

# Dinnington St John's Town Council

## Minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee held on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2025 at 9:00am in Committee Room, Council Office, Dinnington

**Present:** Cllr N Ruff (Chair), Cllr L Clarke, Cllr W Hall, Cllr J Hart, Cllr T Mulholland and Cllr D Smith

**Absent:** Cllr D Adams

**In attendance:** T. Collingham (Town Clerk and RFO) and three members of public

**N142A/25 To elect the Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee in the absence of the Chair for this meeting**

**Resolved:-** That Cllr W Hall be elected as Chair for the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2025

Following this item, Cllr N Ruff, the Chair of the Committee arrived to resume as Chair of the meeting.

**N142B/25 To answer questions from the last meeting: and to allow for questions from electors of Dinnington to ask one question only in respect of business itemised on the agenda or on a pertinent issue that may arise; followed by the formal meeting**

No questions raised during the public participation session.

**N143/25 To receive and consider any reasons for absence**

There were no reasons for absence for consideration. The Committee noted the absence of Cllr D Adams.

**N144/25 To receive and record any declarations of interest and if necessary, to receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests and grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate**

David Johnston raised a personal interest with Item 138/25 due to his connection with Cube Construction. The Clerk advised that he was not entitled to vote on any item as a non-councillor.

**N145/25 To identify any agenda items which may be considered following the exclusion of the press and public, due to the confidential nature to be discussed. Under Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, S1 (2))**

No items were identified for the exclusion of press and public.

**N146/25 To approve the minutes from the Neighbourhood Plan Committee meeting held on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2025**

No matters raised on the minutes.

**Resolved:-** That the minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2025 be approved as a true record and the minutes be signed by the Chairman at the bottom of each page.

Chairman Signature:

**N147/25**

**To invite Rotherham Council's Housing and Community Protection departments to update on the progress since the last meeting and for the committee to consider any further action**

The Committee invited representatives from Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC) to attend the meeting to discuss the issue of empty homes across the borough and the possibility of a pilot scheme in Dinnington.

It was agreed that the Committee would undertake further review and investigation into empty homes in the area.

The Committee was informed that RMBC currently has only one dedicated Empty Homes Officer, and the process of returning empty properties to use involves considerable work and follow-up. Concerns were raised that the role appears to be largely reactive, with limited use of the enforcement powers available to the authority.

It was noted that approximately 3,500 properties are empty across Rotherham at any one time. Within Dinnington Ward, RMBC is currently aware of 177 empty properties, with 97 having been brought back into use over the course of the existing scheme.

The Committee highlighted that Dinnington Ward contains significant pockets of empty homes, with a concentration of longstanding problem properties. Specific examples were discussed where RMBC had advised there was no issue, despite reports of ongoing problems such as water leaks causing distress to neighbouring residents. The Committee scrutinised the level of work carried out on such properties and RMBC outlined the difficulties in engaging with property owners and gaining access.

Councillors referred to RMBC's published Empty Homes Plan, expressing concern at the lack of detail relating specifically to Dinnington. It was noted that the plan's key objectives do not appear to have been met. Questions were raised regarding what enforcement actions have been taken, including the use of Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs), particularly for properties that have remained empty for 10–20 years.

The Committee asked what support the Town Council could offer in helping to bring homes back into use. RMBC agreed to consider the development of a pilot scheme in Dinnington, which could be brought back to the Committee at the next meeting. This would explore whether shared intelligence could help inform RMBC's work on empty properties.

It was agreed that Cllr T. Mulholland and Cllr D. Smith would lead on liaising with RMBC and report back to the Committee. They will also compile a comprehensive list of empty properties requiring attention from the Empty Homes Officer.

**Resolved:-**

- (1) That Cllr T Mulholland and Cllr D Smith champion the work on Empty Homes and work with Rotherham Council.
- (2) That Rotherham Council be invited back to the next meeting to present a proposal for a pilot scheme on how the Town Council and Rotherham Council can work together
- (3) That the Town Council create a list of properties in Dinnington and share this with Rotherham Council based on local intelligence

**N148/25**

**To receive the draft letter for Dinnington Group Practice in response to the questions received and consider any further action**

The Clerk shared a draft letter to be sent to the GP Surgery in response to their questions that they submitted to the Committee.

The Committee agreed that the letter should be sent, and that the GP Practice be invited to the next meeting of the Committee.

**Resolved:-**

- (1) That the Clerk send the approved letter in response to their questions and invite the GP Practice to the next meeting.

Chairman Signature:



**N149/25 To receive an update regarding the college site on sale by the RNN Group and consider any further action**

The Committee received draft feasibility plans for the RNN site, outlining the proposed site layout and how the space could be utilised to meet the requirements of the planned Health and Wellbeing services. Questions were raised regarding the specific needs of the GP Practice, and it was agreed that these should be clarified directly with the Surgery.

The feasibility plans identified several structural issues, particularly relating to the connecting building and the existing stairwell. Initial impressions suggested that a full strip-out of the current internal structure may be required.

The Committee agreed that a full professional survey of the building is necessary, as further concerns were noted regarding the alignment of windows and the adequacy of plumbing facilities.

The Clerk informed the Committee that the RNN Group has indicated its intention to sell the site to the highest bidder, and that previous discussions regarding the Council being the preferred bidder appear to have been disregarded.

In light of this, the Committee considered whether alternative locations should be explored. However, it was agreed that the Clerk should make a further attempt to engage with the RNN Group to obtain updated information regarding the status of the site.

The Chairman expressed a desire to present a gift to an individual in recognition of their work in preparing the feasibility plans for the RNN site.

**Resolved:-**

- (1) That the Clerk make further contact with the RNN Group

**N150/25 To note any updates following the introduction from RDASH and consider any further action**

The Clerk shared that no questions had been received for submission by the agreed deadline and whether any questions would like to be forward. The Committee agreed that they had no further questions for RDASH.

**N151/25 To note the draft letter to landowners on Leicester Road and consider any further action**

The Committee were in agreement with the draft letter to the land owners of land on Leicester Road, and that this should be sent to arrange a meeting for future.

**Resolved:-**

- (1) That the Clerk send a letter to the land owners on Leicester Road within the boundary of consideration of the Committee to open the conversation for acquisition of further plots to support the overall vision for Leicester Road.

**N152/25 To note the date of the meeting with Rotherham Council regarding the S106 covenant detail and consider any further action**

The Committee noted that the meeting with Rotherham Council had been arranged for Friday 1<sup>st</sup> August at 1pm and will be held on Teams, but members are welcome to attend in person if they need help on technology.

**N153/25 To discuss and consider the councils land assets at Pocket Park and Lodge Lane**

The Committee discussed the other plots that are under Town Council ownership, specifically Lodge Lane. The Committee discussed the previous uses for the land including hosting regular fairgrounds and car boots. Cllr L Clarke discussed that a prior agreement was in the process to clear the land by a third party so that the land may be used.

**Resolved:-**

- (1) That Cllr L Clarke be delegated to made contact with a third party to discuss the clearance of the land at Lodge Lane.

**N154/25 To note any matters for inclusion on the next meeting**

- To invite Cube to the next meeting.

**N155/25 To note the date and time of the next meeting**

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> August 2025 at 9:00am (Extraordinary) – and then Friday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2025 at 9:00am

**Meeting Closed: 11:15**