

BEXHILL-ON-SEA TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the meeting of the **FULL COUNCIL**
held in the **BEXHILL SENIOR CITIZENS CLUB, EVERSLEY ROAD,**
BEXHILL-ON-SEA
On **Wednesday 29th January 2025 at 6:00pm**

PRESENT: Cllr Byrne; Cllr Blagrove; Cllr Carroll; Cllr Drayson; Cllr El; Cllr Goss; Cllr Hunt; Cllr Jacklin; Cllr Peters; Cllr Plim; Cllr Thomas; Cllr Timpe; Cllr Wilson.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: J Miller, Clerk; One videographer; two members of the public.

00548 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A member of the public addressed the meeting to express concerns about the Town Council potentially taking over the management of public toilets from Rother District Council. They specifically asked who would be responsible for cleaning, maintenance, and any associated insurance liabilities.

If the Town Council were to enter into a lease agreement with Rother District Council to manage the public toilets, it would assume full responsibility for their upkeep. This includes all cleaning, repairs, ongoing maintenance, and insurance coverage, ensuring that the facilities remain safe and operational for public use.

A member of the public inquired about the parking permits provided to staff and questioned the necessity of this provision.

Parking permits are allocated to staff as part of the terms and conditions outlined in their employment contracts. This provision ensures that employees have the necessary access to parking facilities to effectively carry out their duties.

00549 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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

00550 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.

00551 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cllr Wilson urged fellow councillors to embrace the devolution changes positively, emphasising their potential to help the town council progress.

00552 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the following meetings of the full council:

- a) Wednesday 18th December 2024.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting of Wednesday 18th December 2024.

00553 COMMITTEES

- a) To note minutes from committee meetings held since the last meeting:

- i. Amenities Committee 08/01/25
- ii. Finance and Audit Committee 15/01/25
- iii. Planning and Development Committee 15/01/25

- b) To note current vacancies on committees as per Terms of Reference and appoint members to the following vacancies:

- i. Planning and Development Committee x1.

The following item was brought forward:

00554 GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

- a) To consider process for responding to planning applications to replace the Planning and Development Committee. A proposed process was circulated prior to the meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** to instigate the “Call In” process for Planning applications and the Planning and Development Committee was abolished.

00555 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES

- a) Finance and Audit Committee.

- i. To ringfence £5,000 of CIL funds towards future accessibility projects.

It was **RESOLVED** to ringfence £5,000 of CIL funds towards future accessibility projects.

- ii. To approve updated Expenses Policy – this was not approved.
- iii. To approve Preventing Sexual Harassment Policy – it was **RESOLVED** to approve the Preventing Sexual Harassment Policy.

00556 MAYOR'S OFFICE

- a) To receive update on the work of the Town Mayor. – An update was circulated prior to the meeting.

00557 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 – a report was circulated.
- b) To receive reports from Ward District Councillors – there were none.
- c) To receive ward reports from Town Councillors – Cllr Jacklin reported that Bexhill Museum had tweeted some interesting post cards of Norman's Bay and inquired as to whether they will do this for each ward. Cllr Byrne reported that he had attended a meeting with Bexhill Heritage to declare East Parade a conservation area.

00558 ROTHER DISTRICT COUNCIL LIASION

- a) To note leaders meeting notes from 17/01/25 – noted.
- b) To consider offer from Rother District Council for the Town Council to take temporary control of the public toilets until the freehold is negotiated to enable toilets to be re-opened.

Cllr Blagrove left the meeting at 18:48pm

It was **RESOLVED** to proceed with taking temporary control of the public toilets and the clerk will investigate next steps with Rother District Council.

- c) To note awaiting update on the request for the acquisition of Rother District Council Town Hall, a list of discretionary services and an update on the devolution of parks and open spaces and the Museum – noted.
- d) To note Channel View East Public Convenience lease with solicitors – noted.
- e) To note no clarification on ownership of War Memorials received, this matter is being followed up regularly – noted.
- f) To note heads of terms for Pebsham Play Park with solicitors, no timescales available at present – noted.
- g) To consider re-arranging the visioning exercise meeting to focus on reviewing the services available to the Town Council following updates from Rother District Council and East Sussex County Council. The clerk will organise the meeting once the devolution information has been received.

