

## PRUDHOE TOWN COUNCIL

**DRAFT Minutes of the ORDINARY MEETING (including 2021/22 Budget), held virtually, via Zoom at 7:00pm on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021**

*The agenda and associated papers for the meeting were published on-line on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> February and the meeting was open for members of the public to attend.*

**PRESENT**

Cllr Tracy Gilmore (Chair), Cllr Chris Cuthbert, Cllr Jennifer McGee, Cllr Duncan Couchman, Cllr Gerry Price, Cllr Glenn Simpson, Cllr Chris Barrett, Cllr Angie Scott, Cllr Russ Greig, Cllr Bryan Futers, Cllr Ignasious Varghese, Cllr Robert Blackburn, Cllr Robert Mullen

Also, in attendance County Cllr Gordon Stewart, County Cllr Anne Dale

**OM2021/140 Welcome by the Chair**

Cllr Tracy Gilmore welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**OM2021/141 Apologies for Absence**

Cllr Carol Stephenson

**OM2021/142 Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Russ Greig declared an interest in the item relating to Ebenezer Chapel as the Charity he was a Trustee for 'Friends of Eastwood Park', has an interest in the future use of the building.

**OM2021/143 Dispensations****Cllr Russ Greig in relation to Declaration of Interest on Item 16, Ebenezer Chapel:**

I wish to request Prudhoe Town Council members agree to a dispensation to allow me to Partake in the debate and discussion on the above agenda item for the following reasons.

1. I am a councillor for the ward within which the Ebenezer Chapel sits.
2. The Ebenezer has significant historic and heritage to our town and it is therefore important to our community and in particular to residents within my ward who many have personal and familial ties to the Ebenezer.
3. Members of the public are allowed and permitted to also speak on this agenda item if they wish.
4. I will not be gaining any personal benefit from the discussion or debate regarding the Ebenezer in my capacity acting for the Friends of Eastwoods Park.
5. I am committed to ensuring that the future welfare and wellbeing of residents of Prudhoe is properly considered in any debate.

**OM2021/144 Public Participation**

No items of public participation had been received.

**OM2021/145 Mortal Fools Action Research (funded by PTC £1,460) Helen Ferguson (Creative Producer Mortal Fools) in attendance**

- a) Update and Questions

**It was AGREED** to receive the update circulated in advance of the meeting.

Cllr Gerry Price asked for reassurance that Mortal Fools maintained good relations with Prudhoe Youth Project. Helen Ferguson responded that the charity had a good working relationship with Gemma from PYP and both were keen to have a presence in initial sessions in with the hope that this would develop further in the summer.

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Cllr Chris Cuthbert asked if the Government's roadmap had an impact on what was planned. Helen Ferguson advised that the announcement on Monday was being digested and looked at with a view to 'in person' sessions commencing after Easter, reaffirming that this would be carried out in consultation with PYP.

b) Funding

**It was AGREED** that funding is retained by Mortal Fools to allow them to carry out Action Research later in the summer term when youth groups have had an opportunity to engage

c) Cllr Representative

**It was AGREED** that Cllr Angie Scott would be the Town Council Representative on the Action Research project.

**OM2021/146            Draft Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting, held on 27th January 2021**

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

**Proposed:**

**Seconded:**

**OM2021/147            Draft Minutes of the Planning, Contract and Works Committee,**  
**held on 10th February 2021**

**It was AGREED** to receive the minutes for information, these minutes will be received as a true record at the meeting of the PCW's committee

**OM2021/148            Clerk's Report**

**It was AGREED** to receive the Clerk's update on items actioned since the previous meeting, as detailed:

*Fair View/South Road Car Park*

Following agreement to write to NCC, officers have confirmed that the wall will be repointed when the weather improves. Agreeing the defects are longstanding, it will be done as soon as possible.

In regards resurfacing of the carpark, Tynedale Area Manager, Andy Olive has pushed this for funding in the new financial year and is waiting to hear back from the Local Transport Plan Programme (LTP).

The safety barrier is being picked up by the assets team but there is no update at the time of writing.

*Bus Shelters/Street Furniture on land that belongs to Karbon Homes*

The Planning, Contract and Works Committee debated the proposal to pursue a land transfer of those bus shelters currently installed on Karbon Homes land (West Wylam Drive and Priestclose Cottages travelling west, and land on Stonyflat Bank for the installation of a new bus shelter travelling west.

