Dinnington St John's Town Council

Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting on Monday 11th May 2026 at 7.00pm in The Lyric, Dinnington

Present: Cllr D Smith (Chair), Cllr W Hall (Vice Chair), Cllr D Adams, Cllr D Booth, Cllr L Clarke, Cllr G Cruickshanks, Cllr J Hall, Cllr J Hart, Cllr Z Lowe, Cllr T Mulholland, Cllr N Ruff, Cllr S Scott, Cllr D Scriven, Cllr K Smallwood, Cllr F Walden.
Absent: None
Reasons for absence: None
In attendance: A Wright (Town Council Clerk & RFO), C Radford (Town Council Administrator), 10 members of public.

01/27 **To elect a Chair to the Town Council for 2026/27**

Cllr N Ruff invited nominations for the Chair for the ensuing year. Two nominations were received that were proposed and seconded for Cllr D Smith and Cllr D Adams.

Resolved: Members resolved to elect Cllr D Smith as Chair to the Town Council for 2026/2027

02/27 **For the elected Chairman to sign the Declaration of Office for Chair of the Town Council**

Cllr D Smith signed the Declaration of Office for Chair of the Town Council.

03/27 **To elect a Vice-Chair to the Town Council for 2026/27**

Cllr D Smith invited nominations for the Vice-Chair for the ensuing year. Three nominations were received that were proposed and seconded for Cllr D Adams, Cllr W Hall & Cllr D Scriven.

Resolved: Members resolved to re-elect Cllr W Hall as Vice-Chair to the Town Council for 2026/2027

04/27 **Public Questions**

To answer questions from the last meeting:

None

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;

A representative from the Residents Group against the Universal Glass company was invited to speak. It was announced that the factory has now been closed down and will be relocated to more suitable premises. Members were thanked for their support and assistance. Cllr D Smith thanked the representative for all of their hard work and for bringing the matter to the attention of Dinnington St John's Town Council (DSJTC).

The local MP's involvement in the case was discussed given his lengthy post on social media and his influence in the decision. The Residents Group advised that his contribution amounted to one meeting and a short time spent door knocking on residents.

Resolved: Members resolved that the Clerk write a letter to Jake Richards MP on behalf of DSJTC expressing their disappointment in the way he has conducted himself on this matter. This letter is to be signed by the Chair of the council.

Chairman Signature:

FORMAL MEETING

05/27 **To receive and consider any reasons for absence**

Resolved: No absences

06/27 **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**

No declarations of interest were raised.

07/27 **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 identified

08/27 **Monthly Accounts Schedule and relevant finance information:**

(A) To approve accounts for payment and note contractual payments made under the clerk delegation (attached)
(B) To note expenditure outside of the meeting between the Clerk and the Chair in line with Financial Regulation 5.15
(C) To receive and note the bank reconciliation up to 31st March 2026 (to follow)
(D) To review Council expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972
(E) To review the Council Asset Register up to 31st March 2026

The Clerk updated members that due to a backlog of finance related work, lack of training and familiarity of the software the monthly accounts schedule and finance information is not yet available to members. It is hoped that this will be ready for June's meeting. The Clerk confirmed that the Asset Register still requires additional work to ensure that it is accurate and up to date.

09/27 **To receive and approve the minutes of the meetings of the Council held on:**

(A) Monday 9th March 2026 (Full Council) (attached)

Resolved: Councillors resolved to approve the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 9th March 2026, as true record and to be signed by the Chair and kept on file.

10/27 **To receive and note the minutes of the Committees and sub-committees of the Council since the last meeting was held:**

(A) Thursday 9th April – Neighbourhood Plan Committee (attached)
Members received and noted the minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee.

(B) Monday 23rd March – Lyric Committee (attached)
Members received and noted the minutes of the Lyric Committee.

(C) Monday 23rd March – Community Committee (attached)
Members received and noted the minutes of the Community Committee.

(D) Tuesday 31st March – Staffing and Complaints Committee(attached)
Members received and noted the minutes of the Staffing and Complaints Committee.

(E) Wednesday 8th April – Staffing and Complaints Committee (attached)
Members received and noted the minutes of the Staffing and Complaints Committee.

11/27 To receive and approve the Standing Orders for 2026/27 (attached)

Cllr Smith to table a suggested amendment for adoption

Cllr Smith proposed an amendment to the Standing Orders that meeting agendas will be finalised between the Clerk and the Chair. The Clerk explained that from a practical point of view, the relevant Chair of the committees will need to be conscious of the tight time constraints, anticipate the conversation and respond in a timely manner. If no response is received by the specific deadline, the Clerk will assume that the agenda can go out to members.

