

Minutes of the Harworth and Bircotes Town Council meeting held on Monday 1st September at 6.30pm at the Town Hall, Scrooby Road, Bircotes, DN11 8JP.

Present: Cllr Evans, (Chair) Cllr James, Cllr Flynn, Cllr Smith, Cllr S Harrison, Cllr S Whitehead, Cllr Horrocks, and Cllr Sidwells

Others: W Davies (Officer), L Stewart (Deputy Clerk) and K Tarburton (Community Development and Funding Manager) and members of the public.

17819 To receive and consider any apologies and reasons for absence

Cllr S Harrison proposed to accept the apologies and reasons for absence from Cllr Schuller and Cllr Wratten; this was seconded by Cllr James and resolved by the Council.

Cllr Jones will be attending the meeting shortly.

17820 To receive Declaration of Interest on any item on the agenda

No declarations of interest received.

17821 To suspend the meeting to hold a public session and receive reports from Police, District & County Councillors,

The Chair suspended the meeting to hold the public session.

- Questions regards the Neighbourhood Plan; the Officer reported that the Consultant will be completing the Basic Conditions Statement this week and then the Town Council will be ready to submit the Review Neighbourhood Plan
- Question regarding housing provision for the five thousand people in the area on the housing register – the Chair explained that this information can be provided by Bassetlaw District Council; contact details were passed on
- The Police report has been previously circulated.
- No County Councillor report received

At this point in time, Cllr Jones joined the meeting.

The Chair gave her District Council Report regarding Houses in Multiple Occupation as below meeting.

District Councillor Report from Cllr J Evans

Background

A current issue Bassetlaw District Council is dealing with is Houses in Multiple Occupation(HMO). The situation has been complicated by misinformation put out by some individuals, sometimes for political reasons. Heightened attention in the media seems to have established a link in the minds of the public between H.M.O.'s and Asylum seekers. I think it beneficial that everyone has the facts.

- H.M.O.'s have been around for a long time – we called them bedsits.
- Most are in towns/cities, and meet a housing need e. g. for students, or people working for a specific period in the area, such as temporary construction workers. Others include people unable to afford to buy their own property, especially younger people at the start of their career. In other words, market forces dictated the need for H.M.O.'s

- H.M.O.'s are owned by private landlords who have converted a house into accommodation with a shared bathroom and kitchen. Councils do NOT own H.M.O.'s, nor provide accommodation for asylum seekers.
- H.M.O.'s fall into two categories – smaller, which can house up to six unrelated tenants, and larger, which house more than six.
- It is important to know that the smaller H.M.O.'s DO NOT require planning permission, hence Bassetlaw District Council has no record of how many such smaller properties there are.

The Role of Serco

The Home Office remains bound by law—specifically, the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999—to ensure no [asylum seeker](#) is left without a roof while their case is being processed. Outsourcing parts of this responsibility to companies like Serco allows the government to work with the private sector, offering them more capacity, better choices, and lower costs.

The UK government's Serco scheme invites private landlords to house asylum seekers, offering five-year leases and guaranteed rent to cut hotel costs and improve living conditions.

Councils are not involved in this process, though can offer Serco reasons 'why not' to establish a H.M.O. in a specific area or street.

What Can a District Council do?

There are a number of options, but the first consideration is usually a request for an Article 4 Direction in a defined geographical area, which has to be approved by Government. The rules relating to an Article 4 Direction have changed in recent years and requires specific evidence to support the application.

Other options include a Local Plan that includes a Housing Needs Assessment of the types of housing needed, and Supplementary Planning Documents. This requires research, analysis of need and demand, and a more strategic approach to regulating H.M.O.'s.

The Chair then reconvened the council meeting.

17822 To receive the Chair's report

As above, the Chair advised of Houses in Multiple Occupations process and how Harworth and Bircotes Town Council have no part in the process.

17823 To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 16th June 2025 and 30th June 2025

Cllr Flynn proposed to approve the minutes of the meeting held 16th June 2025 and 30th June 2025 as a true record; this was seconded by Cllr James and resolved by the Council. The Chair then signed the minutes.

