

**DRAFT MINUTES FOR THE ORDINARY MEETING INCLUDING PLANNING, CONTRACT AND
WORKS COMMITTEE OF PRUDHOE TOWN COUNCIL
held on THURSDAY 26TH MARCH 2026 at 7:00PM
at The Spetchells Centre, Meeting Rooms 1 & 2 Front Street, Prudhoe, NE42 5AA**

Present:

Cllr Jonathan Wheeler (Chair), Cllr Dot Dickinson, Cllr Bryan Futers, Cllr Angie Scott (and County Cllr Prudhoe West & Mickley), Cllr Jane Johnson, Cllr Mike Smith, Cllr Carol Stephenson

Shirley Ann Gaut (Clerk)
Stephanie Kirby (Deputy Clerk)

OM2526/155 Welcome by Chair

Meeting opened by Chair Cllr Jonathan Wheeler.

OM2526/156 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Bradley Lloyd, Cllr Gerry Price, Cllr Glenn Simpson, Cllr Ignasious Varghese, Cllr Holly Waddell

County Cllr Lawrence O'Donnell (Prudhoe North & Wylam)

Apologies not Received

Cllr Chris Barrett, Cllr Kiran Bell, Cllr Valerie Leslie

OM2526/157 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Dot Dickinson Dickinson as a trustee of Prudhoe Youth Project, declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 6, Prudhoe Youth Project.

OM2526/158 Dispensations

None received.

OM2526/159 Public Participation

No items of public participation had been received.

OM2526/160 Prudhoe Youth Project

Gemma Nixon, Youth Project Manager: -

- a) Fourth Quarter report – It was AGREED** to receive third quarter update and address any questions
- b) Funding 2025/26 - It was AGREED** to release fourth quarter funding (£5,000.)

Gemma reported that the Project has delivered a busy and successful quarter, marked by increased participation across multiple groups, the introduction of an effective BACS payment system, and the distribution of a parent/carer survey to support service evaluation.

A wide range of activities has been delivered across all youth groups, including creative, recreational, and educational sessions. These have supported young people's social development, wellbeing, and life skills, with opportunities to explore important topics such as relationships, online safety, and discrimination in a safe and supportive environment. Attendance has grown in several groups, with new members joining and engagement levels increasing.

Targeted support has expanded significantly, with a notable rise in one-to-one provision, now supporting eight young people through referrals from schools and partner services. School drop-in sessions continue to be well attended, providing guidance on education pathways and personal development.

Community-based provision remains active, with ongoing sessions in West Wylam and the development of provision in Mickley, which is currently under review to maximise engagement.

Planning is progressing well for upcoming programmes and events, including the Easter holiday activities, a residential trip, and the Water Safety Day in July, which will involve multi-agency partnership working and community engagement.

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Overall, the project continues to provide valuable support and positive opportunities for young people, contributing to their wellbeing, personal development, and future aspirations.

Cllr Wheeler expressed his thanks to Gemma and her team for the work they undertake, and this was further commended by Cllr Smith.

Cllr Futers enquired whether fundraising opportunities such as the Coast to Coast Challenge had been considered. In response, Gemma advised that she had participated in a cycling event the previous year involving Northumberland youth groups, covering a route from Amble to Otterburn.

Cllr Scott thanked Gemma for her work in organising and facilitating the Water Safety Day event.

OM2526/161 Draft Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 26th February 2026
It was **AGREED** to receive the minutes as a true record.

OM2526/162 Reports

a) Chair's Report

Cllr Jonathan Wheeler gave the following report:-

I attended the one-year anniversary event for Veterans, held on 14th March, which was well attended and positively received.

A meeting was by Prudhoe Community Partnership with English Heritage to discuss future options and potential plans for the Castle.

Myself and the Clerk met with Russ, Greg, and Sam Talbot to discuss this year's Miners Race and an update on other initiatives.