Resolved: Members resolved to approve the Standing Orders for 2026/2027 with the proposed amendment for the Chair and the Clerk to agree on the agendas in advance of the meeting.

12/27 To receive and approve the Financial Regulations for 2026/27 (attached)

The Clerk advised members about some slight changes made to the Financial Regulations in line with changes to legislation.

Resolved: Members resolved to approve the Financial Regulations for 2026/2027 with the proposed amendments as detailed.

13/27 To receive and approve the Town Councillor Code of Conduct (attached)

Resolved: Members resolved to approve the Town Councillor Code of Conduct.

Cllr S Scott left the meeting at 19.20pm and returned at 19.22pm

At this point in the meeting, a member raised the issue that having taken advice from RMBC it would appear that members are not required to complete a Register of Interest form yearly but are only required to complete a new form if their situation changes. It was discussed that members should be aware for themselves of what changes require this notification update and act accordingly. The Clerk advised members that the SLCC recommend a yearly review as good practice.

14/27 To consider the formulation of a Finance Committee and an Allotment and Cemetery Committee

Members discussed the advantages of forming a Finance Committee and how this could assist the Clerk in their work, particularly around the precept. It was discussed how often the meetings should be held and how many members would be required.

In regards to forming an Allotments and Cemetery Committee, the Clerk explained that rather than Liaison Officers, it would be her preference to form a committee that can consulted over any issues such as tenancy agreement reviews, rent charges, cemetery issues and prices. Members already acting as Liaison Officers were invited to join the committee.

Resolved: Members resolved to add 5 members to a Finance Committee that will meet on a quarterly basis. Members of the committee will be: Cllr D Booth, Cllr J Hart, Cllr N Ruff, Cllr D Scriven and Cllr D Smith.

15/27 To consider the Terms of Reference for Committees and sub-committees of the Council for 2026/27

(A) Neighbourhood Plan Committee
(B) Emergency Response Committee
(C) Staffing and Complaints Committee
(D) Lyric Committee
(E) Community Committee
(F) Finance Committee (if required)
(G) Allotment and Cemetery Committee (if required)

Chairman Signature:

The Clerk advised that having reviewed the existing Terms of Reference for committees it does state that each committee will review their own at their first meeting after the council's annual meeting. The Clerk will ensure that each committee reviews their Terms of References and then they are brought back to the Council for approval.

Resolved: Members resolved to add 6 members to an Allotment and Cemetery Committee. Members of the committee will be: Cllr D Booth, Cllr L Clarke, Cllr W Hall, Cllr T Mulholland, Cllr S Scott and Cllr F Walden.

Resolved: The Clerk will produce Terms of Reference for the Allotment and Cemetery Committee and the Finance Committee for their first meeting.

16/27 To appoint members to the Committees and sub-committees for 2026/27

(A) Neighbourhood Plan Committee
Resolved: Council resolved to maintain the current membership of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee

(B) Emergency Response Committee
Cllr Scott confirmed that he would like to step down from the committee due to work commitments. Cllr G Cruickshanks said he would be interested in being added to the committee.

Resolved: Members resolved to add Cllr Cruickshanks to the existing membership of the Emergency Response Committee.

(C) Staffing and Complaints Committee
Cllr Smallwood confirmed that she would like to step down from the committee. The Chair invited other members to join the committee.

Resolved: Members resolved to add Cllr Walden to the current membership of the Staffing and Complaints Committee.

(D) Lyric Committee
Resolved: Council resolved to maintain the current membership of the Lyric Committee.

(E) Community Committee
Resolved: Council resolved to maintain the current membership of the Community Committee.

(F) Finance Committee (if required)
Already discussed.

(G) Allotment and Cemetery Committee (if required)
Already discussed.

17/27 To nominate or appoint members to external committees for 2026/27

(A) YLCA Branch Meeting
The Chair, Cllr D Smith said that he will attend.

(B) RMBC Joint Working Group
Cllr Clarke advised members that he attends these meetings on a bi-monthly basis and will continue to do so.

(C) RMBC Community Action Partnership
Cllr Smith advised he would continue as the representative for the RMBC Community Action Partnership

(D) RMBC Standards and Ethics Committee
Cllr J Hart to continue as the representative for the RMBC Standards and Ethics Committee if a space on the committee does become available.

(E) RMBC Transport Advisory Group
Cllr J Hart continue as the representative for the RMBC Transport Advisory Group

On Path – Community Panel

The Clerk was asked to look into what this group is, when the meetings are held and ensure that they are aware to invite Cllr Cruickshanks and Cllr Scriven as they have not been invited to any meetings.

