

BEXHILL-ON-SEA TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the **FULL COUNCIL MEETING** of the **BEXHILL-ON-SEA TOWN COUNCIL** held in **THE BEXHILL SENIOR CITIZENS CLUB, EVERSLEY ROAD, BEXHILL-ON-SEA**

On **Wednesday 26th June 2024** at **6:30pm**.

PRESENT: Cllr Brailsford; Cllr Byrne; Cllr Carroll; Cllr Drayson; Cllr El; Cllr Goss; Cllr Huseyin; Cllr Plim; Cllr Thomas; Cllr Timpe.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: J Miller, Clerk; One Videographer; Cllr Jimmy Stanger (Rother District Council); 1 member of the public; three representatives of Bexhill Lions.

00100 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A member of the public thanked the town council for displaying a further five noticeboards and asked if the town council would complete an audit of the noticeboards in Bexhill.

Two representatives of the Bexhill Lions spoke about the Bexhill Street Market and the decision of the Finance and Audit Committee to withdraw support to close the roads for the weekend. They explained that without the support of the town council to close the roads the market will not be able to continue due to the restrictions that have been imposed on Lions insurance policies.

00101 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and approve apologies for absence with reasons from Cllr Blagrove; Cllr Rustem; Cllr Hampton; Cllr Jacklin; Cllr Winter; Cllr Crotty; Cllr Wilson.

00102 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

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

00103 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were none.

**00104 TO SUSPEND STANDING ORDERS TO ALLOW BEXHILL
FOODBANK TO ADDRESS THE MEETING**

It was noted that this has been deferred due to representatives being unable to attend.

00105 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the following meetings of the full council:
a) Wednesday 8th May 2024.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve and sign the minutes of the meeting of Wednesday 8th May 2024.

00106 COMMITTEES

- a) To note minutes from committee meetings held since the last meeting:
 - i. Finance and Audit Committee 15/05/24
 - ii. Amenities Committee 05/06/24
 - iii. Finance and Audit Committee 12/06/24
- b) To note Planning and Development Committee inquorate on the following dates:
 - i. Wednesday 15th May 2024.
 - ii. Wednesday 12th June 2024.
- c) To note current vacancies on committees as per Terms of Reference and to appoint members to the following:
 - i. Planning and Development Committee x 3

It was **RESOLVED** for Cllr Carroll to join the Planning and Development Committee.

If there are not three members willing to join the Planning and Development Committee at the next meeting, a discussion will be held on dissolving the committee.

00107 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES

- a) Finance and Audit Committee:
 - i. It was **RESOLVED** to recommend that Full Council increase the number on the Finance and Audit Committee to 8 members to enable the 40% limit of Rother District Councillors to be adhered to.
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It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Plim to the Finance and Audit Committee.
 - ii. It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to Full Council that the Grants and Donation policy is streamlined to offer up to £10,000 in January, May and September. Each application can be made up to a value of £10,000 and for smaller grants up to £1000 to be considered at each meeting. An additional £12,000 to be allocated from the general reserves to increase the Grants and Donations budget to £42,000. When a grant application is submitted, the committee will be advised of the previous Town Council grants received by that organisation. A story will be prepared for Bexhill News if this recommendation is adopted by the Full Council.

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- iii. It was **RESOLVED** to recommend that the Full Council to delegate the Finance & Audit Committee to investigate the banks for sale in the town as alternative premises for the Town Council, and any other suitable properties to accommodate future growth.

It was **RESOLVED** for the Town Clerk to investigate the banks for the sale in the town as alternative premises for the Town Council, and any other suitable properties to accommodate future growth and report back to Full Council.

The Town Council will register with local agents and report back available properties.

Amenities Committee:

- i. It was **RESOLVED** that the committee recommends to Full Council to continue with Rother District Council carrying out both maintenance and cleaning. To note Rother District Council referral to contractor and quotation circulated separately for consideration.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the quotation from Wettons for toilet cleaning and maintenance.

- ii. It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to Full Council that £15,000 CIL funds are used to support the Bexhill Heritage bus shelter projects.

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00108 CO-OPTION FOR SIDLEY WARD VACANCY

- a) To receive NALC guidance on co-option.
The guidance was received.
- b) To consider co-option process and set application closing date for vacancy.