I also attended the Borderlands meeting where updates on current initiatives were provided.

The "Prudhoe Goes Green" event, held yesterday, was well attended and demonstrated strong community engagement in environmental initiatives.

It was noted Councillors were advised that a further Borderlands update would be provided at the next meeting, with representatives from Prudhoe Community Partnership and Northumberland County Council scheduled to attend the April Ordinary Meeting. Councillors were therefore asked to reserve any questions for that session.

b) Clerk's Report

The Clerk gave the following verbal report:-

SLCC Conference

The Deputy Clerk and I attended the SLCC (Society of Local Council Clerks) regional training seminar in Newcastle on Wednesday 11th March 2026. The seminar was an all-day event covering a comprehensive range of topics, including AGAR, banking hubs, and other relevant governance and administrative matters. The training provided valuable updates and guidance as well as networking opportunities to support our work.

English Heritage

Attended meeting held on Wednesday 18th March 2026, during which discussions took place regarding working in partnership with English Heritage to raise the profile of the castle and to deliver a programme of events throughout the year.

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It is proposed that the castle will be open one day per month for guided tours. These tours will be free of charge, although donations will be welcomed. Bookings for guided tours will be made online; however, an open day is scheduled for 3 April, for which no prior booking will be required.

Prudhoe Goes Green

Attended meeting held 25th March 2026, updates were provided on upcoming and ongoing initiatives, including the Climate Round Table event with MP Joe Morris, proposals for 'Orange' planting in support of domestic abuse awareness, and progress relating to Prudhoe in Bloom.

Further discussion covered updates on new Council environmental contracts and service areas, alongside progress reports on a range of green space projects, including the Wildlife Garden, Bee Bed, Ladybird Bed, Pocket Park, The Glade, Edgewell Cemetery, Waterworld, Fire Station Beds, and Prudhoe Walled Garden.

An update was also received on the Prudhoe Land Use Survey, as well as plans for the upcoming Eco/Recycling Fair. Members noted arrangements for the Scarecrow Festival, scheduled to take place from 13 April to 23 May, and received an update regarding the Repair Shop/Café initiative.

(Meeting notes will be circulated.)

Scarecrow Festival

Following the Prudhoe Goes Green meeting, it was confirmed that Prudhoe Town Council will be contributing to the Scarecrow Festival.

Grant Aid 2026/2027

Reminder that the closing date for applications is midday Tuesday 31st March 2026.

c) County Cllrs Reports

County Cllr Lawrence O'Donnell (Prudhoe North & Wylam)

- I attended the library consultation at Prudhoe Library, there was a good turnout, and strong support. I will be continuing to urge people to take part in the consultation and would urge Prudhoe Town Councillors to do the same.
- I met with green spaces officers, parking services and Highways at the Tyne Countryside River Park to discuss alleviating problems with café customers unable to park due to the car park effectively being used as a commuter overflow. A good solution will hopefully be implemented soon.
- Environmental services have written to homeowners on a street in Castlefields to urge them to park more considerately to allow the wagons unobstructed access on bin collection days.
- The Police have also spoken to the owners of vans parked on Castlefields Drive causing a dangerous obstruction.
- Double yellow lines will be extended on Duke's Way from Princess Way to allow HGV access to businesses. I have asked Advance Northumberland to redesign the parking on the other side of Duke's Way to add parking spaces and ensure that there is extra parking available for those that currently park where the double yellow lines will be painted. They are arranging for their team to review the proposal and report back.
- I met with Openworks in Low Prudhoe which has rapidly expanded and is now employing 91 members of staff.
- I attended the Cash access UK consultation in Ginevra on Front Street and learnt how businesses will be able to register for the extra services available to them.

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- I continue to push for extra bus services from the surrounding villages to support businesses in Prudhoe.
- I met with the new PCSOs and PC at Waterworld for their 'Cuppa with a Coppa' event.

