, Cllr Jennifer McGee

1 Minutes of meeting held on 2nd April were agreed.

2 Matters arising :

- (i) **Hanging baskets:** The Town Council is unable to arrange this in the current year. Agreed that William and George will approach traders to do them in their own right in conjunction with McGees. Anne suggested approaching Prudhoe in Bloom committee and Gordon offered to provide a contact.
- (ii) **20mph speed limit:** Gordon reported that he had received positive responses from local people to the idea and is waiting to hear from Council officers about the feasibility. Anne emphasised the importance of a well defined gateway to the town.
- (iii) **Visit to Haltwhistle** Gordon and George reported on their visit. Many difference between the two towns so not much transferrable experience. George was struck by how much more attractive the buildings and public spaces are in Haltwhistle.
- (iv) **Proposed visit to Stockton.** No response from Stockton Borough Council. Anne offered to follow up.

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3 Vision exercise

At the request of members at the last meeting, George facilitated a visioning exercise. The group considered the following vision statement:

Our vision is for activity-based community gathering places where retail is a smaller part of a wider range of uses and activities and where green space, leisure, arts and culture and health and social care services combine with housing to create a space based on social and community interactions. The town centre should be inclusive of people of all backgrounds and ages, and accessible to people of all levels of mobility. It can provide a centre for people to gather, to feel relaxed and to connect with others socially and is therefore important both for physical and mental wellbeing.

They considered that this broadly expressed their aspirations but felt it was too wordy and that a strap line would be needed later. Gordon maintained that Prudhoe was unique but others felt it faced similar challenges to many other towns.

Doreen said that Prudhoe needed a 'heart', such as a town square perhaps achieved through revamping The Glade. Anne said it was important to engage Northumberland Estates as a long term partner given their redevelopment plans in the town centre. The need for human and financial resources was also noted.

The group then put forward and scored ideas for two year and ten year goals (and notes of this session are to follow).

George agreed to collate the ideas into a shorter and manageable 'manifesto' which will be agreed at the next meeting to be held on Wednesday 22nd May at 5.30pm.

Members offered to discuss the 'manifesto' with individual traders after this meeting and leading to an open meeting with traders in late June or early July. George suggested an early evening event at Ginevrass.

4 Date of next meeting Wed 22nd May at 5.30pm (note earlier starting time)