

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Harworth and Bircotes Town Council held on Monday 19th May 2025 at 7.25pm at the Town Hall, Scrooby Road, Bircotes, DN11 8JP.

Present: Cllr Evans, Cllr Jones, Cllr Smith, Cllr S Harrison, Cllr C Sidwell, Cllr Flynn, Cllr James, Cllr A Harrison and Cllr Horrocks

Others: Mrs Davies (Officer) and Mr Stewart (Deputy Clerk)

17771 Election of Chairperson

Cllr S Harrison proposed Cllr Evans as Chairperson for the coming year; this was seconded by Cllr Jones and resolved by the Council. Cllr Evans then signed her Acceptance of Office form which was countersigned by the Officer.

The Chair then took over the meeting.

17772 Election of Vice-Chairperson

Cllr Flynn proposed Cllr Jones as Vice-Chairperson for the coming year, this was seconded by Cllr Smith and resolved by the Council. Cllr Jones then signed her Acceptance of Office form which was countersigned by the Officer.

17773 To received completed Acceptance of Office forms

The Officer confirmed that she has received Acceptance of Office forms.

17774 To receive and consider any apologies and reasons for absence

Cllr A Harrison proposed to accept the apologies and reasons for absence from Cllr Whitehead and Cllr Schuller; this was seconded by Cllr Flynn and resolved by the Meeting. Cllr Wratten to join the meeting after work.

17775 To receive Declaration of Interest on any item on the agenda

No declaration of interest received.

17776 To suspend the meeting to hold a public session and receive reports from Police, District & County Councillors

No members of the public present or reports submitted. It was noted that someone on a mobility scooter and trailer stole some plants from the planter in the front of the car park around midnight – caught on camera. Plants also stolen out of the planters on Beech Road.

17777 To receive the Chair's report

See attached Chair's report from the Annual Parish Meeting for 2024-25

17778 To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 7th April 2025

Cllr Flynn proposed to approve the minutes of the meeting held 7th April 2025 as a true copy; this was seconded by Cllr S Harrison and resolved by the Council. The Chair then signed the minutes.

17779 To consider planning applications as listed and any planning correspondence

Application: 25/00370/HSE

Proposal: Two storey rear extension

Location: 20 Grosvenor Road, Harworth

Consideration: No objections

Application: 25/00358/PDN

Proposal: Change of use of first floor former dental practice (Class E) to a two-bedroom apartment (Class C3)

Location: 89 Scrooby Road, Bircotes

Considerations: No objections

Application: 25/00500/HSE

Proposal: Front porch extension

Location: 16 Essex Drive, Bircotes

Considerations: No objections

Cllr S Harrison proposed not to make any objections to the above applications; this was seconded

by Cllr Sidwell and resolved by the Council.

17780 To consider payments as listed and the financial reports for 31st March 2025

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

Cllr S Harrison proposed to approve the payments and financial documents as above, this was seconded by Cllr James and resolved by the Council.

Cllr Jones and Cllr Flynn confirmed the bank statements balances against the financial documents and signed the documents

The Officer also circulated a copy of the final Internal report received recently for the councillors to view and discuss the auditor's comments regarding the number of general reserves against the percept amount. Due to the amount of ongoing and future projects for 2025-26 onwards; it was suggested to transfer funds from the general account and increase the ear marked reserves – this item to be considered at the next meeting.

Cllr Watten proposed to approve the payments and financial documents as above, this was seconded by Cllr A Harrison and resolved by the Council.

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

At this point Cllr Wratten joined the meeting.

17781 To consider transferring the precept money from the NatWest account to Unity Trust accounts

The Officer ask for permission to transfer the precept fund from the NatWest account into the Unity Trust accounts; this is due to the District Council sending the money to the wrong bank account.

Cllr James proposed to transfer the money as above; this was seconded by Cllr Sidwell and resolved by the Council.