Members are now aware that although technically the motion to proceed was carried, an error in proceedings declared the motion not supported in view that votes were 2:1 with 6 abstentions.

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This matter will be brought back to the Planning, Contract and Works Committee in March with the first motion on the subject being the Council's support for the installation of a new bus shelter, to ascertain that members still wish to pursue this, in light of the legal implications we now appreciate, which we did not in January 2020.

If there is support for said bus shelter, the meeting will agree whether it wishes to proceed on the basis of land transfer or long-term lease.

In regards bus shelters already in situ, the Clerk has sought confirmation from NCC Strategic Estates that ownership of the bus shelters was legally transferred, in addition to responsibility for maintenance.

*Highfield Park Skate Park*

The contract has been offered and accepted by Canvas. The Clerk has sought feedback from previous contracts provided. Those not successful in the tender process have requested feedback which will be given alongside anonymised ratings.

*Pocket Park (Front Street)*

PCP has emailed thanks for the Town Council's support of the Pocket Park. They update that plans are well advanced, and it is hoped that the park will be up and running by Easter. There were 18 sponsors which are being added to a board for display in the area. There will be an opening event as soon as restrictions allow.

*Grant Aid*

A couple of groups have contacted the Council to request information on Grant Aid for the coming year.

*Edgewell Allotments/Edgewell Grange Fencing*

Barratt Homes will carry out repairs on fencing at Edgewell Grange on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

The Clerk is seeking further quotes for repairs and fencing being carried out by the Council.

*COVID Funding for Counselling (Prudhoe Parochial Council)*

Everything is set up and Rev. Dan has confirmed that the first person to benefit has been referred, incidentally this is from a non-religious setting.

*Tyne Rivers Trust Funding*

Following members questions the Council was sent a report of work to control invasive non-native species throughout the Tyne catchment area, which was emailed, a further report will be sent at the end of 2021.

The volunteer coordinator also confirmed that financial support was received from Broomhaugh and Riding Mill PC, Stocksfield PC and Wylam PC, as well as general support from Bywell PC who were unable to offer funding at the time of asking.

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They hope that support will grow in the coming year as the group are able to do more as restrictions allow and look forward to coordinated actions for control of INNS across all the councils in the area.

*Prudhoe Gardeners Association (PGA)*

As advised by email, PGA are seeking new members in advance of their Annual General Meeting, scheduled to be held in April. Committee members are needed as a matter of urgency as the chair and secretary wish to stand down.

*Street Naming – Cottier Grange*

Northumberland County Council Street Naming department has progressed Barony Drive which will be listed as the street address. NCC did not find the Council's reason for objection to be valid. The reason stated was

"In regards Barony Drive, the Council is strongly against this as a name for the street in question. Members were unanimous, not one Cllr was supportive of the name. The comments were made that too many street names in Prudhoe relate back to land and gentry and our history is so much more."

In response to the suggestion Henry Travers Avenue, NCC confirmed that written permission must be sought from the family prior to assigning a street name to someone deceased. Those living cannot be commemorated in street names.

The Clerk inquired what was classed as a valid reason for objection, some of the reasons cited were that the name caused offense, conflicted with something in the locality or at the Manager's discretion. Not 'liking' a theme or name is not considered a valid reason for objection.

The response further supports that it is of primary importance to gain the support of Gentoo to the Council's suggestions, prior to them being presented to NCC for consultation.

As agreed, a small group of Cllrs met and their suggestions for street names are on the agenda.

*Training*

The Clerk will be attending the virtual Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) Practitioners Conference on 23<sup>rd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> February so will be available intermittently between 9am and 5pm on those days.

**OM2021/149 County Councillor Reports**

No reports received.

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**OM2021/150 Monthly Accounts**

- a) Statement of Budget and Expenditure – **It was AGREED to RECEIVE** the statement from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 – 18<sup>th</sup> February 2021.
- b) Bank Reconciliation - **It was AGREED to RECEIVE** the Bank Reconciliation from 9<sup>th</sup> January 2021 – 9<sup>th</sup> February 2021
- c) Schedule of Payments **It was AGREED to ENDORSE** those accounts paid since 27<sup>th</sup> January 2021, included on the payment schedule, and it was **AGREED to PAY** those listed to be paid.

