

## Bexhill on Sea Council – Five Year Strategy 2022 - 2027 analysis

Key:

- **Achieved objectives are highlighted in bold**
- RECOMMENDATIONS ARE IN BLUE FONT
- Ongoing objectives are in normal font
- *Objectives which may or not be pursued are in italics*

### Year one – GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Objective	Comments
<b>Establish new premises and create a workspace for staff</b>	This has been established and is working well as the premises is in a central I position and within reasonable access to residents
<b>Recruit a facilities officer to be responsible for contract compliance and general risk management</b>	Facilities officer now employed and dealing is primarily dealing with allotments
<b>Audit and implement the required policies for a town council to operate compliantly</b>	Most policies (other than anything unforeseen) have been implemented and are available to the public on our website. We should make these policies easier to access on our website.
<b>Publish a regular council update in the Bexhill News</b>	Regular advertorials have been appearing in the Bexhill News. This is available for all councillors to contribute to and reduces the need and cost for newsletter to be delivered individually to all residents. The Bexhill News is available free of charge
	<p>RECOMMENDATION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Maybe we could display the latest version of each of these on all of our noticeboards – they also display the times of future Council meetings</b></li> <li>• <b>Could we consider mailing a weekly newsletter to residents, in the same way that RDC do?</b></li> </ul>

## Year One – WELLBEING AND COMMUNITY

Establish a grant scheme for sports and fitness training to upskill in how to keep older residents fit and healthy

This was referred to as the 'Old and Bold' initiative and was put in place by the previous administration, via Cllr Dan Barfoot.

RECOMMENDATION:  
obtain feedback to see how this is progressing

Install five noticeboards across the area, to improve public engagement

This has been accomplished with plans in the pipeline for more noticeboards to be distributed around Bexhill

Introduce 'Happy to Chat' benches to tackle loneliness

RECOMMENDATION: -  
We would like to obtain feedback as to how effective this initiative was

Recruit customer service staff and operate a drop-in- desk at new premises

Implemented and working well

Organise a community Awards scheme to recognize residents' achievements

BTC have successfully implemented the Community Award scheme, and these awards are annually presented at the Bexhill Town Meeting which has taken place at St Augustine's Church for the previous two years.

## Year One – TOURISM AND EVENTS

Organise a health and well being event for COVID recovery

This took place on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2023 in Devonshire Square and generated a lot of interest from Bexhill residents and visitors.

RECOMMENDATION:  
Maybe we could combine the stallholders who participated in this, with our Bexhill Day celebrations

Be responsible for the organisation of Remembrance Day parades in Bexhill, to assist the Royal British Legion.

Bexhill Town Council have now taken over the organisation of these two events

### Year One – ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Organise a Climate and Nature Panel event to feed into the Climate and Nature Action Plan

A Climate Change Event meeting was held at St Barnabas Church in Sea Road on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2022, and feedback from this was incorporated in a 'Draft Climate Action Plan' for Bexhill-on-Sea

**RECOMMENDATION:-**

We need to decide what to do with this document, which is at present on our website in Draft form

Fund additional grass cuts to verges to smarten up the area

This has been carried out for the past two years. We are considering funding this for a further year, but in the meantime we will obtain quotes for the two additional cuts from other businesses in order to evaluate the most economical way forward..

Replace 'Welcome To' signs to define Bexhill's borders and create a positive entrance

Work on this objective is ongoing.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

We need to find a way to make these signs more attractive by adding flowers, etc. Maybe we could work with Bexhill in Bloom in order to achieve this objective.

Take on the management of the allotment and consider bio-diversity policies

We have taken on full management of the allotments and are in the process of an extensive maintenance programme.

Work with local groups to achieve renewal of Fairtrade Status for Bexhill –

The Bexhill Fairtrade Town Steering Group manages and promotes all things Fairtrade in Bexhill. Bexhill has had Fairtrade Town status since 2007 when BEXHILL'S Fairtrade Town certificate was formally accepted on behalf of the people of Bexhill by Deputy Town Mayor Cllr Patrick Douart

**Year One – MUSIC, CULTURE AND ARTS**

**Consider how the council can engage better with young people**

**We have a connection with the Bexhill Air Cadets. A facility called ‘The Basement project’ has recently been opened in Bexhill by The Pelham Group.**

**A working party has recently been set up to consider how to push this objective along further. We are awaiting feedback from this group**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**Maybe BTC could promote the work of Bexhill Air Cadets, together with The Basement project at The Pelham. And we could write to the head of the Youth Council at Bexhill 6<sup>th</sup> Form College and ask them for suggestions on what sort of facilities could be provided for the younger people in Bexhill (such as the previous Bexhill Youth Club**

*Note – the objective listed below appear on our online version of the 5 year strategy plan adjacent to the heading of ‘TRANSPORT AND ACCESSIBILITY’ – should these be reformatted to appear under the ‘MUSIC CULTURE AND ARTS’ section*