It was **RESOLVED** to advertise the vacancy to be filled at the next meeting, with a form to fill out where each candidate completes their name, address, their background and why they want to be a councillor.

If they wish to attend the meeting, candidates can speak at the meeting for three minutes. If they are not able to attend the meeting to speak, they will be advised that they are still be eligible for co-option. The closing date will be 17th July 2024 to allow reports to be sent to councillors.

00109 MAYOR'S OFFICE

- a) To receive update on the work of the Town Mayor.
An update was received.

00110 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

External councillors may report for 3 minutes. Written reports must be received three days before the meeting.

- a) To receive reports from Division County Councillors – apologies were received from Cllr Ian Hollidge.
b) To receive reports from Ward District Councillors.
Cllr Stanger reported about the new PSPO being introduced in Herbrand Walk. Town Councillors were encouraged to respond to planning applications and asked that the town council reconsider its position on re-opening the toilets.
c) To receive ward reports from Town Councillors – there were none.

00111 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY REVIEW 2023-24

- a) To review the system of internal control. The council is asked to review the system of internal control.
It was **RESOLVED** to review the system of internal control.
b) To review the effectiveness of the system of internal control. The council is asked to consider the attached statement of internal control in support of the Annual Governance Statement.
It was **RESOLVED** to review the effectiveness of the system of internal control.
The Chair of the meeting and the clerk signed the statement of the internal control.
c) To approve the internal audit report 2023-24 and approve the appropriate increase in fidelity guarantee.
It was **RESOLVED** to increase the fidelity guarantee to £1m.
It was **RESOLVED** to thank the Town Clerk and staff for the work involved.
d) To approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2023-24, Section I of the AGAR for the year ending 31 March 2024. The clerk to read out the assertions and the council to answer.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2023-24.

The Chair of the meeting and the clerk signed and dated the AGAR.

- e) To approve the Accounting Statements for 2023-24, Section 2 of the AGAR for the year ending 31 March 2024, the supporting Bank Reconciliation as of 31 March 2024 and the explanation of significant variances from last year (2022-23) to this year (2023- 24).

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Accounting Statements for 2023-24, Section 2 of the AGAR for the year ending 31 March 2024, the supporting Bank Reconciliation as of 31 March 2024 and the explanation of significant variances from last year (2022-23) to this year (2023- 24).

The Chair of the meeting and clerk signed and dated the AGAR Section 2.

00112 GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- a) To consider appeal from Bexhill Lions against the decision of the Finance and Audit Committee to stop funding the Continental Market road closures.

It was **RESOLVED** to continue to subsidise the road closure for Lions Bexhill Street Market in September, and for support for road closures at future events to be reviewed at the end of the year.

- b) To consider cost and security implications of tablets or laptops for councillors.

It was **RESOLVED** to defer this item to the next meeting.

- c) To renew the Council's commitment to support Bexhill-on-Sea as a Fairtrade community and to continue to provide Fairtrade products and services where possible.

It was **RESOLVED** to renew the Council's commitment to support Bexhill-on-Sea as a Fairtrade community and to continue to provide Fairtrade products and services where possible.

- d) To adopt the updated NALC Financial Regulations.

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the updated NALC Financial Regulations.

00113 ROTHER DISTRICT COUNCIL LIASION

- a) To note update on Town Centre Visioning Group.

It was noted that group has finalised the Town Centre vision and this is being submitted to the Town Board. An update from the Town Board will be sought to investigate any ideas that are not taken forward.

- b) To note leaders meeting taking place 17th July. – noted.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Leaders are reminded that Cllr Brailsford is still waiting for definitive response on the public toilets from the meeting in April.

00114 SUSSEX POLICE LIAISON

- a) To note there are no further updates regarding CCTV. – noted.

00115 NORTHEYE ASYLUM PROPOSAL

- a) To receive any updates – it was noted that there will be no further news until after the General Election.

00116 TOWN BOARD

- a) To consider consultation letter from Town Board.

Councillors to bring two capital investment ideas for Bexhill-on-Sea.

It was **RESOLVED** to submit the following ideas:

- i. Restore the fountains or build a water play park in Egerton Park.
- ii. Concentrate on Sea Front redevelopment.
- iii. Improve the Link Road walk.
- iv. Submit the “Big Survey” to the Town Board.
- v. Renovate the twittens and footpaths that run through Bexhill.
- vi. Improve the Polegrove facilities.
- vii. To complete a disabled access audit of the town to inform a plan to improve access.
- viii. Develop East Parade.
- ix. Improve sports facilities for the youth.
- x. Improve the parking facilities.
- xi. Crazy golf/family activity on the sea front.

