

Mechanisms to Influence RMBC's Policy Making and High-Level Decisions

The following question was submitted to a recent Town Council meeting:

“What is the mechanism by which Dinnington Town Council may influence RMBC's policy making and other high-level decisions?”

The following mechanisms provide an overview of how individuals and Dinnington St John's Town Council can influence and challenge RMBC's policies and other high-level decisions.

Councillor Surgeries

Weekly face to face surgeries are held locally on various days of the week in various locations throughout the area, dealt with in an individual basis depending on the enquiry. All surgeries should be logged and given time limits for resolution. Data from the Surgeries feeds into the RMBC Complaints System, unless it is a complaint against Dinnington Town Council in which case the complaint will be fed straight into the Town Council complaint system.

Complaints, Compliments or Suggestions

Can be made direct to RMBC by completing an online form at www.rotherham.gov.uk

- If you feel you have been discriminated against or treated unfairly...if you feel staff have been rude or impolite
- if you feel there has been an unreasonable delay in providing a service
- if you feel the quality of the service provided has been unsatisfactory

Following investigations, if your complaint is upheld RMBC will try to solve the problem. If a solution can be found, they will:

- apologise and explain what went wrong
- provide you with the service you are entitled to receive
- change procedures, where relevant, so that the mistake is not repeated

Freedom of Information Act

The Freedom of Information Act (FOI) gives you the right to ask any public sector organization for the recorded information they have on any subject. Anyone can make a request for information – there are no restrictions on your age, nationality or where you live. Please note however, there are areas that are exempt from the Act, e.g. personal information, that means you may not receive all the information you request.

E-Petitions

All e-petitions must be a request for the government to do something. There is a need to identify which government department looks after your issue. For example

road issues should be sent to the Department for Transport. All e-petitions will be checked by the government department that looks after your issue. Usually e-petitions stay open for 12 months. There is a choice of whether you want your e-petition to close sooner than this. If you set a shorter period, you still need to get 100,000 signatures for your issue to be eligible for debate in the House of Commons. At the end of the set period, the e-petition closes. No further signatures can be added to it.

Council Meetings

Meetings of the Town and Borough Councils are open to the public and anyone attending should have the opportunity to submit questions to the council, subject to meeting rules and protocols.

Area Assemblies

Area Assembly	Rother Valley South
Meeting dates	Contact the Rother Valley South team at the Dinnington Resource Centre for future meeting dates
Areas covered	Anston, Woodsetts, Dinnington and Wales

Local MP

MPs have public contact details so their constituents can get in touch. In most cases you can write, phone, fax or email. MPs will generally only act on behalf of their constituents, so please check you are contacting the MP who represents your constituency.

Local Government Ombudsman

If you have a complaint, the first thing to do is complain to the council. You can ask a councillor to help, if your complaint is against a council. In most cases, the body complained about must have a chance to sort out the complaint before the Ombudsman can consider it. Councils often have more than one stage in their complaints procedure. You will usually need to complete all stages before the Ombudsman will look at a complaint.

Localism Act

The Community Rights are a set of powers that give greater say over how communities develop. They can help you to save local shops, pubs, libraries, parks and football grounds.

Parish Poll

Parish polls may be demanded at a parish meeting by a specified number of electors. These may be held on any question arising at the meeting but the result is not binding (*Local Government Act 1972*);