



Doncaster
Council

Joint Charter and Terms of Reference

For the partnership between Doncaster Council and the Parish and Town
Councils of the Borough of Doncaster (Revised 2022)



The Charter

Introduction

- 1 The original Joint Charter was endorsed at the Parish Councils Joint Consultative Committee meeting held 15th October 2007, and was adopted at the Doncaster Council Cabinet meeting held on 14th January 2009. The Charter has subsequently been reviewed, updated and re-endorsed by the PCJCC and Cabinet in April 2011, November 2013 and March 2019. This update follows a review in March 2022.
- 2 The purpose of the Joint Charter is to provide the basis on which Doncaster Council and Parish & Town Councils will work together in close partnership to provide high quality service and support to local communities throughout the Borough. The primary means of working together as a collective is through the Parish Councils Joint Consultative Committee (PCJCC).

PCJCC - Purpose & Function

- 3 The purpose of the PCJCC is to provide a facility whereby officers of the Council, nominated elected members and representatives of the Parish and Town Councils can meet to be informed about, and consider policy and service development issues, which are either of a strategic nature or affect more than one local council within the borough.
- 4 The function of the PCJCC is, as its name implies, consultative. Following the adoption of the Joint Charter and subsequent agreed updates, Parish and Town Councils commit to partnership working and in return are given the opportunity to influence decisions of the Principal Authority.

The Operation, Membership and Administration of the PCJCC are covered in the "Terms of Reference" appendix at the end of the document.

Underpinning principles

- 5 Doncaster Council acknowledges that Parish and Town Councils are the grass-roots level of local government. By working with them, Doncaster Council aims to act in partnership with local communities to meet local and locality needs, while balancing the needs of the wider community.

Locality Plans are prepared for two reasons, these are that
 - a. partnership working in a neighbourhood, using a place and strength based approach, allows partners to develop well targeted and effective approaches that reflect the priorities of that community; and
 - b. it allows residents to become directly involved in informing the decisions that affect their lives. Parish and Town Councils will be actively involved in the locality work and be represented in appropriate meetings.
- 6 In their role as democratically accountable bodies Parish and Town Councils offer a means of shaping the decisions that affect their communities. They also offer a means of decentralising the provision of certain services and of revitalising local communities. In turn the Parish or Town Councils recognise the strategic role of Doncaster Council and the equitable distribution of services, which it has to achieve.
- 7 Doncaster Council will work in partnership with all Parish and Town Councils in its area to promote sustainable social, economic, and environmental development for the benefit of local communities, in accordance with agreed policies and will, through the PCJCC and other means, actively involve Parish and Town Councils in the processes of preparing and implementing those policies. This will specifically include any refresh of the Borough Strategy, and associated strategies and policies.

- 8 When Doncaster Council consults Parish and Town Councils it will provide them with sufficient and timely information to enable them to reach an informed view and adequate time to respond taking account of any statutory or designated requirements where applicable.
- 9 Where a Parish or Town Council (or Group of Parish and/or Town Councils) has prepared an agreed Neighbourhood Plan, consistent with the requirements of the Localism Act, Doncaster Council will honour its proposals and priorities and will work to strengthen the links between Parish and Town Councils and local strategic partnerships to improve the delivery of local priorities.
- 10 Doncaster Council will, in accordance with its own, other recognised bodies and government best practice guidance, make every effort to avoid or eliminate double taxation.
- 11 Doncaster Council, and Parish and Town Councils, are committed to Customer Care. In line with the current Customer Care Strategy, all parties will respond to enquiries promptly and professionally. When responding to correspondence received, all parties will send a full substantive reply or an acknowledgement. In the unlikely event that correspondence is not responded to, and all other routes have been exhausted, an appeal can be presented to the nominated officer from Doncaster Council and the matter will be escalated appropriately.
- 12 It is recognised that the Charter will need to be reviewed periodically to reflect changing circumstances. Members of the PCJCC can, by agreement, initiate a review at any time and nominate members of a Joint Charter Working Party to conduct the review.
- Any proposed amendments to the Joint Charter must be agreed by the Parish Councils Joint Consultative Committee and Doncaster Council Cabinet.