County Cllr Gordon Stewart (Prudhoe South)

Cty Councillor Gordon Stewart Prudhoe Town Council February 2026 Report

Highfield proposed development.

25/01971/FUL

Land To East Of School Highfield Lane Prudhoe Northumberland

It is anticipated that this application will go before a committee.

Coop Car park - Restrictions

The Coop HQ team have now confirmed they will not introduce restrictions.

West Wylam bus services

New poles & flags have installed & timetables refreshed.

Banking Hub.

Cash Access UK - Temporary hub will be at the Setchell's from 1st April 2026

<https://www.cashaccess.co.uk/hubs/>

Credit union

Discussions regarding a Credit union having a presence in Prudhoe are continuing.

Neighbourhood Plan

Major changes to planning are expected, PTC may wish to accelerate the process if practicable.

The Government has indicated its wish to encourage house building close to main line railway stations, this may alert developers to Prudhoe.

Prudhoe Hall & Prudhoe Walled Gardens

I remain in contact with Gentoo regarding options.

Humbles Wood Estate.

Concerns re parking on the estate, discussions are continuing.

The estate has not been adopted; .

NCC library consultation

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives/shaping-future-northumberland-libraries/about-our-libraries-consultation>

East Centre

The planning application has now been submitted by the PCP.

<https://publicaccess.northumberland.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=TC1X3DQSK8700>

Litter picking/Spring clean

Another great effort this year by many residents.

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West Wylam 20mph speed signs,

Several have been replaced; some work yet to be done.

Prudhoe Castle

<https://www.hexham-courant.co.uk/news/25964238.listed-prudhoe-castle-northumberland-reopen-public/>

County Cllr Angie Scott (Prudhoe West & Mickley)

The outcome of the Northumberland Library Consultation will be discussed at the next Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting, with the date to be confirmed.

Highways officers have delivered a presentation on the FixMyStreet reporting system and how it operates. In addition, officers have offered to come along to meet with Town Councillors to provide a detailed explanation of how residents and councillors can use the system to report issues effectively and also look at how the system works.

It is also important that residents in Prudhoe are made aware of the Council Tax Support scheme, which provides financial assistance for those who may be struggling with council tax payments. Further information can be found here:

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/benefits-support/council-tax-support>

OM2526/163 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 26th February 20206.

b) Bank Reconciliation

It was AGREED to receive the Bank Reconciliation from 10 February – 9 March 2026.

c) Statement of Budget and Expenditure

It was AGREED to receive statement to date

OM2625/164 Northumberland County Council Library Service Consultation

It was AGREED to receive and consider a formal response to Northumberland County Council regarding the public consultation on the proposed redesign of its Library Service.

Following discussion, the main areas identified as being impacted by the proposal included:-

- Social impact
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Education and learning, encompassing both children and young people, as well as adult learning and lifelong skills
- Wider educational equality
-

It was AGREED that the response would request a clear explanation from the Library Service of the process by which the proposal to reduce staffing hours was developed, including the supporting data and evidence that informed this proposal.

OM2526/165 Reports from Outside Bodies

To receive following written or verbal reports and record any questions for response:-