**OM2021/151 Grant Aid 2021/22**

**It was AGREED** to agree to launch of Grant Aid, in view that a roadmap out of lockdown had been publicised and groups were beginning to request a date.

The Clerk confirmed that information would be released the following day, allowing a closing date of the end of March.

**OM2021/152 North Wylam View, Castlefields Drive (placed on the agenda by Cllr Gerry Price)**

- a) **It was AGREED** to write to Northumberland County Council to seek action to address a lack of maintenance of hedgerow/trees that border North Wylam View with open space, previously developer's play space (now removed)
- b) **It was AGREED** to seek formal written confirmation from both NCC and Bellway Homes as to the responsibility for trees and hedgerow adjacent to North Wylam View

**OM2021/153 The Glade**

**It was AGREED** to receive the previously circulated information relating to the maintenance issues with the Glade.

Cllr Jennifer McGee questioned that surely when the area was transferred from Tynedale Council to Northumberland County Council that agreements would have been drawn up to ensure future maintenance of the area.

Cllr Glenn Simpson agreed that after significant investment there would have been an expectation that maintenance would be carried out, especially bearing in mind that this is the Town Centre, and it is important that it looks good. Cllr Simpson could recall an agreement in reference to the electricity supply but not to ongoing maintenance.

Cllr Bryan Futers commented that there has been a pattern emerging over the years on many things where there is an expectation that responsibility has transferred from Tynedale to Northumberland County Council, but that NCC maintain this is not the case.

**It was AGREED** to gather research alongside Northumberland County Council and Prudhoe Community Partnership to establish who is responsible for the ongoing maintenance of operational aspects of the Glade, i.e., lighting, surfacing, structures.

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**OM2021/154 COVID19 Local Trader Support Working Group (*placed on the agenda by Cllr Carol Stephenson*)**

It was **AGREED** to defer the item as Cllr Stephenson was unable to attend the meeting due to illness.

**OM2021/155 Ebenezer Chapel (West Wylam) (*placed on the agenda by Cllr Jennifer McGee and Cllr Angie Scott*)**

It was **AGREED** to write to the Methodist Church Authorities to request that the following is considered in respect of the sale of the West Wylam Methodist Chapel (The Ebenezer Chapel)

- The Ebenezer Chapel is a one of Prudhoe's historic and much-loved buildings and is one of the few remaining buildings of the original West Wylam Colliery Village.
- That the building is only sold only to parties with an interest in utilising it for the benefit of the local community and to safeguard this historic building for future generations.
- That the building is preserved as a historic building and not sold with the intention to demolish it and develop the land.

**OM2021/156 Cottier Grange Street Naming**

a) It was **AGREED** to receive and approve the list of street names from Cllrs.

Cllr Glenn Simpson explained that Bernicia was challenged by Gentoo as there was a similar sounding housing association.

b) It was **AGREED** that this definitive list of street names be sent to Gentoo Homes for consideration in future street naming consultations. It was **also AGREED** that the Clerk would consult the small working group on any future street names sort from Gentoo Housing, in advance of formal consultation by Northumberland County Council.

**OM2021/157 Correspondence**

a) *Resident email received in regards open space on Western Avenue and Town Council's opinion on Neighbourhood Plans*

It was **AGREED** to receive the letter. It was discussed that those Ward Cllrs who had been contacted by the resident should respond in regards the open space on Western Avenue.

It was discussed that the Clerk had answered questions on the Council's approach to Neighbourhood Plans to date, and that any further opinion would be better sought from the Council after May Elections and the new term.

b) *Northumberland Communities Together Hub – email introducing Northumberland Strategy for Financial Well Being and offering link to further reading and training*

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

c) *Prudhoe WI – email enquiring about the possibility of creating and maintaining a raised bed on 'The Glade'*

It was **AGREED** to add the item to the next Planning, Contract and Works Meeting for consideration.

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**OM2021/158 Exclusion of the Press and Public**

**It was AGREED** 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.

**OM2021/159 Confidential Item**

**It was AGREED** to receive the update on flooding issues and endorse the action taken. It was agreed to continue to engage with NCC and NWL where necessary.

END OF MEETING

DRAFT