

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 26th November** at **6:30pm**

PRESENT: Cllr Blagrove, Cllr Byrne, Cllr Carroll, Cllr Crotty, Cllr Drayson, Cllr El, Cllr Goss, Cllr Hunt, Cllr Huseyin, Cllr Jacklin, Cllr Plim, Cllr Thomas, Cllr Timpe, Cllr Wilson, Cllr Winter.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: J Daeva, Clerk; M Webber; One videographer, 8 members of the public, Cllr Ian Hollidge (East Sussex County Council).

00298 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A member of the public stated that in November 2024 they attended an event at the De La Warr, where they were told by the previous Mayor that it was common knowledge who the next mayor would be, but it should not be this way, the deputy mayor should be the one who is voted in next. In the last week they have been told who the next mayor will be. They ask that a Councillor puts forward a proposal to go to the old Rother District way, of the mayor serving for one year and the deputy mayor taking over because it should not be that people are hearing names on the street.

A member of the public asked why Devolution was in the closed session of the meeting after spending so much money on the De La Warr to have a public consultation, why would this now be private. *The discussion of devolution was moved into the closed session due to the confidential information being disclosed.*

A member of the public requested an update on the serpollet sculpture for Glyne Gap Roundabout and which committee this update will go to. *Further updates on the serpollet sculpture will be discussed in the Engagement and Communications Committee.* At a previous meeting there was the discussion of the Villas next to the Rother District Council offices. The steps leading up are not accessible for those in wheelchairs, pram users and members of the public with problems walking up stairs. It was also mentioned that the doors are not wide enough for wheelchairs or prams. They ask

who would pay for these adaptations, Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council or Rother District Council. *This will be discussed at the Amenities Committee.*

At the Full Council meeting on the 29th of October there was a discussion about Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council allocating £4,000 from general reserves to fund one-third of the hotel feasibility study in collaboration with Bexhill Neighbourhood Board and Rother District Council. The Chair proposed the motion after declaring that he is a member of the Neighbourhood Board. He then voted on this matter whereas he should not have participated. This motion was carried by one vote. Has this been legally carried?

A member of the public asked the Council why it is being asked to take on long-term legal, financial and operational liability for the fountains when the Neighbourhood board has access to a £20 million budget specifically intended for the regeneration and improvement of Bexhill. What safeguards are in place to ensure that this is used for tangible public benefit rather than being diverted into transfers of risk, administration purposes or ongoing consultation costs that effectively shifts financial burden onto the Town Council and Local taxpayers.

00299 APOLIGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and approve apologies for absence with reason from Cllr Lee, Cllr Peters and Cllr Rustem.

The Council expressed well wishes to Cllr Lee.

00300 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTEREST

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 and as the director of Old Town Occasions.

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

00301 CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair requested that Councillors be succinct as there is a lot of business to discuss.

00302 MINUTES

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

a) Wednesday 29th October 2025.

It was **RESOLVED** to defer the approval of the minutes of the meeting of Wednesday 29th October 2025 until the correct amendment has been made. – Priority being given to Little Common Primary School and Birkdale Road

00303 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES

a) Finance and Audit Committee.

To receive and approve updated Grants and Donations Policy.

It was noted that there is a typo on 3.1, it should say “applications” rather than “applicants”.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the updated Grants and Donations Policy after amendments have been made.

00304 BUDGET PREDICTIONS 2026–2027

a) To receive full draft budget report for 2026–2027.

The draft budget was received, and it was **RESOLVED** for questions to be emailed to the Responsible Financial Officer ahead of the next meeting Of the Full Council.

00305 MAYORS OFFICE

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

An update was circulated prior to the meeting.

00306 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS

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 Hollidge gave an update on the current consultations. The formal consultation on Rother parking has now finished and will be reviewed by officers in relation to new restrictions, possibly in

January. Any amendments will go to the Planning Committee. If residents wish to make a case at the Planning Committee, Cllr Hollidge can assist. Cllr Hollidge has not received much negative response in relation to parking.

Most Members will be aware of the Local Plan and housing numbers, which are set by the Government and are ambitious. Cllr Hollidge encouraged people to engage with the consultation, as it will affect Bexhill in the long term, with significant growth.

Cllr Hollidge attended a meeting on Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation, which is progressing at pace. Work continues on a business-as-usual basis in terms of setting the budget, which remains difficult. Sussex is supported by Mark Rogers, who has set up three combined county authorities, and Joey Townsend, who has set up six mayoral county authorities.

The structure being set up is called the Local Assurance Framework, covering governance, audit and scrutiny, and was considered by the committee chaired by Cllr Hollidge. A statutory instrument will be required for the English Devolution and Communities Bill, which is expected to be made public in December. While Local Government Reorganisation is being discussed, the current focus is on the Strategic Mayoral Authority, with detailed consideration of Local Government Reorganisation expected during 2026–2027.

- b) To receive reports from Ward District Councillors.

There was none.

- c) To receive ward reports from Town Councillors.

Last Friday Cllr Plim and Cllr Crotty reopened Channel View East Public Conveniences. A resident showed concern that the front is locked but the back of the toilets is not. Expressed worry about kids going round the back at night. Cllr Crotty has investigated the 5 streetlights along Western Road, which have not been working for the last year or so, hopefully Western Road will be in brightness again. Western Road traders are unhappy that nothing is happening at the bottom of the road during the Christmas Light switch on.

00307 PLANNING MATTERS

- a) To receive update on the Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr Wilson attended an all-day conference organised by ESALC and WSALC. A planning expert suggested investigating how useful a neighbourhood plan would currently be for Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council. Cllr Wilson put forward a motion for the Officers to contact the planning expert on the benefit of having a neighbourhood plan and if it is required for the Council.