17824 To consider planning applications as listed and any planning correspondence

Application: 25/00132/RES

Proposal: Reserves matters for access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for the proposed development of 138 dwellings pursuant of outline planning permission (18/01210/OUT)

Location: Land south of Scrooby Road and north of Snape Lane, Harworth

Consideration: No objections

Application: 25/00860/HSE

Proposal: Erect single storey rear and side extension

Location: 32 Meadow Way, Harworth

Consideration: No objections

Cllr S Harrison proposed not to make any objections to the above applications; this was seconded by Cllr Flynn and resolved by the Council.

17825 To receive the cemetery's Health & Safety inspections, to consider installing runners for phase two of the Styrrup Road Cemetery and contract for CCTV camera in the Tickhill Road Cemetery

Cllr S Harrison confirmed that the Tickhill Road Cemetery has been inspected, and the cemetery is in a good condition with no actions required. Cllr Jones reported on the Styrrup Road Cemetery and no actions required.

After consideration, Cllr S Harrison proposed the installation of cemetery runners (for putting the Memorial Stones on) in the new Cemetery; this was seconded by Cllr Whitehead and resolved by the Council. Quotations to be obtained.

Cllr Smith proposed to set up Data Sim contract for cameras in the old Cemetery this was seconded by Cllr Flynn and resolved by the Council.

17826 To consider appointment of a consultant to carried out Reinstatement Cost Assessments at the Town Hall and Information Centre for insurance purposes

After consideration, Cllr S Harrison proposed to authorise the appointment of a contractor to provide a full Reinstatement Survey for the Town Council properties for insurance purposes; this was seconded by Cllr Flynn and resolved by the Council.

17827 To consider payments as listed and the financial reports for 30th June and 31st July 2025

The Officer previously circulated payments for approval, financial reports, general and earmarked reserves, budget, Balance sheet, Income & expenditure account, bank reconciliations for approval on 30th June and 31st July 2025. The Officer went through the above account documents for the Council to consider.

Cllr Jones proposed to Authorise payments and the financial reports as above his was seconded by Cllr James and resolved by the Council.

Cllr James and Cllr Flynn confirmed the above bank balances against the financial reports and signed the documents.

Bank-Cash Reconciliation as of 30th June 2025**Bank Statement Balances**

30.6.2025	NatWest Current	£406,743.47	
	NatWest Deposit	£133,890.81	
	Unity Trust Current	£079,228.55	
	Unity Trust Deposit	<u>£108,733.87</u>	<u>£728,596.70</u>
	Less unrepresented payments	£000,000.00	
	Plus, receipts not on statement	<u>£000,000.00</u>	<u>£728,596.70</u>

Closing cash book balances

30.6.2025	NatWest Current	£406,743.47	
	NatWest Deposit	£133,890.81	
	Unity Trust Current	£079,228.55	
	Unity Trust Deposit	<u>£108,733.87</u>	<u>£728,596.70</u>

Represented by:	General Reserves	£456,990.12
	Earmarked Reserves	<u>£271,606.58</u>
		<u>£728,596.70</u>

Bank-Cash Reconciliation as of 31st July 2025**Bank Statement Balances**

31.7.2025	NatWest Current	£227,447.13	
	NatWest Deposit	£134,013.15	
	Unity Trust Current	£136,396.33	
	Unity Trust Deposit	<u>£195,752.87</u>	<u>£693,609.48</u>
	Less unrepresented payments	£000,000.00	
	Plus, receipts not on statement	<u>£000,000.00</u>	<u>£693,609.48</u>

Closing cash book balances

31.7.2025	NatWest Current	£227,447.13	
	NatWest Deposit	£134,013.15	
	Unity Trust Current	£136,396.33	
	Unity Trust Deposit	<u>£195,752.87</u>	<u>£693,609.48</u>

Represented by:	General Reserves	£414,668.06
	Earmarked Reserves	<u>£278,941.42</u>
		<u>£693,609.48</u>

17828 To appoint the solicitors for the renewal lease for the Police Station

Cllr Horrocks proposed to Authorise the appointment of Jones & Co solicitors to assist with the renewal of the Police station Lease; this was seconded by Cllr Smith and resolved by the Council.