Resolved: Council resolved that Cllr G Cruickshanks and Cllr D Scriven continue as the representatives for the On Path Community Panel.

18/27 To review the Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies

(A) YLCA – Yorkshire Local Council Association
(B) SLCC – Society of Local Council Clerks
(C) NALC – National Association of Local Councils
(D) ICCM – Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management
Members requested that the Clerk let them know how much the annual subscriptions are for information.

Resolved: Members resolved to retain the Council's memberships and staff subscriptions to YLCA, SLCC, NALC and ICCM.

19/27 To review and approve the following Town Council policies and consider any further action:

(A) Cemetery Policy (new) (attached)
A short discussion took place between members regarding the involvement of staff in the production of the policy. It was suggested to make an additional point within the policy that the policy should be read in conjunction with the Health and Safety policy.
Resolved: Members resolved to adopt the Cemetery Policy with the amendment to include reference to the Health and Safety policy.

(B) Dignity at Work Policy (new) (attached)
The Clerk was asked to look into the council signing up to the local authorities 'Dignity Statement' and report back to council.
Resolved: Members resolved to adopt the Dignity at Work Policy.

(C) Volunteer Policy (new) (to follow)
Members discussed the production of the policy through the Volunteer Working Group. The Clerk confirmed that she is happy to oversee the onboarding and allocation of volunteers and with the initial set up of the policy.
It was proposed and seconded that an amendment to the policy is made. In the interest of Dinnington residents, only volunteers with a home address of within 3 miles of Dinnington would be allowed.

Cllr S Scott left the meeting at 20.27pm and returned at 20.28pm

Resolved: Members resolved to adopt the Volunteer Policy.

20/27 To consider relevant planning applications as published on RMBC's weekly lists along with any associated submissions received and any reports on previous planning applications/issues;

Planning Reference	Details	Date Valid
RB2026/0518	Erection of a single storey side Extension 40 Birkdale Avenue Dinnington, Rotherham http://rotherham.planportal.co.uk/?id=RB2026/0518	12/05/2026

The Chair and Clerk confirmed that there are no online objections. No further discussion took place.

Chairman Signature:

21/27 To consider future proofing the council and the use of IT for Councillors and Council meetings (Cllr L Clarke)

Cllr Clarke spoke to members about his belief that it would be beneficial for all Councillors to be issued an iPad (or similar device) to be used solely for council business. It would be better for the environment and reduce paper/printing costs. It was agreed that they would need to be encrypted and data held securely.

Members asked Cllr Clarke to look into further and bring a full costing back to the next meeting.

At 20.35pm the Chair announced a short comfort break and the meeting resumed at 20.43pm.

On the meeting re-starting, Cllr F Walden expressed her wish to be taken off of the Staffing and Complaints Committee and that the available position be offered to Cllr Scriven instead as he had also requested to join during that item on the agenda. The Chair confirmed that this would be amended.

22/27 To consider implementing DBS checks for staff and Town Councillors (and volunteers) to ensure vulnerable adults and children are aware that staff, Councillors and volunteers are checked. (Cllr J Hall)

Whilst not compulsory, Cllr J Hall explained to members that she feels it would be best practice for members, staff and volunteers to undertake a DBS check. A DBS check for volunteers would be free but there would be a cost to the council for Councillors and staff. Concerns were raised and discussed around the consequences of any convictions coming to light and how this would be handled as well as access to such confidential data.

Resolved: Members resolved that staff, members and volunteers will be asked to undertake a DBS check but that this would be optional.

23/27 Chair's allowance/ Chair's Civic Budget (attachment) (Clerk)

The Clerk explained to members the difference between a Chairs Allowance and having a Chairs Civic Budget and the potential financial implications for the Chair.

Resolved: Members resolved to adopt using the title of Chairs Civic Budget for managing finances for the Chair of the council.

24/27 Discussion regarding anonymous requests and correspondence (Cllr D Adams)

Cllr Adams spoke to members about his concerns over recent anonymous correspondence being read out at a meeting. He is happy for the Clerk to withhold names if requested to do so, but that anything coming in without any contact information should not be brought to council meetings. Members discussed this matter and it was proposed that if a letter or email arrives with no contact name and or address it is ignored, this was not approved by councillors.

25/27 Discussion regarding Councillor use of mobile phones during meetings (Cllr D Smith)

Cllr Smith advised members that he is concerned about the increased use of mobile phones by members whilst meetings are underway. It is noted that members are recording meetings and disrupting meetings by accepting calls. A discussion followed about acceptable use of mobile phones e.g. to check information or calendars. Members noted the request to be more considerate of others whilst a meeting is in place.