It was **RESOLVED** for the officers to investigate the usefulness and necessity of having a neighbourhood plan.

00308 ROTHER DISTRICT COUNCIL LIASON

- a) To receive update following leader's meeting on Friday 21st November 2025.

The following was discussed at the leader's meeting: work of Town Rangers – lots of positive feedback, progress on Ravenside roundabout, the potential of the yellow bus entering Sidley, Marina gardens, toilets and potential of managing toilets differently, devolution of assets and future joint communication events.

- b) To approve draft Heads of Terms for Channel View East Public Conveniences.

Cllr Goss requested a response to previously raised comments. This item was deferred pending further comments.

- c) To approve draft Heads of Terms for The Villas.

Further information is required regarding accessibility, site plan, potential use of the Hub, and lease break clauses.

This item was deferred pending further information.

00309 EXTERNAL REPRESENTATIVES

- a) To receive updates from external representatives.

There was none.

- b) Neighbourhood Board – to consider confirming that the Council is willing, in principle, to explore taking on responsibility for managing and maintaining proposed new water feature on

Bexhill Seafront subject to further information on costs, liabilities, maintenance requirements and legal implications being provided to a future meeting.

Cllr Wilson declared an interest as a member of the Neighbourhood Board.

It was **RESOLVED** in principle, to explore taking on, the responsibility and maintenance of the proposed new water feature.

00310 SCHOOL CROSSING PATROL OFFICERS

- a) To note East Sussex County Council has been contacted and initial investigations have begun. – noted.

00311 EXTERNAL AUDIT CERTIFICATE

- a) To note conclusion of external audit and no matters raised by external auditor. – noted.

00312 MOTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

- a) Cllr Wilson

To consider establishing a regular meeting of all Committee Chairs and the Full Council Chair to review outstanding motions and plan strategic priorities.

This was **RESOLVED** to have a trial meeting for all the Committee Chairs and the Full Council Chair in the next Council year.

- b) Cllr Plim.

This Council believes that after Rother District Council have spent taxpayers' money on the refurbishment of the Colonnade that they should devolve (in the spirit of The Localism Act 2011) the freehold of the Colonnade site to Bexhill Town Council and not any higher authority or CIC/Trust.

This was **RESOLVED** for the Clerk to contact Rother District Council to investigate the devolvement of the freehold of the Colonnade site to Bexhill Town Council.

c) Cllr Jacklin

Would the Council want to develop a corporate response to the forthcoming government consultation on Local Government Reorganisation.

This motion was amended to include for the Clerk to seek clarity on the correct process for Town and Parish Councils to submit feedback on consultations.

This was **RESOLVED** for the Council to develop a corporate response to the forthcoming government consultation and for the Clerk to investigate the correct process for Town and Parish Councils to submit feedback on consultations.

00313 CORRESPONDENCE AND MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

a) There is none.

00314 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

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

Cllr Jacklin requested for an estimated number of people who attended the De La Warr meeting on Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation.	The Council does not hold this information.
Cllr Blagrove asked if the Town Rangers will be removing graffiti.	This is an operational matter that is being investigated. Graffiti removal requires extensive training, use of chemicals, appropriate Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) and equipment.
Cllr Blagrove asked if the Town Rangers will be maintaining and cleaning the noticeboards.	The maintenance and cleaning of noticeboards can be done in house. The budget line for noticeboards would no longer be needed if this were to happen.
Cllr Blagrove requested information on the current CCTV that we have in Bexhill-On-Sea, including location, how many are operational and if the police	A review of CCTV within Bexhill-on-Sea has been undertaken as an action by the Amenities Committee.

have reviewed them since the Town Council has had them.	
Cllr Blagrove asked if the Chair could keep in mind that Councillors can have their say and to not object.	This question would be for the relevant Councillor to answer.
Cllr Lee requested the Clerk to give feedback on a previous motion.	Updates on motions fall to the relevant committee. In this case, updates are given to the Amenities Committee.

- b) To consider any new risks to be added to the risk register.
There was none.

00315 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 17th December 2025

All motions for the next meeting of Full Council on 17th December 2025 must be received by received by the 6thDecember 2025.

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:

00316 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

- a) To receive update.

Cllr Wilson left the meeting at 20:09.

Cllr Goss left the meeting at 20:09.

Cllr Wilson re-entered the meeting at 20:10.

Cllr Goss re-entered the meeting 20:10.

Cllr Wilson left the meeting at 20:11.

Cllr Wilson re-entered the meeting at 20:14.

Cllr Crotty left the meeting at 20:32.

Cllr Crotty re-entered the meeting 20:33.

The Deputy Clerk left the meeting at 20:35.

The Deputy Clerk re-entered the meeting at 20:36.

It was **RESOLVED** to submit a business case for all 31 items, as there was insufficient time to consider alternative options with the 12th December submission deadline fast approaching.

RECORDED VOTE

FOR:

Cllr Blagrove

Cllr Byrne

Cllr Carroll

Cllr Drayson

Cllr El

Cllr Hunt

Cllr Huseyin

Cllr Jacklin

Cllr Plim

Cllr Thomas

Cllr Timpe

Cllr Wilson

Cllr Winter

AGAINST:

None.

ABSTAIN:

Cllr Crotty

Cllr Goss.

00317 STAFFING UPDATE

a) To receive update.

Cllr El was nominated to take the minutes.

The Town Clerk left the meeting at 20:59.

It was **RESOLVED** for the Council to tender for the position of Town Clerk; the interim Town Clerk will continue their duties until the vacancy is filled.

It was **RESOLVED** for the HR Committee to seek advice from Worknest into the information previously given.

The meeting closed at 21:34.

Date.....

Signed.....