17782 To consider the review of the Standing Orders and updated amendments required

The National Associated of Local Councils has supplied an updated amendments for the Standing Orders relating to financial controls and procurement. The Officer circulated copies of the amendments for the Councillors to view prior to the meeting.

Cllr Smith proposed to update the Standing Order's financial controls and procurement – no other amendments required; this was seconded by Cllr Sidwell and resolved by the Council.

17783 To review the Code of Conduct and Complaints Policy

The Officer circulated copies of the current Code of Conduct and Complaints Policy for the Councillors to view.

Cllr A Harrison proposed to approve the above policies with no amendments; this was seconded by Cllr James and resolved by the Councils.

17784 To consider the asset list as of 31st March 2025 and approval of disposals and sale of trailer

The Officer circulated copies of the asst list as of 31st March 2025 and went through the grounds maintenance equipment which have been disposed of due to being worn out and no longer in use.

The Officer reported that a buyer has been found for the large trailer for £600.00.

Cllr Flynn proposed to approve the asset list as of 31st March 2025, the disposal of old equipment and approval of sale price of £600.00 for the large trailer; this was seconded by Cllr Jones and resolved by the Council.

17785 To consider the comparison costs for the water supply contract

The Deputy Clerk reported that the water rates are fixed for all suppliers these are the Whole sale rates, (In contract price - out of contract price) the only "costs" that can be changed/cut by suppliers are the retail charges (set fees) for the maintenance/ customer care etc. Money can be saved by entering into a contract with either Water company, With potential for smaller savings on Retail charges. - these charges are more difficult to get. We are now awaiting the "Retail charges from existing suppliers" and we can report back next meeting.

17786 To consider renewal of BT's standard telephone line contract

Cllr Flynn proposed to approve the renewal of the BT telephone line contract so that the Council can keep its current telephone number for £60.00 per month; this was seconded by Cllr James and resolved by the Council.

17787 To consider renewal of insurance

The Officer reported on the renewal of the insurance for 2025-26; this is the second or a three-year contract for the amount of £4,502.10 which includes £527.01 for fees and administration.

Cllr Sidwell proposed to approve the insurance renewal; this was seconded by Cllr S Harrison and resolved by the Council.

17788 To consider costs of alternative Christmas Tree for the events area and consider EMR for a 10-year plan

After discusses, the council asked for more research to be done on the seasonal costs of both options, costs associated with the install and purchase of real tree etc and the full costs of a Cone/fake tree. to assist with the decision-making process.

17789 To discuss approve the Neighbourhood Plan Review consultations and consider any expenses

Councillors were asked to contact the Deputy Clerk to advise who, what, and when they are available to help attending or dropping leaflets and attending the scheduled consultation events.

17790 To receive items for information

- Cllr Jones gave her new cemetery inspection report and Cllr Harrison gave his old cemetery inspection report.
- Cllr Sidwell wanted to raise the idea of twinning with an Italian cycling town which has benefited from embracing its cycling heritage and history and becoming a tourist destination; more information will be required.

17791 Time and date of the next scheduled Town Council meeting

The next scheduled meeting will be held on 30th June 2025 at 6.30pm at the Town Hall, Scrooby Road, Bircotes, DN11 8JP.

The Officer has also requested an additional meeting for the consideration of Annual Governance and Accountability Regulations documents for 2024 -26 – which will be held 16th June 2025 – the time still to be agreed.

Chairs report for 2025-25

Looking back over the last 12 months, I can say the year has been successful for the Town Council in a number of ways.

Starting with Finance

I have to thank The Town Clerk for her careful, diligent approach to managing the Council budget, as demonstrated by excellent returns from auditors.

I also have to thank the Finance Committee for their input when making challenging decisions, such as setting the precept. Council approved raising the precept by 8% for this new financial year, as did many other parish/town councils – the average rise in precept across Bassetlaw was 8%. Unlike Harworth and Bircotes, most other parishes do not have the advantage of extensive housing growth and the resultant watering down of the financial impact on residents.

