



Hessle Town Council Charter

Why do Town and Parish Councils exist? Why do we need a Town Council when there is a Unitary Authority to make decisions about Hessle? What can the Town Council do that is any different?

The Unitary Authority – the East Riding of Yorkshire Council – covers a vast area which stretches from Snaith to Spurn, Spurn to Flamborough and across the county to Stamford Bridge and it has wide responsibilities. The money it collects from Hessle – apart from “Special Expenses” is used for the benefit of the whole of the East Riding and resources are channelled into areas of greatest need. Hessle’s Special Expenses are a tiny part of the East Riding of Yorkshire Council Tax, collected for specific Hessle items like seats, grass cutting, footway lighting and for looking after the Churchyard.

Just as the East Riding of Yorkshire Council Tax money is spread throughout the East Riding, then ERYC ward councillors represent the whole area too. Whilst Hessle’s East Riding councillors stick up for Hessle and do an enormous amount of work in Hessle, sometimes the needs of other areas have to be given priority over Hessle.

For these reasons Hessle needs a Town Council that:

- Concentrates on Hessle
- Puts Hessle first
- Champions the people and environment of Hessle
- Provides a voice and a choice for Hessle
- Provides and raises the money for the extra things which make the difference for the people of Hessle.

This Charter sets out Hessle Town Council’s aims for making Hessle a Safer, Fairer and Greener place in which to live, work and play. It provides a framework for making a difference within which the Committees can set their own objectives.

Hessle Town Council will:

- Represent the Town of Hessle through its elected councillors and co-opted members.
- Provide a democratic voice for the Hessle community.
- Support and make a contribution towards the economic and social regeneration of the community in Hessle.
- Ensure that the Town Council's services are provided at an economic cost.
- Inform and be informed by the people of Hessle.
- Support the community towards achieving involvement in and responsibility for its own development, particularly via a Town Plan.
- Involve people outside the Council and with expertise through co-opting them to Committees.
- Ensure that all Council initiatives comply with the principle of sustainable development.
- Support the revitalisation and regeneration of the Town Centre to serve the shopping, leisure, business, cultural, recreational and educational needs of the local people and visitors to the Town.
- Promote local democracy through open government.
- Be an advocate for Hessle to other authorities, including East Riding of Yorkshire Council and agencies providing services in Hessle.
- Continue to support and liaise with other community orientated voluntary organisations that provide services to Hessle people.
- Endeavour to protect and improve the environment in Hessle.
- Maintain and develop the Town Hall for the people and organisations of Hessle.
- Seek opportunities for taking responsibility for devolved services in Hessle (eg notice boards and bus shelters in The Square).

- Raise sufficient funds from the council taxpayers of Hessle and other sources, such as rents and charges, to provide its services.
- Work with the East Riding of Yorkshire Council, its partners and other relevant local groups to ensure a safer environment for the people of Hessle.

ASSET MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

This Committee will:

- Promote the use of the Town Hall as a venue for a wide range of activities of benefit to the community and ensure full accessibility.
- Operate an Equal Opportunities Policy for the use of the Town Hall.
- Maintain Health and Safety standards.
- Minimise the subsidy required from the Hessle council taxpayer and maximise the resources available to meet Council's aims by:
 - a. Promoting the Town Hall to increase revenue.
 - b. Minimising the running costs of the Town Hall.
- Create an environment, which encourages and promotes a wide range of uses including social, cultural, recreational and educational activities within the Town Hall.
- Secure and manage designated recreational facilities for young people.
- Manage other Council assets (eg bus shelters in The Square and seat at the top of Prestongate and the maintenance and replacement of the Council's notice boards).

COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE

The Committee will:

- Oversee the production of “Hessle Town”.
- Oversee and manage the content of the text and advertisements, submitted by the editor and clerk to the Committee, for accuracy and suitability.
- Ensure that the contents inform the people of Hessle of the Town Council’s activities, other events and news of a local nature not readily available in other newspapers.
- Invite feedback, views and comments from readers.
- Invite contributions from people and organisations in Hessle.
- Seek information on the initiatives of the Police and other organisations and disseminate to the community where this information is not readily available elsewhere.
- Maintain an accessible and customer friendly Town Council website.
- Take responsibility for the content of and income from the Town Council’s notice boards.
- Encourage and promote communications with the people of Hessle, in particular, the business community, schools and young people.