17829 To consider the quotation for the installation of an electric supply at the Tickhill Road Cemetery

Cllr S Harrison proposed to Authorise the quotation fees of £990.00 and the quotation of £12,401.45 for Northern PowerGrid to install an electric supply to the cemetery, it is noted that any extra work will be an additional cost; this was seconded by Cllr James and resolved by the Council.

17830 To consider a contribution towards the bonfire event

Cllr Whitehead proposed to Authorise a contribution of £1000 to the Bonfire event carried out by the Bircotes & Harworth Sports and Social Club, this was seconded by Cllr Smith and resolved by the Council.

17831 To consider a contribution towards the road closure on Remembrance Day and purchase of wreath

Cllr Whitehead proposed to Authorise a contribution of £950.00 towards the Remembrance Day event by paying for the road closure and traffic management. It was also authorised for the purchase of a Remembrance Wreath for £25.00, this was seconded by Cllr Flynn and resolved by the Council. (CilCa)

17832 To consider the annual renewal of Clear Risk Management Health & Safety Consultants

Cllr S Harrison proposed to Authorise the annual fee review for Clear Risk Management Health & Safety Consultants of £1683.00 this was seconded by Cllr Flynn and resolved by the Council.

17833 To consider recommendations from the Finance Committee for transfer amounts of general reserves to ear marked reserves

The Officer went through the current on-going work and projects and ear marked reserves required. After consideration, Cllr James proposed to Authorise transfer of amount from general reserves to ear marked reserves for the Community Hub £50k and Installation of electric to the Styrrup Road Cemetery and addition work if required £20k, this was seconded by Cllr James and resolved by the Council.

Additional ear marked reserves will be updated when various quotations have been received.

17834 To consider the HR Committee's recommendations to appoint the new Caretaker and consider the draft HR policies

After consideration, Cllr Jones proposed to Authorise the appointment of the new Caretaker for the Town Hall and approved the HR policies (see list below); this was seconded by Cllr Smith and resolved by the Council.

17835 To consider the Finance Committee's Terms of Reference

After consideration, Cllr S Harrison proposed to Authorise the Finance Committee's Terms of Reference; this was seconded by Cllr Smith and resolved by the Council.

17836 To consider a request for the Ecologist to map and name the trees on Town Council's land as part of the new tree policies

After consideration, Cllr Jones proposed to Authorise for the Ecologist to carry out mapping and naming of trees within the Town Council's land; this was seconded by Cllr James and resolved by the Council.

17837 To consider the policies as listedNew and updated Draft Policies:

- 1) Reserve's Policy - new
- 2) CCTV Policy - new
- 3) Subject Access Request Form (CCTV) - new
- 4) Social media and Communications Policy - updated
- 5) Tree Management Policy - new
- 6) Tree Visual Inspection Tracking Table - new
- 7) Co-option Policy - updated
- 8) Training & Development Plan for Councillors - new
- 9) HR Committee – Recruitment Policy – new
- 10) HR Committee – Training & Development policy for Staff and Volunteers - new

Cllr S Harrison proposed to Authorise the approval of the new and updated policies as listed above; this was seconded by Cllr Flynn and resolved by the Council.

17838 To consider potential future events

Cllr Whitehead proposed to Authorise the planned future events, Halloween, Christmas Lighting, Winter Wounded Land and a Safety event; this was seconded by Cllr James and resolved by the Council

17839 To receive items for information**Items to note:**

- Cllr Sidwells advised times and dates and handed out Flyers for the Tom Simpon Retro Bike ride happening next week.
- A resident sent a letter which was previously circulated around the councillors which was noted.

17840 Time and date of the next scheduled Town Council meeting

The time and date of the next Town Council meeting will be on the 13th October 2025 in the Town Hall, Scrooby Road, Bircotes, DN11 8JP.