Practical support

- 13 Doncaster Council will, wherever practical and possible, offer its assistance to Parish and Town Councils to enable it to deliver its services when its own resources / expertise are insufficient to meet its needs. It is recognised that there may be a charge for this service.
- Doncaster Council will also, where practical and possible, offer Parish and Town Councils access to their own support services to enable them to take advantage of facilities such as printing, purchasing, IT support, etc. at a mutually agreed price. In particular, assistance will be offered in identifying and helping to meet the training needs of Parish and Town Councils not offered by YLCA and other bodies.
- 14 Doncaster Council will inform and involve Parish and Town Councils in the process of delivering our Borough Strategy including the 12 national levelling up missions.
- The missions revolve around
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|-------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| a. Living Standards | b. Research & Development | c. Transport Infrastructure |
| d. Digital Connectivity | e. Education | f. Skills |
| g. Health | h. Wellbeing | i. Pride in Place |
| j. House | k. Crime | l. Local Leadership |

The above missions are related to the Borough Strategy Well-Being goals and the associated Great Eight (8) Priorities

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| 1. Tackling climate change | 2. Developing the skills to thrive in life and work |
| 3. Making Doncaster the best place to do business and create good jobs | 4. Building opportunities for healthier, happier and longer lives for all |

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| 5. Creating safer, stronger, greener and cleaner communities where everyone belongs | 6. Nurturing a child and family friendly borough |
| 7. Building transport and digital connections fit for the future | 8. Promoting the borough and its cultural, sporting and heritage opportunities |

Doncaster Council is committed to consult and engage with the Parish and Town Councils with regards to funding rounds when projects fall within Parish and/or Town Council areas.

- 15 If a Parish or Town Council (or group of Parish and/or Town Councils) wishes to take on sole or shared responsibility for Service Delivery (outside of the Community Right to Challenge – see 16), Doncaster Council will consider this, and where it is considered as best value (taking account of cost, quality, local preferences, and practicability), approve and assist with the change in arrangements.

Where it is not best value or practicable Doncaster Council will, in consultation with the individual or group of Parish and/or Town Councils, explore alternative solutions to encourage more local-level input into service delivery.

Local Councils wishing to make new arrangements with Doncaster Council should initially contact the “Policy & Insights Team” to determine the best way forward.

- 16 Doncaster Council will provide whatever advice and assistance is necessary for Parish & Town Councils to pursue their rights under the Localism Act 2011, including:

- The Community right to Bid
- The Community Right to Challenge
- Community Asset Transfer

- 17 In relation to 10 above, in addressing instances of double taxation Doncaster Council will work in partnership with Parish and town Councils to explore means of mitigating the effect of double taxation through:




- Delegation with funding (Section 101 of Local Government Act 1992)
- Special expenses (Sections 35 and 25 of Local Government Act 1992)
- Grant schemes (Section 136 of Local Government Act 1972)
- Help in kind (as outlined in 13 above)

Standards

- 18 Both Doncaster Council and the Parish and Town Councils in the Borough are required by law to adopt a Member Code of Conduct, which all councillors are expected to abide by. Parish and Town Councils will work with Doncaster Council’s Monitoring Officer to promote and maintain compliance with their adopted Code. PCJCC and associated meetings are covered by the Code.
- 19 When an alleged breach of the Code is reported, members of Doncaster Council and Parish and Town Councils in the Borough will comply with the procedure set out for dealing with alleged breaches of the Code and assist the Monitoring Officer in any investigation.

Signatories

- 20 This revised Joint Charter has been formally adopted by both Doncaster Council and, following consultation, by the following Parish and Town Councils within the Borough.

