

BEXHILL-ON-SEA TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **BEXHILL-ON-SEA TOWN COUNCIL**

Held in the **BEXHILL SENIOR CITIZENS CLUB, EVERSLEY ROAD,**

BEXHILL-ON-SEA

On **Wednesday 17th December 2025** at **6:30pm**

PRESENT: Cllr Blagrove, Cllr Byrne, Cllr Drayson, Cllr Goss, Cllr Jacklin, Cllr Lee, Cllr Peters, Cllr Plim, Cllr Thomas, Cllr Wilson, Cllr Winter.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: M Webber; L Muhilathithan; One Videographer; 3 members of the public; Cllr Ian Hollidge (East Sussex County Council).

00353 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

One member of the public referred to a previous meeting and the discussion of the Villas, stating that the lease would be for three years, but Rother District Council will most likely no longer exist, suggesting the Council should instead look at leasing or purchasing an alternative building. The member of the public requested answers to questions raised at a previous meeting. Including the question of if it was a legal vote in the previous meeting when the Chair voted after declaring an interest in the matter being discussed.

The Chair did not declare a pecuniary interest; this vote was legal as per the standing orders.

Request for an update on Glyne Gap Roundabout, the 125th anniversary since the first race in Britain is coming up and this would be a great way of publicizing and promoting Bexhill-on-Sea.

An update on the serpollet sculpture for Glyne Gap Roundabout was discussed in the Engagement and Communications Committee meeting on Wednesday 7th January 2026.

Additionally in the meeting of the 26th November it was noted that the next meeting was dated 17th December, with all motions for the next meeting of the Full Council on the 17th December needing to be

received by the 6th December, however these minutes were not uploaded until the 11th December. Why was this?

This was due to staff workload, the minutes are now up to date.

The member of the public stated it is not easy to match meeting minutes and agendas as the numbering is different. They should be the same in order to make it easier to follow and trace.

The minutes of meetings must run in sequence from the first meeting to the last meeting of the Council year.

00354 APOLIGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and approve apologies for absence with reason from Cllr Carroll, Cllr Crotty, Cllr El, Cllr Hunt, Cllr Huseyin, and Cllr Rustem.

It was noted that the Council sends well wishes to the Town Clerk.

00355 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTEREST

Cllr Bryne declared an interest as a member of Rother District Council and board member for Combe Valley Country Park CIC.

Cllr Drayson declared an interest as a member of Rother District Council.

Cllr Winter declared an interest as a member of Rother District Council.

00356 CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair announced that the Council should try to reach resolutions quickly for some of the motions in order to get through the agenda.

Cllr Wilson gave a reminder to the Council to avoid making any comments on social media that can be perceived as pre-determination.

00357 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the following meetings of the Full Council:

a) Wednesday 29th October 2025.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting of Wednesday 29th October 2025.

b) Wednesday 26th November 2025.

It was noted that there are outstanding answers to questions asked by members of the public. – these will be answered in the minutes.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting of Wednesday 26th November 2025.

00358 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES

There were none.

00359 BUDGET PREDICTIONS 2026–2027

a) To note and approve the budget for 2026–2027 – £2,259,437.

Cllr Peters put forward a motion for the requirement of public approval prior to any town precept increase of 100% or more within a single financial year.

Cllr Lee left the meeting at 19:05.

Cllr Lee re-entered the meeting at 19:07.

For:

Cllr Blagrove

Cllr Jacklin

Cllr Peters

Against:

Cllr Byrne

Cllr Drayson

Cllr Lee

Cllr Plim

Initial.....

Cllr Thomas

Cllr Wilson

Cllr Winter

Abstain:

Cllr Goss

It was **RESOLVED** not to approve the motion for the requirement of public approval prior to any town precept increase of 100% or more within a single financial year.

Cllr Plim put forward a motion to follow the Responsible Financial Officers advice for the recommendation of the budget and submit the precept request.

Cllr Wilson put forward a motion to change the budget line on Devolution asset expenditure to around £694,000.

Cllr Drayson put forward a motion to reduce the line on Devolution asset expenditure to £500,000 and then approve the budget.

For:

Cllr Blagrove

Cllr Byrne

Cllr Plim

Cllr Lee

Cllr Thomas

Against:

Cllr Goss

Cllr Jacklin

Cllr Peters

Cllr Wilson

Initial.....

Cllr Winter

Abstain:

Cllr Drayson

This vote resulted in equal votes for and against the motion with one abstention. The Chair originally voted against the motion and then changed his vote to for when using the casting vote.

This was **RESOLVED** to approve the budget for 2026-2027. –
£2,259,437.

- b) To note and approve the precept request to Rother District Council – £2,018,168.