OUTSIDE BODY

CURRENT PTC REPRESENTATIVE(S)
2025-2026

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Prudhoe Town Twinning Association	Cllr Chris Barrett & Cllr Jane Johnson
Prudhoe Community Partnership (3 rd Tuesday of the month, bi-monthly)	Cllr Dot Dickinson
Northumberland Association of Local Councils County Committee	Cllr Dot Dickinson & Cllr Holly Waddell
East Tynedale Local Council's Forum	Cllr Holly Waddell & Cllr Jonathan Wheeler
Essity Community Consultation Forum (lunchtime meetings at the Mill, when permitted)	Cllr Bryan Futers & Cllr Dot Dickinson
Prudhoe Pathforce	Cllr Angie Scott & Cllr Carol Stephenson
NCC Town and Parish Council Liaison Working Group	Cllr Holly Waddell
Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership	Cllr Holly Waddell & Cllr Gerry Price
Prudhoe Youth Project (PYP) (previously met monthly on a Monday evening)	Cllr Dot Dickinson & Cllr Gerry Price
Borderlands	Cllr Bryan Futers & Cllr Mike Smith
Tyne Valley Parish Council Active Travel Route	Cllr Chris Barrett & Cllr Jonathan Wheeler
Prudhoe Community Partnership Working Group	Cllr Dot Dickinson, Cllr Gerry Price, Cllr Mike Smith & Cllr Jonathan Wheeler
Climate Change and Biodiversity	Cllr Dot Dickinson, Cllr Gerry Price, Cllr Scott, Cllr Carol Stephenson & Cllr Jonathan Wheeler
East Centre Advisory Group	Cllr Kiran Bell & Cllr Dot Dickinson
Trustee Friends of Eastwood Park	Cllr Jane Johnson
Poverty Coalition	Cllr Valerie Leslie

- a) Borderlands meeting dates and key PCP events – circulated 16/03/2026
- b) Northumberland Parish and Town Council Conference held 5 March 2026, presentation slides – circulated 16/03/2026

Cllr Johnson advised that a delegation from Mity-Mory of six young people and five adults will be attending Highfield Fest, arriving on Friday 29th May 2026.

Cllr Johnson advised that a new member of staff has been appointed at the Miners Lamp Community Café and Hub following Sadie's departure.

Cllr Futers reported that the official opening of Essity's recycling plant, scheduled for 9th April 2026, has been postponed, with a new date to be confirmed.

OM2526/166 Friends of Eastwood Park

It was AGREED to consider the appointment of a council member to represent Prudhoe Town Council on the Eastwoods Park Playzone Steering Group.

Cllr Scott volunteered and this was seconded by Cllr Wheeler.

It was AGREED Cllr Scott will represent Prudhoe Town Council on the Eastwoods Park Playzone Steering Group.

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OM2526/167 Correspondence

It was AGREED to receive the following correspondence:-

- a) NALC Chief Executive's Bulletin – circulated 26/02, 06/03, 12/03, 19/03.
- b) RSN Weekly Newsletter – circulated 25/02, 05/03.
- c) West Road Cemetery Bulletin– circulated 02/03, 16/03.
- d) Thriving Together newsletter – circulated 02/03, 16/03.
- e) NALC events – circulated 05/03, 12/03.
- f) Healthwatch Northumberland – circulated 05/03.
- g) Northumberland Net Zero – circulated 06/03.
- h) Tyne Rivers Trust Spring newsletter – circulated 16/03.
- i) Social Prescribing Celebration Day for Hexham – circulated 18/03.

The Clerk advised that additional correspondence had been received following circulation of the agenda:-

Prudhoe Town Football Club requested that Prudhoe Town Council, as their landlord, act as a referee for any grant applications submitted by the Club for additional funding.

It was AGREED that Prudhoe Town Council would act as a referee for such grant applications.

Prudhoe Army Cadets requested permission to use The Glade, and access to the power supply for a TV display and other small electrical equipment. The request relates to a CPR Challenge event planned for Saturday 30th June, aimed at promoting life-saving skills through continuous CPR for 12 hours to raise funds for the Children's Heart Unit Fund (CHUF). The event will run from 9:00am to 5:00pm and will include a hands-on CPR area where members of the public can learn CPR techniques.

It was AGREED that the power supply could be used throughout the event, it was noted that Prudhoe Town Council does not own or manage The Glade, permission granted to use the power supply.

OM2526/168 Date of Next Meeting

It was AGREED that the next Ordinary Meeting will be held on Thursday 23rd April 2026.

OM2526/169 Exclusion of the Press and Public

To agree to approve a motion to invoke Standing Order 3d) to exclude the press and public, for the remainder of the meeting, in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, permitted under Schedule (12A) Local Government Act 1972, paragraph 3, that they relate to contractor's quotes.