*Work with dementia charities to achieve Dementia Friendly town status*

*Can’t see how this will benefit Bexhill*

**Support Bexhill Hub to support Ukrainian organisation to integrate refugees in our community.**

**This worked really well and the Hub seems to be now operating independently**

**Pilot a dementia friendly coffee morning to help patients interact within the community**

**We have already held two successful coffee mornings**

**Year Two – GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

Recruit a finance officer to prepare accounts and reports for the analysis of spending

Work in progress

Develop a staff handbook and workspace policies

Work is ongoing on this

<p><b>Work with local and national press and media to promote the work of the Town Council and Bexhill generally</b></p> <p>Finalise the ownership of the Town Coat of Arms</p>	<p><b>We have a contract with the Bexhill News to place a full page advertorial in each of their editions, and a Bexhill Town Council Facebook page.</b></p> <p>This is a work in progress</p>
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<b>Year Two – WELLBEING AND COMMUNITY</b>	
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<p>Consider adding further CCTV for security and to give reassurance to residents</p> <p>Introduce ‘Happy to Chat’ in cafes to combat loneliness –</p> <p>Install further noticeboards across the area increasing engagement</p> <p>Start to prepare Neighbourhood Plan</p> <p>Prepare an emergency response plan</p> <p><b>Support local well-being events, such as Running Space ‘Midnight to Midnight’</b></p> <p><b>Continue to use the Bexhill Flag to create a sense of community</b></p>	<p>Ascertain what progress has been made on this objective</p> <p>Cllr Julie Norris is trialing this in her Sidley Coffee shop and is experiencing some success with it.</p> <p>Work in progress</p> <p>The CNE Committee invited someone to speak about this on 11 October 2023, and this lady seems extremely competent and was happy to initialize this project. It will be of great benefit to Bexhill Town Council when the work has been completed, because it will increase our share of the available CIL money for Bexhill area</p> <p>The CNE Committee are discussing this and evaluating the benefit and cost of initializing this</p> <p><b>Our Clerk and some of our Councillors have participated in this event.</b></p> <p><b>The town Hub is decorated in Bexhill colours and shows the Bexhill Flag, and the flag has been well used on our website and on the run up towards our Bexhill Day event. We give out Bexhill flags and hand-</b></p>
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	<p><b>outs to residents when we attend local events, using our Bexhill Town Council gazebo</b></p>
<p><b>Year two – TOURISM AND EVENTS</b></p>	
<p>Consider transfer of Christmas Light funding from Rother District Council to the Town Council and agree a funding strategy across the area</p> <p>Investigate indoor and outdoor cinema events</p>	<p>Rother District Council decided not to fund this for 2023 so Bexhill Town Council took this on for the benefit of Bexhill residents</p> <p>We would need to purchase a building large enough to facilitate this, but this building would have to be a sizeable one, with capacity for multi-use and be economically viable.. RDC has autonomy over most of the communal land in Bexhill. The Chamber of Commerce are showing a film on the rear wall of the De la Warr Pavilion, and previously hired a big screen to show the Coronation, but RDC are charging them for the use of the De la Warr Lawns. Under these circumstances, this idea is not practical to proceed with</p>
<p><b>Year Two – ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE</b></p>	
<p>Consider taking on the maintenance of parks and open spaces to improve the appearance of public areas</p> <p>Address littering, street cleansing, overgrown footpaths and graffiti issues.</p> <p>Finalise Climate and Nature Action Plan for Bexhill and consider fund raising for associated projects.</p> <p>Work with environment groups to plant trees</p>	<p>We need to see a schedule of expenditure for taking on these items before we can make an informed decision.</p> <p>Same comment as above for this objective. These objectives come under the statutory duties of RDC and ESCC, although some BTC councillors have undertaken this work either personally or with a team of volunteers, motivated out of goodwill for Bexhill.</p> <p>There is a draft Climate and Nature Action Plan available on our website. We need to go through this in detail to make informed decisions on this subject</p> <p>There is a scheme being initiated by RDC Cllr Christine Bayliss to plant trees along St</p>

	<p>Leonards Road. She has presented the idea to BTC who are awaiting her feedback from consultations with local residents and businesses, together with the basic start up costs and future maintenance provisions before making a decision on how we can assist with this. Bexhill has recently been recognized as a Tree City of the World for 2023 following a successful application by Rother District Council</p>
<p><b>Year Two – MUSIC, CULTURE AND ARTS</b></p>	
<p><b>Consider activities for senior citizen social engagement</b></p> <p><b>Consider tackling graffiti using art projects with WaveArts and other local groups</b></p>	<p><b>This was very well supported during our Healthy Bexhill event which took place in July 2023</b></p> <p><b>We have contributed financially to various WaveArts projects and supported them with Mayoral (and Deputy Mayoral) visits when requested.</b></p>
<p><b>Year Two – TRANSPORT AND ACCESSIBILITY</b></p>	
<p>Improve disability access across the area, starting with Town Council facilities</p> <p>Start working with RDC, East Sussex County Council and other agencies on a vision for town centre pedestrianisation; cycling routes; retain; local businesses and hospitality and train connections.</p> <p>Investigate funding additional pothole and pavement repairs and work with East Sussex County Council to maintain a priority register of repairs.</p>	<p>The Climate, Nature &amp; Environment Committee have initiated a sub committee to investigate the accessibility situation in the central Bexhill area, and are working on producing a map to with information to assist people with accessibility issues.</p> <p>We have participated in surveys and consultations on this subject on several occasions.</p> <p>Our Town Centre Hub has a facility to enable residents to contact these councils for information and enables them to report faults.</p>