<i>Chair</i>	<i>Vice – Chair</i>	<i>Cabinet Member</i>
<i>Parish Councils' Joint Consultative Committee</i>	<i>Parish Councils' Joint Consultative Committee</i>	<i>on Behalf of the City of Doncaster Council</i>
Parish Councillor Duncan Wright	Councillor Linda Curran	Councillor Phil Cole
		

Endorsed by the following Parish/Town Councils at 19th April 2023:

Askern Town Council
Auckley Parish Council
Barnburgh-and-Harlington Parish Council
Blaxton Parish Council
Burghwallis Parish Council
Cantley-with-Branton Parish Council
Clayton-with-Frickley
Conisbrough Parks Parish Council
Edlington Parish Council
Finningley Parish Council
Hatfield Town Council
Hickleton Town Council
Hooton Pagnell Parish Council
Rossington Parish Council
Sprotbrough and Cusworth Parish Council
Stainforth Town Council
Thorne-Moorends Town Council
Tickhill Town Council
Wadworth Parish Council
Warmsworth Parish Council

Terms of Reference

Operation

1. PCJCC meetings shall be held as and when required, but not less than three times per year with the possibility of Working Groups if appropriate and one other non-facilitated meeting.

The time, date and venue / means shall be agreed by the Secretary with the Chair and/or Vice-Chair. The autumn meeting of the PCJCC will be in the form of an Annual General Meeting (AGM).

2. The PCJCC shall appoint a Chair and Vice-Chair at alternate November meetings for the ensuing 2 years. If the Chair is a Member of the Borough Council then the Vice-Chair shall be a Member of the local Councils and vice-versa. Nomination is by members of the appropriate group. The roles of Chair and Vice-Chair will alternate on a 2 yearly basis unless otherwise agreed by the PCJCC.

Membership

3. Doncaster Council will appoint 6 Borough Councillors at the Council's Annual Meeting and the Mayor will appoint 2 Cabinet Members as representatives to the PCJCC for a municipal year.

Each local council within the borough of Doncaster is invited to nominate one representative to attend PCJCC meetings. A deputy representative can attend the PCJCC meeting if required where the nominated representative is unable to attend.

4. Both Doncaster Council and local councils shall be entitled to arrange for the attendance of officers in an advisory capacity. For this purpose, "officers" can include representatives from the Yorkshire Local Councils Association or from other agencies or partners as is necessary to support agenda items and fulfil the Purpose.

Attendance by observers at meetings

5. The attendance of observers is strictly by agreement of the Chair or Vice-Chair of the PCJCC. If it is agreed that an observer can attend, they should not address the committee in any way. If the observer wishes to comment on any part of the meeting, then this should be done after the meeting has taken place through the Clerk to their Town/Parish Council and subsequently to the Chair of the PCJCC.

In any case, requests to observe the meeting would only be approved by the Chair if the proposed observer was an elected member of a Town / Parish Council.

Request to observe the meeting should be received by the committee administrators no less than 3 working days before the meeting.

Administration

6. Any member has the opportunity to put forward, in writing to the Chair, Vice Chair or facilitator, matters for consideration on future agendas. Topics put forward for consideration must include the context and

purpose behind the request to the Policy, Insight, and Change (PIC) Team.

The Chair and Vice-Chair have the power to decide whether or not to admit the item on to a future Agenda. In the event of no agreement being reached between the Chair and Vice-Chair, the originator can request the item be included on an Agenda for discussion and decision by the Members.

7. The PCJCC schedule of meetings and items for inclusion on the agenda will be facilitated by an officer from Doncaster Council's PIC Team who will seek to identify the appropriate project, service lead or other appropriate persons to attend a future meeting and present a report.

8. An Officer from Doncaster Council's Democratic Services will set a timetable showing when reports / papers have to be received for approval prior to circulation of the agenda.

Democratic Services will also maintain the contact database of all current Local Council Clerks and name of the representative on the PCJCC. This list will be in such a form that the facilitator or any project officer of DMBC will be able to communicate with members and their Councils when necessary.

9. The PCJCC minutes will be recorded by an Officer from Doncaster Council's Democratic Services. These will clearly show agreed action points and areas where there is to be no further action.

The draft minutes will be circulated to members via Parish/Town Council clerks within four weeks and for the minutes to be included as an agenda item on a Parish or Town Council meeting prior to the next PCJCC. The minutes will then be presented at the next PCJCC meeting for approval.

10. The PCJCC shall have the power to appoint Working Parties, such as the Joint Charter Working Group, to examine particular issues. The Borough Council will, where possible, facilitate meetings. However, it will be the responsibility of Working Party members to appoint a Chair, take notes of their meetings, and feedback progress to the PCJCC.