

**BEXHILL-ON-SEA TOWN COUNCIL**

Minutes of the meeting of the **BEXHILL-ON-SEA TOWN COUNCIL**

held in the **BEXHILL SENIOR CITIZEN'S CLUB, EVERSLEY ROAD,**

**BEXHILL-ON-SEA**

on **Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2025** at **6:30pm**

**PRESENT:** Cllr Blagrove, Cllr Byrne, Cllr Drayson, Cllr El, Cllr Goss, Cllr Hunt, Cllr Huseyin, Cllr Jacklin, Cllr Lee, Cllr Peters, Cllr Plim, Cllr Rustem, Cllr Thomas, Cllr Timpe, Cllr Wilson, Cllr Winter.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** J Daeva, Clerk; M Webber; One Videographer; Cllr Jimmy Stanger (Rother District Council); Cllr Ian Hollidge (East Sussex County Council); Fifteen members of the public.

**00073. CO-OPTION**

a) To co-opt a councillor to fill St Stephens Ward vacancy.

It was **RESOLVED** to elect John Lee to St Stephens Ward.

**00074. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

A member of the public who regularly travels to Eastbourne for voluntary work shared their thoughts on the Bexhill-on-Sea boundaries. They noted seeing a "Bexhill-on-Sea" sign on the Normans Bay toilet block and felt it was a positive addition, as Normans Bay is part of Bexhill-on-Sea. They compared it to similar signage in Sidley, which also indicates it is part of Bexhill-on-Sea.

A representative of the Normans Bay Residents Association mentioned they were not aware the sign was going to be installed and said they would have appreciated being consulted. They also questioned the relevance of having a "Welcome to Bexhill-on-Sea" sign.

A member of the public commented on the recent installation of a "Welcome to Bexhill-on-Sea" sign in the area. They noted that the sign appeared without prior notice and questioned its purpose, given that Normans Bay feels quite separate from Bexhill-on-Sea despite being within the same ward. They pointed out that the sign effectively divides the village and suggested that it would have been appreciated if

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residents had been consulted beforehand, especially as there is an active residents' association. They questioned the use of funds for the sign, expressing a preference for the money to have been spent on removing graffiti from the area instead.

A member of the public shared their thoughts on the placement of the new sign. While they welcomed the idea of having a village sign, they questioned why it had been placed at the eastern end of Normans Bay, which is a cul-de-sac. They felt the sign would be more appropriately located at the western end of the village and asked if this could be considered.

**00075. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and approve apologies for absence with reasons from Cllr Carroll and Cllr Crotty.

**00076. 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.

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

**00077. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were none.

**00078. MINUTES**

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

a) Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve and sign the minutes of the meeting of Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025.

**00079. COMMITTEES**

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

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- i. Engagement and Communications Committee 04/06/25 – noted.
- ii. Finance and Audit Committee 11/06/25 – noted.

**00080. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES**

- a) Engagement and Communications Committee:
  - i. It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to Full Council that the town council takes ownership of the Little Common war memorial and assist with installation of the flagpole on the roundabout. It was **RESOLVED** to take ownership of the Little Common war memorial and assist with installation of the flagpole on the roundabout.
- b) Finance and Audit Committee:
  - i. It was **RESOLVED** to recommend the draft policy for allocating CIL funds to community groups to Full Council. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the draft policy for allocating CIL funds to community groups.

**00081. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY REVIEW 2024-2025**

- a) To review system of internal control.  
It was **RESOLVED** to review system of internal control.
- b) To review the effectiveness of the system of internal control.  
It was **RESOLVED** to review the effectiveness of the system of internal control.
- c) To approve the internal audit report 2024-2025.  
It was **RESOLVED** to approve the internal audit report 2024-2025.
- d) To approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2024-2025, Section 1 of the AGAR for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.  
It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2024-2025, Section 1 of the AGAR for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.
- e) To approve the Accounting Statements for 2024-2025, Section 2 of the AGAR for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025, the supporting Bank Reconciliation as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 and the explanation of significant variances from last year (2023-2024) to this year (2024-2025).

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It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Accounting Statements for 2024–2025, Section 2 of the AGAR for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025, the supporting Bank Reconciliation as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 and the explanation of significant variances from last year (2023–2024) to this year (2024–2025).

**00082. MAYOR'S OFFICE**

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

An update was received.