<p><i>Further support SpeedWatch groups to target speeding hot spots.</i></p>	<p><i>This was discussed some time ago during a council meeting with the Police, and although some members of the public mentioned carrying out this exercise, the feedback on it was not particularly positive</i></p>
<p><b>Year Three</b></p> <p><b>GOVERNANCE AND ACCUNTABILITY</b></p>	
<p><b>Develop use of the Town Regalia</b></p> <p>Consider staffing for culture, youth and events</p> <p>Review the effectiveness of grants and donations policy</p>	<p>This has been used for presentations and awards during our Bexhill Annual Town Meeting</p> <p>this has yet to take place, and I think this coming year could be a good time to put this plan into action should the need arise</p> <p>It would be great to review all of the good things which have come our from our grants and donations policy, and use it for a press release in the Bexhill News.</p>
<p><b>Year Three – WELLBEING AND COMMUNITY</b></p>	
<p><i>Consider bicycle hire to encourage outdoor exercise.</i></p> <p><b>Hold regular police liaison meetings to tackle crime and the perception of crime.</b></p> <p>Consider how to further support community groups that retain the unique features of Bexhill such as Bexhill 100 motoring club and Bexhill Heritage</p>	<p><i>It may be a good idea to review this initiative; but we would have to build in the cost of the bicycles; insurance provisions; public liability and safe storage of the bikes, which could make this project extremely costly</i></p> <p><b>Feel that we do this already – zoom meeting coming shortly with BTCs and Police, in November 2023.</b></p> <p>We should approach these groups to see if anyone has any new ideas</p>



<b>Year Three – TOURISM AND EVENTS</b>	
<p>Consider outdoor theatre performances</p> <p>Consider installation of water play or fountain feature</p> <p>Develop a retail and economic strategy for each area: Sidley; Little Common; Pebsham; Old Town; Town Centre</p>	<p>Previously mentioned in Year two</p> <p>We should at some stage get ideas about whether it will be possible to repair the fountains – especially bearing in mind the potential of £2million per annum government funding coming into Bexhill.</p> <p>Feel that we need to liaise with Bexhill Chamber of Commerce to see how we can assist them with their work</p>
<b>Year Three – ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE</b>	
<p>Only 1 objective listed – Work with Bexhill in Bloom to allocate areas for wildflower meadow to encourage wildlife</p>	<p>It may be more beneficial to work with Bexhill in Bloom to ensure the return of formal flower beds to Marina Gardens, thereby making Bexhill much more attractive for visitors, and also ask Bexhill in Bloom for ideas to enhance our Welcome to Bexhill notices.</p>
<b>Year Three – MUSIC, CULTURE AND ARTS</b>	
<p>Investigate innovative ways to utilise empty shop fronts with local groups</p> <p>Seek grant funding to assist the development of community assets</p>	<p>.A classic example of this is the shops front opposite Bexhill Station, which is the initiative of Wave Arts, and shows portraits of famous people with associations to Bexhill, rather than run-down shop fronts.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ravenside Roundabout</li> <li>• Sports Stadium at The Polegrove</li> <li>• To facilitate a crazy golf/putting green facility in Bexhill</li> <li>• To enhance Bexhill Maritime project along East Parade</li> <li>• To enhance the planned Beach Garden with disability access at West Parade</li> </ul>
<b>Year Three – TRANSPORT AND ACCESSIBILITY</b>	

Review the Bexhill Accessibility map for further improvements to the Town's accessibility to include mental health, ADHD and autism.	This work is under way now under the auspices of the CNE Committee
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**REMAINING ITEMS LISTED FOR YEARS FOUR AND FIVE:-**

- *Carry out new 'Big Survey' to understand residents needs*
- *Finalise strategy for next five years.*
- *Investigate supporting mental health charities and access to services via the Town Council's premises*
- *Develop a healthy eating campaign*
- *Develop Galley Hill into a recreational destination*
- *Work with Rother District Council to improve leisure centre and swimming pool facilities*
- *Work with Rother District Council and East Sussex County Council to increase recycling provision across the area*
- *Improve floral displays across the town working with Bexhill in Bloom*
- *Develop a policy for improving access to music, culture and the arts*
- *Develop better footpath connections from Sidley to the town centre*