This was **RESOLVED** to submit the precept request to Rother District Council.

00360 MAYORS OFFICE

- a) To receive an update on the work of Town Mayor.

The Chair reported that though he was unwell for a week he has still had many opportunities to support some brilliant voluntary organisations. A couple trips outside of the Bexhill boundary, allowed Cllr Wilson to spread the word on the great achievements that are happening all around us. Cllr Wilson highlighted a couple of events. An awards evening for the volunteers of the Bexhill Bus and the turning on of the Christmas Lights. First it was Sidley lights which showed great community spirit. The Town celebrations this year moved onto another level with more stalls and just as many people despite the weather. It was great to see so many Councillors there in support of the Officers who pulled it all together. Cllr Wilson ended the report wishing everyone a very happy Christmas or end of the year.

00361 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

Initial.....

External Councillors may report for three minutes. Written reports must be received three days before the meeting.

- a) To receive reports from Division County Councillors.

Cllr Ian Hollidge raised concerns that he does not understand the 31 assets on the green list being transferred from Rother and believes the public should see this list. Suggestion is to move away from using the term devolution and call it asset transfers to avoid confusions. Mentioned grass cutting bill increase, would like to ensure that the Council is getting value for money. Cllr Hollidge expressed regret over the Government's decision to cancel mayoral elections in 2026 and noted that a combined county authority will cover West Sussex, East Sussex, and Brighton & Hove. He explained that Local Government Reorganisation will begin in 2026 with a continuing authority and a shadow authority. He referenced the plan for 912 homes across Rother, noted uncertainty around the Neighbourhood Plan, and agreed it was the right decision to maintain the budget allocation at £20,000.

- b) To receive reports form Ward District Councillors.

There was none.

- c) To receive ward reports from Town Councillors.

Cllr Peters highlighted that the pothole campaign has filled 20 of the 109 potholes on Ashcombe Drive.

Cllr Blagrove gave an update on the success of the Rother Forum group.

00362 PLANNING MATTERS

- a) To receive update on the Neighbourhood Plan.

Deferred till the next meeting of the Full Council.

00363 ROTHER DISTRICT COUNCIL LIASON

- a) To consider the approval of the Draft Heads of Terms for Channel View East Public Conveniences.

This item will be deferred pending further comments.

- b) To receive update on the Draft Heads of Terms for The Villas.
This item will be deferred pending further comments.

00364 EXTERNAL REPRESENTATIVES

- a) To receive updates from external representatives.
Report issued from Neighbourhood board.

00365 MOTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

- a) Cllr Wilson

To decide if Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council staff:

1. remain occupied in the Hub and operate WFH for a further year, as the office is uncomfortable and with the growth of workloads in the next 12 months it is unclear if this is acceptable.
2. To move to the Villas as in the prepared Heads of Terms as already decided, with confirmation of whether there is disabled access via the Town Hall or an alternative access point for those that require it.
3. To investigate the possibility of purchasing an alternative building within the whole of Bexhill, noting that two previous motions on this subject have failed.
4. Carry out option 1 or 2 and look to purchase a plot of land and build our own civic centre.

It was **RESOLVED** to defer this motion until the next meeting of the Full Council.

- b) Cllr Drayson

For the Council to adopt the following policy regarding the appointment and succession of the Vice Chair/Deputy Mayor.

Deferred till January.

It was **RESOLVED** to defer this motion until the next meeting of the Full Council and to upload this motion as an appendix on the next agenda.

c) Cllr Drayson

For the Council to adopt the following policy regarding the appointment of the Chair/Mayor.

This was **RESOLVED** to defer this motion until the next meeting of the Full Council and to upload this motion as an appendix on the next agenda.

00366 CORRESPONDENCE AND MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

There was none.

00367 RISK REGISTER

a) There was none.

00368 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – WEDNESDAY 28th JANUARY 2026

All motions for the next meeting of the Full Council on 28th January 2026 must be received by received by the 17th January 2026.

Civic Administrator left the meeting at 20:01.

Pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings Act) 1960, because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and the press will not be permitted to attend during the following items:

00369 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

a) To receive update. – update received.

The business plan for all 31 assets has been submitted.

00370 STAFFING UPDATE

a) Recruitment process for the position of Town Clerk.

It was **RESOLVED** to agree interview panel, consisting of five Councillors and one independent interviewer.

It was **RESOLVED** that the location of the interview would be the Pelham.
Date to be confirmed.

Initial.....

It was **RESOLVED** for the advertisement to be done on three relevant websites and the Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council Website.

It was **RESOLVED** to seek guidance from Trevor Lego on the appropriate interview format.

The meeting closed at 20:53pm.

Date.....

Signed.....

Initial.....