

BEXHILL-ON-SEA TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of **BEXHILL-ON-SEA TOWN COUNCIL Climate, Nature and Environment Committee** held at the **Bexhill Senior Citizens Club, Eversley Road, Bexhill-on-Sea** on **Wednesday 16th November 2022 at 7pm**

PRESENT: Cllr Wray (Chair); Cllr Brailsford; Cllr Plim; Cllr Izzard; Cllr Norris; Cllr Winter; Cllr Thomas

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: J Miller, Clerk, seven members of the public, David Denis

00418. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A member of the public asked

- a) With reference to the role the discussions on a possible officer to project manage the Climate Action Plan, why the council is offering a low wage for a post that pays a national average of £39,000 per annum when Rother District Council and East Sussex County Council are the statutory bodies for environment policies.

The council has not made any decisions on such a post. Initial exploratory discussions suggested that the role might not need professional climate qualifications. The role could be a project delivery role, working in conjunction with the statutory bodies. Initial research on similar parish and town roles showed that the salary may be around £25,000 per annum. No decisions have been made.

A member of the public asked

- b) If an environmentalist should be employed by Rother District Council or East Sussex County Council.

That would be a decision for the district or county council.

A member of the public asked

- c) Does the £25,000 salary suggested for this role include all costs, such as National Insurance, pension, car and out of pocket expenses?

The discussion with reference to on-costs has not yet taken place, as the role has not been fully explored.

A member of the public asked

- d) Who will this person's line manager be and what will their remit be? Will the committee be their line manager?

None of this has been discussed as yet.

00419. TO ADJURN THE MEETING TO ALLOW DAVID DENNIS TO ADDRESS THE MEETING REGARDING THE DOMESDAY SURVEY

This item was taken later in the meeting to allow Mr Dennis to set up equipment.

Mr Denis gave a presentation on how the town council could participate in a Domesday survey of wildlife in Bexhill.

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00420. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and approve apologies from Cllr Baldry with reasons.

00421. DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Cllr Thomas declared a non-pecuniary interest in the Climate Action Plan as the Rother District Council spokesperson for sustainable communities.

00422. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were none,

00423. MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** to sign and approve the minutes from the meeting of the 28th September 2022.

00424. TO RECEIVE NOTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM WORKING GROUPS

a) Climate and Nature Emergency Panel Recommendations:

- i. That the Committee approve the Climate and Nature Plan and recommend its adoption to Full Council

It was **RESOLVED** to refer the Climate Action Plan to full council for consideration.

Thanks were noted to the Town Clerk and Assistant Clerk for their outstanding work preparing the Climate Action Plan.

- ii. That the Committee recognise the scope of work required to implement the plan and recommend that Full Council appoint a full time Climate and Nature Officer at the earliest opportunity. It was noted that the F&GP Committee are reviewing staffing costs for this role at the next meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** that Full Council seek funding for a Climate and Nature Officer.

A recorded vote was called for.

FOR: Cllr Plim; Cllr Thomas; Cllr Izzard; Cllr Taylor-Gee; Cllr Norris

AGAINST: Cllr Brailsford; Cllr Winter

It was noted that this role would not be an environmentalist role. It would be a project management role.

- iii. That the Committee requests that Council staff explore the options to conduct a Nature and Biodiversity Audit similar to that of the Crowhurst Biodiversity audit conducted in 2020 at the earliest opportunity.

It was **RESOLVED** to defer this motion until the Climate and Nature officer is in post.

- b) Town Accessibility Working Group – meeting deferred.
- c) Beach and Sea Working Group – meeting deferred.

00425. ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

- a) Operation Radcott – to receive update from Cllr Plim
Cllr Plim attended the recent meeting and reported that the majority of the meeting was about Camber. Notes will be circulated.
- b) To note update on ‘Hello Bexhill’ projects.
 - i. To note clerk to identify a bench with Rother District Council on the Promenade to install the ‘Happy to Chat’ sign and launch the project at earliest opportunity – noted.
 - ii. To note clerk to organise the supply and installation of a new ‘Happy to Chat’ bench up to the value of £2000.00 at earliest opportunity – noted.
 - iii. ‘Welcome to Bexhill’ signs - to consider latest design circulated prior to the meeting.
It was **RESOLVED** to update the sign to read ‘Welcome to’ and go ahead with the supply and installation.
- c) To note awaiting information from Rother District Council on how the town council can fit into its emergency response and disaster planning – noted – noted.
- d) To note Wave Arts to be invited to a future meeting to discuss ways of dealing with graffiti issues – noted.
- e) To note graffiti removed from Sea Road art work – noted.
- f) Sewage release on Galley Hill – to note the clerk to arrange a community stakeholder meeting with those affected by the sewage release, asking them to provide evidence to the town council of the effects of sewage release. This will be noted, and information publicised in the press. The committee will then call a meeting with Huw Merriman, RDC Ward Councillors, East Sussex County Councillors and Southern Water to discuss the evidence – noted.
- g) To note Community Committee lobbying Rother District Council regarding Glyne Gap roundabout improvements – noted.