00559 SIDLEY LEAKY DAMS PROJECT

- a) To receive notes from the meeting held with East Sussex County Council and Rother District Council and David Dennis. – notes were circulated.

00560 POST OFFICE

To note request sent to Post Office Ltd for inclusion of the town council in the closure consultations and to be sent any consultation documents to promote to residents – noted.

00561 EXTERNAL REPRESENTATIVES - reports were circulated.

- a) RALC – Cllr Jacklin and Cllr Thomas.
It was noted that the Highways Steward for Bexhill was present at the meeting and has been approached to contact the Clerk for updates on Bexhill highway matters, including potholes.
- b) Citizen’s Advice – Cllr Byrne
- c) Bexhill Air Cadet Squadron – Mayor
- d) Bexhill Maritime – Cllr Timpe
- e) Little Gate Farm – Cllr Jacklin
- f) Town Board – Cllr Wilson
- g) Chamber of Commerce Centenary Fund Assessment Panel – Cllr Wilson
- h) To note Amenities Committee submission for Cllr Byrne to join the Combe Valley CIC. – noted.

00562 MOTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

- a) Cllr Byrne

I would like to propose that Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council facilitate two “Town Forum” style public meetings during 2025. The meetings to be held in March and September, actual dates to be announced nearer the time. The meetings would largely follow the “Any Questions” format with questions being directed to a panel of prominent local residents and local authority Councillors. The meetings should, if possible, be held in a suitable non-council venue.

It was **RESOLVED** to plan a meeting in September based around the Annual Town Meeting format, the Engagement and Communications Committee will finalise the event.

- b) Cllr Jacklin

- i. Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council acknowledges the request by East and West Sussex County Councils and Brighton and Hove City Council to combine into a single Sussex wide authority with Mayoral elections in May 2026. We understand that under this new structure District and Borough Councils would be absorbed into the new authority with Town and Parish Councils remaining in place.

It was **RESOLVED** that Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council acknowledges the request by East and West Sussex County Councils and Brighton and Hove City Council to combine into a single Sussex wide authority with Mayoral elections in May 2026. We understand that under this new structure, District and Borough Councils would be absorbed into the new authority with Town and Parish Councils remaining in place.

- ii. Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council will seek to set up an appropriate mechanism for this transition to be managed if and when this transition is confirmed.
It was **RESOLVED** that Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council will seek to set up an appropriate mechanism for this transition to be managed if and when this transition is confirmed.
- iii. Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council will also initiate discussions with RDC and ESCC at the earliest appropriate time to ensure that Bexhill on Sea residents receive value for money during this reorganisation, that the Town continues to evolve and improve and key services are maintained.
- iv. It was **RESOLVED** that Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council will also initiate discussions with RDC and ESCC at the earliest appropriate time to ensure that Bexhill on Sea residents receive value for money during this reorganisation, that the Town continues to evolve and improve and key services are maintained.

00563 CORRESPONDENCE AND MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

- a) Rother District Council Budget Consultation – Deadline for response: 10/01/25.
- b) Statutory Consultation on proposed parking restrictions and shared footpaths for Bexhill cycle route between Worsham and Collington.
It was noted that these items were approved at the last meeting.

00564 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

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

Cllr El asked for a final design update on the Pebsham Play Park and have this displayed in the Hub.	This has been circulated.
Cllr Jacklin asked for the list of discretionary services to be provided prior to the visioning exercise.	This has been requested.
Cllr Jacklin asked if the previous motion is the longest motion ever agreed by the Town Council.	Quite possibly!

- b) To receive questions from councillors at the meeting.
Cllr Jacklin asked if the Town Clerk can clarify the declaration of interests in regard to the Rother Forum.

Cllr Drayson asked if previous years minutes and agendas could be archived on the town council website.

Cllr Drayson asked if the council could consider the Bexhill Trust to make Bexhill Day a fundraising event for the Bexhill Trust.

Cllr El asked how the work with Town Rangers is going.

- c) To note any future agenda items.
There will be a future item to approve trustees for the Bexhill Trust.
- d) To consider any new risks to be added to the risk register – there were none.

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:

00565 TO RECEIVE UPDATE ON LEGAL CLAIM

An update was received.

Meeting closed at 19:49pm

Signed.....

Date.....