26/27 Ward Member Update

Cllr J Hall updated members of the good news regarding the previously mentioned closure of the glass factory.

Anti-social behaviour continues to be an issue in Dinnington and meetings are taking place with representatives from RMBC, PCSO's and a newly established Street Safe Team to try and tackle the ongoing issue.

D S.

Regeneration meetings had been reduced to quarterly but due to pressure from Cllr Hall and the reported issues in Dinnington these are being brought back to monthly. The scheme is facing further delays due to appointing contractors.

Members discussed the problems of anti social behaviour and if it would be worthwhile the Town Council purchasing and installing our own CCTV equipment and then being able to hand this over to the relevant authorities.

Resolved: At this point, 21.29pm, in the meeting members resolved to suspend Standing Orders.

Members requested that the Clerk invite Oliver Coppard, Police and Crime Commissioner, to a DSJTC meeting to discuss the crime and anti social behaviour in Dinnington.

27/27 For Members consideration and decisions:

(A) **To receive an update in regard to Charity of the year 2026/27 (attachment)**
The Clerk advised members of the two applications received. Members agreed to accept a verbal application from Cllr Clarke on behalf of Dinnington's branch of the Salvation Army Food bank.

Resolved: Members resolved to accept the application of the Dinnington Food bank as the Charity of the Year for 2026/2027. The charity will benefit from the free use of the Lyric Venue on 3 occasions (not Fridays or Saturday's), a collection box on the Lyric bar and a donation of £200.00.

(B) **To receive an update in relation to the ongoing SYMCA Bus Transport (Cllr J Hart)**
Cllr Hart updated members that there appears to be reduced communication and less meetings recently. The scheme is moving slowly but she is determined to ensure that Dinnington is at the forefront of any meetings and plans to ensure new and improved transport links for Dinnington residents.

28/27 General Matters

(A) RMBC Dinnington Regeneration update
Previously discussed.

(B) Neighbourhood Plan Committee update
Cllr Ruff updated members that an area of Japanese Knotweed has been identified on the land at East Street. This is currently under further investigation and there will be a significant cost to the council to resolve it. Meetings with developers regarding the site at Lodge Lane are being planned and Cllr Mulholland and Cllr Smith are continuing their work on the Empty Homes.

(C) Emergency Response Committee update
No meeting – no update.

(D) Staffing and Complaints Committee update (attachment)

i) Members are asked to receive and approve a recommendation from the Committee for a revised staffing structure

The Clerk explained to members that following in depth discussion, the Staffing and Complaints Committee have passed over a recommendation for a revised staffing structure for approval by full council. Approval of the proposed changes allows the council to move forward, make changes and advertise for the proposed new vacancy.

A discussion followed regarding the consultation of staff over proposed changes to the staff Christmas bonus. There was also some confusion over the job title of Lyric Manager from a previous title of Events Manager.

Members requested additional information from the Staffing and Complaints Committee regarding the proposed cost of these changes to the council. Clarity around job titles for the Lyric Manager and proposed Events Officer and working hours.

Chairman Signature:

Cllr N Ruff left the meeting at 22.00pm.

Members would also like to see proposed job descriptions for each member of staff and the proposed new role of Events Officer.

The Clerk requested that members do consider the recommendation that the Town Council Administrator becomes the Assistant Clerk. Members requested that the Clerk seeks HR advice to ensure that the council can promote from within or if the position does need to be advertised.

Resolved: Members resolved that the Town Council Administrator becomes the Assistant Clerk but that the Clerk carries out the necessary checks with HR.

ii) Members are asked to abolish the Staff Christmas Bonus policy as obsolete and approve the enrolment of staff into a council funded health cash back scheme

This item was deferred until June's meeting in order for the Clerk to collate additional information on the various offered schemes and the costs involved.

At 10.14pm Cllr D Adams left the meeting.

At 10.15pm Cllr S Scott left the meeting.

(E) Lyric Committee update

i) Members are asked to consider and approve a new colour palate for the redecoration of the Lyric Theatre (attachment)

Members briefly discussed the proposed colour scheme for the Lyric.

Resolved: Members resolved to accept the proposed new colour palate for the redecoration of the Lyric.

(F) Community Committee update

Cllr L Clarke updated councillors that an Open Mic event is to be held on 23rd May at the Lyric. Cllr Cruickshanks hosted a Quiz for the Community Club which was enjoyed by all. Upcoming events are Remembrance, Bonfire and the Christmas Festival.

(G) Working Group updates

The Volunteer policy was approved at this evenings meeting

29/27 To determine the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council (attached)

Resolved: Members resolved to approve the proposed schedule of ordinary meetings for 2026/2027

Meeting closed at 22.21 hours

D Smith