**00083. 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.

Cllr Hollidge spoke on several local matters, stating that improving accessibility has always been a personal priority, and noted that East Sussex County Council can support this through the installation of drop kerbs. On parking, he explained that Rother District Council carries out a parking review every 12 to 18 months. A new list for informal consultation is expected in July, which will consider various issues, including the extended hours of the De La Warr Pavilion car park. He acknowledged that this change has caused difficulties for permit holders in finding spaces. The review will also explore parking time changes to support residents and may include updates to taxi bay operating hours.

Regarding potholes, Cllr Hollidge noted that 67 repairs have been completed and that future updates will be broken down by ward to improve communication with local councillors.

He also touched on the complexities of potential local government reorganisation (LGR), explaining that before any changes to governance or roles are considered, the defined area for a mayoral or unitary authority must be established. He referenced that the current proposed coastal strip was originally set by a previous government and that a ministerial decision will ultimately be needed. He also highlighted that Eastbourne and Hastings do not currently have town councils, and locally in Rother, the Town Hall

remains an important community asset, owned by Rother District Council, and may continue to be needed to provide key functions.

b) To receive reports from Ward District Councillors.

Cllr Timpe shared that she will be officially opening the public toilets in Egerton Park on Friday morning at 10:00am.

Cllr Stanger expressed support for the majority view in Normans Bay, which he described as having its own distinct identity. He said it would have been appreciated if residents had been consulted about recent changes, noting that the ward feels divided. He asked to be kept updated on developments. He also raised concerns about major issues on the A259 near Sluice Lane and mentioned a planned meeting with a senior director from National Highways. Regarding planning matters, he noted there were no objections to current items. He expressed support for Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council taking over responsibility for the war memorial but does not want to see it moved. He also raised Herbrand Walk as an ongoing concern. As a member of the planning committee, he commented that while parish representation is often strong, he has not seen the Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council Clerk, or an officer attend to share the council's views.

c) To receive ward reports from Town Councillors.

Cllr Byrne reported attending the rededication of St Barnabas Church following major building works. The church, once at risk of demolition, received a £750,000 legacy which enabled it to secure further grants. It now includes a social space, office and committee rooms, and plans for ten units of temporary housing.

Cllr Jacklin thanked those involved in installing the Normans Bay sign and noted that an alternative location to the west of Normans Bay had been explored, but no suitable site was found.

Cllr Peters reported that the sinkhole on Pages Lane has been repaired. He also mentioned that an application concerning 81 Cooden Drive has been called in by Cllr Drayson at Rother District Council.

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**00084. PLANNING MATTERS**

- a) To receive update on Neighbourhood Plan.

Cllr Winter reported that a meeting was held yesterday with the Neighbourhood Planning Group in preparation for an upcoming meeting with Rother District Council's planning team. The discussion covered the distinction between a Neighbourhood Plan, which is a legally binding document requiring a referendum, and a Spatial Plan, which has no legal weight and does not involve public voting. It was felt that the council is in a strong position to lead on a Neighbourhood Plan and, despite concerns about timing, it was agreed that pursuing one would still be worthwhile. The plan will need to align with Rother District Council's Local Plan. A document outlining examples from other councils and typical timelines was shared. The first step is to determine the geographical area the plan will cover, which is proposed to be the whole of Bexhill-on-Sea. This will require approval from Rother District Council. A meeting with Rother District Council officers is scheduled for next Tuesday, and findings will be brought back to Full Council. The aim is to work alongside the Neighbourhood Board to ensure the community benefits from both approaches.

**00085. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION**

- a) To receive update on submissions of Expressions of Interest to Rother District Council and East Sussex County Council.  
An update was received.

**00086. ROTHER DISTRICT COUNCIL LIAISON**

- a) To note awaiting dates for next leader's meeting. – noted.  
b) To note solicitor has requested Rother District Council expedite HM Land Registry application for Pebsham Play Area. – noted.  
c) To consider applying for CIL infrastructure matched fund.  
It was **RESOLVED** to apply for CIL infrastructure matched fund.

**00087. EXTERNAL REPRESENTATIVES**

- a) RALC – Cllr Huseyin and Cllr Jacklin.

Cllr Huseyin gave an update on a RALC meeting held at the Cooden Beach Hotel, where members were advised not to speculate regarding Local Government Reorganisation.

b) Citizen's Advice – Cllr Byrne.

There were no updates.

c) Bexhill Air Cadet Squadron – Mayor/ Deputy Mayor.

There were no updates.

d) Bexhill Maritime – Cllr Timpe.

Cllr Timpe advised that the Bexhill Maritime program will be put into four phases.

e) Little Gate Farm – Cllr Winter.