OM2526/170 Community Engagement

It was AGREED to receive, for information only, details of the cost of advertising in the Tyne Valley Express as previously agreed at the Ordinary Meeting held on 23rd October 2025.

It was AGREED that this will be added to a future agenda to consider the potential content for publication, identify the author(s), and determine whether it should be utilised as a tool for community engagement.

**AGENDA – PLANNING, CONTRACT AND WORKS COMMITTEE OF
PRUDHOE TOWN COUNCIL**

**Cllr Jonathan Wheeler continued to Chair, due to the absence of Chair Cllr Gerry Price and
Cllr Glenn Simpson**

**PCW2526/156 Draft Minutes of the Planning, Contracts and Works Committee held on 12th
February 2026.**

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

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PCW2526/157 Planning Matters

a) Planning Applications requiring a response.

To receive and agree a response to the following Planning Applications, received since 12th February 2026. To view planning applications, please visit the [planning portal](#) and input the reference numbers listed.

Ref: 26/00626/FUL 45 Front Street Prudhoe Northumberland NE42 5DB

Proposed new window opening to rear south facing elevation along with changing the window colours throughout from white to grey.

It was AGREED to support the application.

The Clerk advised that the agreed comment in support of the application was submitted prior to the deadline of 17th March 2026.

Ref: 26/00654/ADE, Liliun Gardens 27 South Road Prudhoe Northumberland NE42 5JT

Advertisement Consent for illuminated restaurant sign 2m x 1m; light output 300W; 3 selectable colours.

It was AGREED to support the application.

Ref: 26/00850/ADE Tyne Riverside Country Park Station Road Prudhoe, Northumberland NE42 6NP

Advertisement Consent for 1no sculpture signage held by two galvanised steel posts at the rear.

It was noted that the application had been sent in error, the planning application referred to Wylam and not Prudhoe.

Ref: 26/00996/LBC Eltringham Farm Mickley Stocksfield Northumberland NE43 7DF

Listed Building Consent to provide an overhead fed, full fibre connection.

It was AGREED to support the application.

Ref: 26/01012/FUL 2 Highfield Prudhoe Northumberland NE42 6EZ

Proposed extension to front of garage.

It was AGREED to support the application.

Ref 26/00975/FUL The East, Front Street, Prudhoe, Northumberland, NE42 5DQ

Demolition, new build construction with the retention and conversion of a section of the building to create a new community facility, providing a youth centre, community space, associated meeting/ staff spaces, business/ training units, an arts and crafts workshop, community led retail unit and 3no. residential units, along with associated external works and landscaping.

It was AGREED to support the application.

b) Northumberland County Council (NCC) Planning Decisions and Notifications

To agree to receive, if any, the NCC Planning Decisions and any other notifications, received since 12th February 2026.

Ref: 26/00233/FUL Essity Princess Way Prudhoe Northumberland NE42 6HE

Full Planning Permission for the replacement of roof mounted HVAC.

Northumberland County Council GRANTED permission.

PCW2525/158 Clerk's Report

To receive a verbal report on items actioned and general information to update the Council.

Highfield Park

Dog Waste Bags

A post has been published on social media regarding the dog waste bags, and a notice has also been displayed on the dispenser. The dispenser was refilled on Monday 2nd March and again on Wednesday 4th March. Whilst it is encouraging to see that the bags are being used, it is important to note that the unit was

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installed for use while walking dogs and to provide bags if required. The bags are intended for immediate use only and should not be taken for personal supply.

Graffiti

There has been a significant increase in graffiti particularly on each of the park signs, and on the concrete seats. Work is being carried out to remove this.

Improvements

Northumberland Estates have formally approved the plans for the installation of the footpath and youth shelter.

Road Ends Toilets

Male toilets vandalized on afternoon of Friday 6th March 2026, graffiti on walls, toilet and toilet roll holder damaged. Police have been contacted regarding any CCTV footage.