We have also seen increased hire of the Town Hall, and therefore increased income, due to:

- Growing population
- Quality facilities on offer
- And the efforts of Karen who is always on the lookout for new customers.

We have had increased usage from the Hindu community along with the African Caribbean community who are living within this area and South Yorkshire. We have also had an increase in private party bookings.

This Leads Me to Events

The Town Council continues to hold successful events for the benefit of the community; in-year, the celebration of Halloween was added to the list - this proved to be very popular with residents and generated many positive comments. The most popular event continues to be the Christmas Extravaganza. I thank Karen and all our staff for their efforts in making such occasions very special for our community; it takes a lot of work and planning, and it would be appreciated if more members of the Town Council become involved, where possible.

We continue to look forward to the annual Retro-Bike event to the square, and this coming summer we are bringing the sand pit back to the square with Karen and Lee looking at a programme of smaller activities throughout the summer holidays, based and themed around the seaside.

I now want to stress the Importance of Partnership Working.

The Town Council is not an island, nor is it able to meet all the needs of the community without help from other partners, other organisations...and this has to be a system of two-way traffic. Other organisations may need help from us to deliver services that meet a specific need – we are big enough to step in and help others, if required.

Some of our current local partners are Tenants and Residents Association, The Food Bank, Cycling Legends, Active Communities CIC, then on a more strategic level there is BDC along with Nottinghamshire County Council and Department of Working Pension. We also work with North Notts BID, who have helped fund some of the events.

Achieved In-Year

- Improved security of cemeteries
- Maintenance of the pathways around the cemetery and the Miner's Memorial
- Extensive work by the tree surgeon

Ongoing work

- The review of the Neighbourhood Plan, developed by the working group, is nearing the consultation stage – I hope councillors can give any available help to this process. This document will act as a major influence in terms of planning, so it really matters!
- Another priority is expansion of New Cemetery

We have seen a number of Staff Changes in-year. We have:

- A new caretaker, who seems happy in his role
- Lee Stewart is now Deputy Clerk – this appointment is proving very effective in dealing with a growing workload, such as helping with the design/content of the Neighbourhood Plan leaflet, managing the installation of CCTV in the cemeteries, supervising the internet upgrade and updating our website, managing social media, event promotion and planning, and carrying out admin and customer services
- Re operational staff – the appointment of Adrian to work with Sean has been very successful, and I note the staff now undertake a wider range of activities, such as painting the Town Hall, simple plumbing jobs, maintenance of the pathways around the cemetery and the miner's memorial.

Importantly, the Town Council will continue to serve the community and must be innovative in future years as the community grows – I remain hopeful we will see the transfer of our Community Centres to the Town Council, and I am still clinging to the vision we all share regarding the North Notts Border School. What is certain is the expansion of the Town Council's role in serving the people of Harworth and Bircotes in the future – we have to meet that challenge.

Finally, I want to thank everyone on the Town Council for their input. I know we all wish the best for Sheila Place, having recently stepped down as a County Councillor – we hope she has a happy, enjoyable retirement.

Thank you.

Harworth & Bircotes Town Council

Bank-Cash Reconciliation as of 31st March 2025

Bank Statement Balances

31.3.2025	NatWest Current	£	235,824.21	
31.3.2025	NatWest Deposit A/c	£	133,511.13	
31.3.2025	Unity Trust A/c	£	160,969.31	
31.3.2025	Unity Trust Deposit	£	108,101.55	
				£ 638,406.20

Less unrepresented Payments

£ -

Plus, receipts not on Bank Statement

£ -

£ 638,406.20

Closing Cash Book Balances

All Cash Bank Accounts

NatWest Current	£	235,824.21
NatWest Deposit A/c	£	133,511.13
Unity Trust A/c	£	160,969.31
Unity Trust Deposit	£	108,101.55
	£	638,406.20

Represented by

General Reserves	£	394,274.62
Earmarked Reserves	£	244,131.58
	£	638,406.20