00117 ACCESSIBLE PLAY PARK FOR PEBSHAM

- a) To note sealed tenders to be opened.

It was noted that the tenders have been opened and a report will be presented to the next meeting.

- b) To consider request from Pebsham Community Association for £16,000 from the CIL Funds to install a Changing Places Toilet to support the Accessible Play area.

It was **RESOLVED** to grant Pebsham Community Association £16,000 from the CIL Funds to install accessible toilets to support the Accessible Play area.

00118 PUTTING GREEN/ CRAZY GOLF

- a) To note update from Rother District Council following the Town Council’s decision to explore if RDC will commit to a long-term lease on the lawns for crazy golf before proceeding. The answer is no, RDC are not able to confirm the consideration of a long-term lease to BoSTC at this time. It was **AGREED** to that this matter could be considered again in the future.

00119 VISIONING EXERCISE

- a) To note visioning exercise being revisited later this year. – noted.

00120 EXTERNAL REPRESENTATIVES

To receive reports from external representatives (circulated prior to the meeting)

- a) RALC – Cllr Wilson and Cllr Jacklin – there were none.
- b) Citizen’s Advice – Cllr Byrne – a report will follow.
- c) Bexhill Air Cadet Squadron – Mayor
Cllr Plim reported in the Mayor’s absence. It was noted that the Mayor’s Cadet is part of the squadron.
- d) Bexhill Maritime – Cllr Timpe – it was noted that a new plan is being submitted.
- e) Little Gate Farm – Cllr Jacklin – a report was circulated.
- f) Town Board – Cllr Wilson – a report was circulated.
The point of deputies being allowed to attend in Cllr Wilson’s absence will be discussed at the next meeting.

00121 MOTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

- a) Cllr Drayson.
That this Council urgently forms a small working party to examine Rother District Council's Draft Local Plan and formulate a response on our behalf.
The motion was withdrawn. The link to the Local Plan consultation will be shared.
- b) Cllr Wilson.
That Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council, for the year 2024-2025 support the chosen charity of the mayor. That being Sidley Cricket club. Report to be read out by the Chair.
It was **RESOLVED** that Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council, for the year 2024-2025 support the chosen charity of the mayor. That being Sidley Cricket club.
- c) Cllr El.
That the Town Council prioritises its investigation into Town Rangers, expanding the project to include cutting grass, cleaning toilets, painting over graffiti and clearing up fly tipping as examples. Moreover, these jobs could also be done by the team of rangers for county and district council on behalf of Bexhill-on-Sea Town council for a fee.
It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council prioritises its investigation into Town Rangers, expanding the project to include cutting grass, cleaning toilets, painting over graffiti and clearing up fly tipping as examples. Moreover, these jobs could also be done by the team of rangers for county and district council on behalf of Bexhill-on-Sea Town council for a fee.

- d) Cllr Crotty.
I am asking for a training session with understanding Autism in the workplace.
It was **RESOLVED** to defer this matter to the next meeting.

00122 CORRESPONDENCE AND MATTERS FOR INFORMATION
There were none.

00123 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- a) To receive answers to questions raised at the last meeting.

Cllr Goss asked what the landline telephone number for the Hub is, and why is it not on the website.	The landline for the Hub will soon be available to the public once our customer service team is fully staffed. This will ensure that all calls are promptly answered. At the moment, the council has one part-time customer service adviser handling face-to-face and email enquiries.
Cllr Blagrove asked if something can be put in place for statements be made to the public in situations such as when public toilets are closed.	The Engagement & Communications Committee can consider this under its terms of reference.
Cllr Blagrove asked if council staff could make posters to advertise council meetings.	The Engagement & Communications Committee can consider this under its terms of reference.

- b) To receive questions from councillors at the meeting.
There were none.
- c) To note any future agenda items.
There were none.
- d) To consider any new risks to be added to the risk register.
There were none.

00124 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 24TH JULY 2024

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:

00125 TO RECEIVE UPDATE ON LEGAL CLAIM
An update was received.

The meeting closed at 21:00pm.

Signed.....

Date.....