Durham Riding Seat

Repairs have now been carried out.

Bus Shelters

Priestclose Cottages

Awaiting confirmation of when works can be scheduled to repair and repaint the shelter.

West Mickley

The Deputy Clerk and Cllr Mike Smith met with an NCC Highways Officer on 9 March 2026 to investigate the possible installation of a shelter on the westbound side.

The Copse Play Area

The date for the works is to be confirmed, pending improved weather conditions.

Allotments

Redwell

Gate repairs at Redwell Allotments have been Carried out this week.

Edgewell

Damaged tap has been replaced.

PCW2526/159 Playground Inspection Reports

It was **AGREED** to receive the latest Playground Inspection Reports.

**PCW2526/160 Local Housing Needs Assessment Prudhoe & Neighbouring Parishes,
Northumberland**

It was **AGREED** that the Clerk would circulate the questionnaire to councillors to request individual feedback. Once the responses have been collated, a formal response will be submitted to arc4 Ltd.

PCW2526/161 Prudhoe Town Council Events 2026

The Clerk gave the following verbal report:-

a) Prudhoe in Bloom – Councillors were advised that dates are yet to be confirmed, following a review of previous events. The Clerk will prepare a poster. It was noted that the Prudhoe Goes Green group may assist, and that Russ Greig has agreed to act as judge. Discussions have taken place with Russ regarding celebrating the Prudhoe in Bloom awards at the Town Show.

b) Highfield Fest – Saturday 30th May 2026 – Planning is ongoing. Confirmed participants include food vendors, First Aid provision, PYP, Friends of Eastwood Park, Elaine Pygall Dance Group, Team Extreme, and Carnival Fun Fairs amongst others. A call for crafters and additional participants will be publicised on Facebook.

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- c) Miners Race – Sunday 23rd August 2026 – Councillors were advised of a change of date to Sunday 30th August 2026, maintaining the same start time. The event will be integrated with the Town Show, with consideration given to providing a Miners’ picnic or other activity following the race.
- d) Remembrance Parade – Sunday 8th November 2026 – Albermarle Barracks will be contacted regarding this year’s arrangements.
- e) Christmas Lights Switch-On – Friday 27th November 2026 – Noted.
- f) Grant Aid Celebration – It was noted that this item will be added to the agenda of the next Finance Committee meeting.
- g) Any Additional Events – No further events were discussed.

It was noted that the current primary focus is on Prudhoe in Bloom and Highfield Fest.

PCW2526/162 Dog Waste Bag Dispensers

It was AGREED that Councillors would identify any areas within their wards that may benefit from the potential rollout of dispensers and provide feedback accordingly.

The Clerk noted that the installation of the dispenser at Hillcrest is still outstanding.

PCW2526/163 Correspondence

No items of correspondence had been received

PCW256/163 Date of Next Meeting

It was AGREED that the next Planning, Contract and Works meeting will be held on Thursday 9th April 2026.

PCW2526/164 Exclusion of the Press and Public

To agree to approve a motion to invoke Standing Order 3d) to exclude the press and public, for the remainder of the meeting, in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, permitted under Schedule (12A) Local Government Act 1972, paragraph 3, that they relate to contractor’s quotes.

PCW2526/165 Highfield Fest

It was AGREED to receive quotes for the following:-

- a) Provision of a skatepark team, to include a compere, three professional riders, and additional competition prizes.

It was AGREED that, following the success of the competitions held in 2024 and 2025, Team Extreme would facilitate the Highfield Fest 2026 skate park competitions, at a cost of £3,260 plus VAT.

- b) Provision of fairground attraction rides

It was AGREED that, following the success of the rides in 2024 and 2025, Carnival Fun Fairs would facilitate the Highfield Fest 2026 skate park competitions, at a cost of £2000 plus VAT.

Meeting ended 8.40pm.