00426. HIGHWAYS MATTERS

- a) To note Strengthening Local Relationships (SLR) meeting being arranged with East Sussex County Council to raise outstanding highways matters from last agenda with Cllr Plim and Cllr Thomas.
- b) To note consultation on school streets All Saints, Sidley – noted.

00427. ALLOTMENTS SITES

- a) To note clerk and assistant to work on transition of allotments to the town council – noted.
- b) Request to permit the installation of a composting toilet on the Broad Oak Allotment site – to note clerk to seek advice from the National Allotment Society on the installation of a composting toilet – noted.
- c) To receive update on recruitment of facility coordinator to manage allotments – noted.

00428. FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

To note current budget position year to date – noted.

00429. MOTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

a) Cllr Thomas:

It was **RESOLVED** that this committee urges Southern Water and it's parent company:

- i. To make public an investigation into the causes of the equipment failures at the Galley Hill pumping station, and of actions to be taken to prevent a recurrence.
- ii. To install back-up equipment capable of taking over and managing key functions in the event of a breakdown of the primary machinery.
- iii. To set a date, no later than 2027, for all sewage discharges into the sea to cease.
- iv. To increase investment in the sewage and wastewater systems within Bexhill to ensure efficient treatment of the same, sufficient to meet present and predicted demand.
- v. To provide compensation for the losses and costs suffered because of the calamitous failures of Southern Water.

b) Cllr Thomas

Would the committee support a motion to full council to use the space in the ground floor of the new offices to support a community fridge?

It was **RESOLVED** to support the principle of a community fridge and look into the options available.

c) Cllr Thomas (referred from Full Council)

It was **RESOLVED** to invite a speaker from the English Regional Transport Association to attend future a meeting and present information on the new direct rail route to Polegate.

00430. CORRESPONDENCE AND MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

All circulated to councillors prior to the meeting.

- a) Email from resident requesting assistance with land encroaching her property that ESCC advised is town council owned 08/08/2022
- b) Email from resident requesting the town council support improvements to Devonshire Square 29/08/2022
- c) Email from resident concerning sewage spill at Galley Hill 22/08/2022
- d) Email from resident concerning sewage spill at Galley Hill 20/08/2022

- e) Email from visitor concerning perceived risks of rocks on beach 13/08/2022
- f) Trees for Cities Project – Tree planting in Bexhill 28/07/2022 and 08/09/2022
- g) Upgrades to gas network The Glades 22/07/2022
- h) Preventing plastics litter picks 28/10/2022
- i) Complaint regarding dog mess on pavements from visitor to Bexhill 27/10/2022
- j) Sussex Residents Association – effect of telecommunications equipment in public areas 24/10/2022
- k) Old Town Preservation Society – request for information on additional verge cutting 24/10/2022
- l) Emergency planning in Rother – 14/10/2022
- m) Invitation to tour waste energy recovery and in vessel composting facilities – 30/09/2022 – Cllr Izzard and Cllr Wray are attending.
- n) Email from resident regarding the replacement of ‘Ben’s Bench’ by Rother District Council – 08/09/2022
- o) Update on tree planting projects – 07/09/2022
- p) Splash Deck Outfall Pipe – 10/11/2022

00431. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

a) Questions carried forward from last meeting

<p>Cllr Izzard Could the council contact Rother District Council for more information on the Combe Valley Nature Reserve issues raised concerning sewage issue.</p>	<p>This item will be on the next agenda.</p>
<p>Cllr Thomas Would the committee support a motion to full council to use the space in the ground floor of the new town council offices to support a community fridge.</p>	<p>This item is on the agenda</p>

b) To receive questions and future agenda items
 There were none.

00432. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 18TH JANUARY 2023

The meeting closed at 21:17pm

Signed.....

Date.....

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