Cllr Winter has arranged a meeting with the staff and CEO of Little Gate Farm.

f) Neighbourhood Board – Cllr Wilson.

It was noted that the clerk's appointment to the Neighbourhood Board has now been confirmed.

g) Combe Valley CIC – Cllr Jacklin.

Cllr Jacklin reported that the next meeting of the Combe Valley Community Interest Company is scheduled for the end of next month and will include an extended session with representatives from Rother District Council and Hastings Borough Council to discuss the organisation's future. Cllr Byrne has now joined as a representative from Rother. An extraordinary meeting was also recently held to review and tighten the constitution, particularly regarding the process for appointing members.

h) Chamber of Commerce Centenary Fund Assessment Panel – Cllr Wilson.

There were no updates.

i) To consider nominating external representative for Bathing Water Community Group.

It was **RESOLVED** to nominate Cllr Byrne, Cllr Drayson, Cllr Jacklin and Cllr Plim.

*Cllr Hunt left the meeting at 20:00pm*

**00088. TO CONSIDER ESTABLISHING A PROCESS FOR SELECTING THE CHAIR, WITH A DEADLINE SET AHEAD OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

– Cllr Drayson

It was **RESOLVED** to investigate a process for selecting the chair, with a deadline set ahead of the Annual Meeting of The Council.

*Cllr Hunt re-entered on 20:01pm.*

**00089. TO ESTABLISH A PROCESS FOR COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS TO ENSURE THAT THOSE STANDING FOR COMMITTEE POSITIONS ARE KNOWN IN ADVANCE – Cllr Drayson**

The motion was withdrawn.

**00090. MOTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

a) Cllr Plim.

In light of the recent increase in localised retail crime within Bexhill, Sidley, and Little Common, will this council investigate the costs associated with utilising powers under the Police Act 1996 Sections 25 and 96 to fund additional PCSO patrols in these areas, and present a report with findings at the next meeting for the council's consideration?

It was **RESOLVED** to pass the motion with an amendment: That the clerk investigates PCSOs or any other crime prevention initiatives. Findings will be reported back to the next meeting.

b) Cllr Wilson.

As The elected Mayor for Bexhill I wish to have a chosen charity and for the 2nd year I wish to choose Sidley Cricket Club.

They continue to do such amazing work in the community. Their project is far from complete and choosing them really does improve awareness of what they are attempting to achieve.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve Sidley Cricket Club as Cllr Wilson's chosen charity.

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## c) Cllr Wilson.

That Bexhill Town Council considers having a Mayor's Ball in April 2026 as a celebration of the work that BoSTC have achieved during the year 2025/2026.

It was **RESOLVED** to have a Mayor's Ball in April 2026 as a celebration of the work that Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council have achieved during the year 2025/2026.

## d) Cllr Winter.

This Council resolves to introduce a structured framework of "Lead Councillor" roles, aligned with best practice in local governance, to strengthen thematic oversight, enhance community engagement, and prepare for asset devolution. These roles shall be advisory and representative only, without individual decision-making powers.

This item was deferred until the next meeting.

**00091. CORRESPONDENCE AND MATTERS FOR INFORMATION – There were none.****00092. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

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

Cllr Jacklin asked whether the CCTV contract has been put in for renewal.	The CCTV contract was renewed on 8 <sup>th</sup> April 2025.
Cllr Plim asked for clarification on how many allotments were owned by Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council.	Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council owns eight allotments, two of which are managed by the Town Council.
Cllr Drayson asked whether the appointment of the Mayoral Cadet should take place when the new Mayor is established.	That would be for the council to decide.
Cllr Drayson asked if councillors could be sat next to their ward partners for future meetings.	This is done where possible, however no formal seating plan has been agreed.
Cllr Crotty praised the standard bearer representing the town council at VE Day events.	This feedback will be passed on.

- b) To receive questions from councillors.

*Questions shall be recorded in the minutes and responded to at the next meeting or before.*

Cllr Winter asked if the clerk could investigate moving the Normans Bay 'Welcome To' sign.

Cllr Goss asked if the Old Town speed watch survey had been carried out.

Cllr El asked that the Clerk ask Rother District Council whether the Pebsham Play Park project can proceed while the land registry application is still pending.

- c) To receive any future agenda items.

There were none.

- d) To consider any new risks to be added to the risk register.

There were none.

**00093. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 30<sup>TH</sup> JULY 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:*

**00094. TO RECEIVE UPDATE ON LEGAL CLAIM**

There were no updates.

*The meeting closed at 21:04pm.*

*Date.....*

*Signed.....*

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