FINANCE AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

This Committee will:

- Manage the Council’s finance in line with its budget, Standing Orders and the best local government accounting practice.

- Prepare and recommend an annual budget for the Town Council's January meeting taking the advice of the Precept Committee.
- Give grants to voluntary bodies that provide cultural, social, educational and sporting opportunities in Hessle.
- Decide on the financial matters of by-elections provided they remain within the sum allocated in the budget and to advise the Town Council otherwise.
- Advise the Town Council on all financial matters.
- Design, produce, maintain and review all the Town Council's Personnel Policy documents (Equal Opportunities, Health and Safety and Grievance Procedures and the like) and develop new policies as appropriate.
- Undertake the recruitment of Town Council staff as appropriate and establish job specifications and contracts accordingly.
- Instigate and organise interview processes and recommend appointments to the Town Council.
- Manage staff performances by means of regularised appraisals and report on staffing levels, from time to time, to the Town Council.
- Consider all other matters relating to staff grievances and complaints and make suggestions for increasing Town Council efficiency as arising.

PLANNING AND TRAFFIC COMMITTEE

The Committee will:

- Seek to maintain and improve the character and environment of Hessle.
- Uphold the policies of the Town Centre and Southfield Conservation Areas.
- Respond fairly and speedily to consultations on planning applications, tree orders, licences and road naming.
- Seek to ensure that the people of Hessle are aware of significant issues on major planning developments.
- Seek to ensure that housing and industry areas are kept separate.
- Uphold the Local Development Framework and seek to ensure that its provisions are complied with.
- Seek to ensure, where possible, a supply of low cost and rented accommodation in Hessle.
- Oppose building on the green spaces, outside the development limit, to the north and west of the Town.
- Seek to preserve as many green spaces as possible with the Town limit.
- Seek to identify solutions to highway problems in consultation with local people, the Highway Authority and the Police.
- Seek to provide consistent and high quality approach to highway issues.

- Seek the support of the Police on road safety and refer these issues to the East Riding of Yorkshire Council.
- Promote and support campaigns for greater road safety in Hessle.
- Promote and encourage public and private rights of way.

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

The Committee will:

- Ensure all opportunities are taken to maintain and improve the character and environment of Hessle, liaising with the East Riding of Yorkshire Council and others as appropriate.
- Provide and effectively manage allotments for the residents of Hessle, the former Beverley Borough area and others, in that priority order.
- Cover the running and administration costs of the allotments by the annual rentals and other means whilst seeking to keep them affordable for retired people and those on benefits.
- Ensure effective strategies and administrative systems are in place so that plots remain tidy and that plot holders have regard to each other's rights and responsibilities.
- Improve the environment by encouraging the planting and replacing of trees where necessary.

- Take responsibility for all publicly owned land in Hessle, including Hessle War Memorial Park, ensuring high standards are maintained.
- Seek to secure sports facilities commensurate with the size of the Town.
- Encourage East Riding of Yorkshire Council to provide facilities (seats, litter bins and the like) in appropriate places.

EVENTS COMMITTEE

The Committee will:

- Provide, maintain and extend Christmas lights and decorations and organise Christmas celebrations at the switch-on of the lights.
- Engage with local schools and the Hessle community in the possible staging of other Christmas festivities.
- Support the Town Mayor in the organisation of the Annual Civic Service.
- Organise and promote suitable social events throughout the year for the enjoyment of the Hessle community.

TREE VISIT COMMITTEE

The Committee will:

- Respond fairly and speedily to consultations on Tree Preservation Orders and proposed work to trees in the Conservation areas.
- Where timely, respond to proposals about highway trees and other trees owned and maintained by ERYC.