

BEXHILL-ON-SEA TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**
Held in the **ST PETER'S COMMUNITY CENTRE, CHURCH ST,**
BEXHILL-ON-SEA

On **Saturday 18th April 2026 at 6:30pm**

PRESENT: Cllr Byrne, Cllr Goss, Cllr Huseyin, Cllr Lee, Cllr Peters, Cllr Plim, Cllr Thomas, Cllr Timpe, Cllr Wilson.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Adam Chugg, Town Clerk; L Muhilathithan; One Videographer, 14 members of public.

1. TOWN CRIER ANNOUNCEMENT

The Town Crier announced the meeting.

2. INTRODUCTION FROM CHAIR

The Chair gave an introduction and explained the proceedings of the Annual Town Meeting.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No formal apologies were noted in the meeting, but the following Cllrs had informed the Office they would not be attending – Cllr Blagrove, Cllr Carroll and Cllr El.

4. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

To approve the minutes of the following meeting:

a) Saturday 29th March 2026

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting on the 29th March 2026.

5. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

One member of public requested that the microphones are sorted for next year. Thanked the Mayor and Councillors for all they have done throughout the year. One question regarding noticeboards, the Town Council have done a wonderful job with the noticeboards, however still frustrated with the one outside the Town Hall. Aware it is not the Town Council's but would like the Town Council to put pressure on Rother to upgrade that noticeboard.

Response – *Happy to take this away. We have an upcoming Leaders meeting and will put this on the agenda.*

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Concerns have since been raised with Rother District Council regarding the noticeboard. The Town Council have offered to take responsibility for it, Rother District Council are currently considering the proposal.

Second question regarding the water feature – Would like the Council to lobby the District Council, have heard it might be coming, but would like some more clarification; wants this to be minuted tonight that Bexhill Town Council really want to see the water feature re-instated.

Response – *The Neighbourhood Board, now Pride in Place, has this as their number one project.*

Can you clarify that this is the new name of the Neighbourhood Board?

Response – *There was a value of £20 million under what was called the Neighbourhood Board by the previous Government, the new Government have carried this on and re-branded it as Pride in Place. The Pride in Place team have had their first four-year financial plan agreed. That includes the investigation into the water feature. Watch this space and their funds will stream through from April next year. Nothing to be expected before this as there is a lot of planning required.*

One of the founding directors of Come As You Are CIC, spoke about the community organisation and the importance of offering a community to families with children who are neurodivergent, disabled, and have high support needs. Have so far run almost entirely by directors in a voluntary capacity but the year ahead is now a fully funded staff model with proven outcomes and sessions that are fully booked. We have built strong partnerships with East Sussex County Council, Pelham etc. Bexhill is a Town that understands community. We want our families to be a part of that community. As Devolution happens and assets are transferred, will Bexhill Town Council consider one of these spaces to be a permanent home for Come As You Are CIC, to offer more support to the families of Bexhill?

Response – *As a Town Council we could fully help and look into areas for a property. However, at the moment Rother District Council owns most of the properties. Rother District Council are looking on a basis that if it makes money it will go to the unitary authority and if it costs money it will come to us. There are three lists, green, yellow and red. The green list we have fully seen and agree. Rother District Council have money at the forefront of their minds and in my opinion are not considering the social needs of some of these sites. I'm strongly in favour of this Council trying to get as much possible back down from the District so we can look after it. Therefore, I will fully support you in any way and try to assist in any way I can.*

Response – *To put a balance to that this will be going on for at least 18 months, this started two years ago, and we just got through the first list. This had the impact of putting money on to the Towns precept. Speaking on behalf of the*

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corporate body we have had some robust conversations over what we will take. Rother decided a long time ago that the first point of call would be the Town and Parish Council's before anything went to the CIC. I have recently seen an email, that that is the process they are going through. They haven't sold things off like the toilets, they're under a lease, and that will then make money which is why there's discussions ongoing.

Response – *What you're doing definitely needs our backing. 100% behind you, whatever you need, if we can help.*

One member of public stated they have attended several meetings and occasions throughout the year and have engaged with most present here today. It has always been a pleasant and positive experience. However, on occasion there can be an incompatible tone to Town Council meetings. Such a shame that some Councillors have repeatedly chosen not to attend occasions. Wanted to say thank you to those that have repeatedly shown up, through all weathers, afternoons, evenings, early mornings etc. I understand that is a personal sacrifice, especially when it comes to social media. I wanted to say thank you for your efforts they are appreciated and those Councillors who are repeatedly not available, please try.

Response – *Thank you for your compliments.*

An Artistic Director from Culbaba Theatre spoke about the development of their idea for a commemorative mosaic that can highlight, symbolize and give Ukrainians gratitude to the local residents of Bexhill. When the full invasion started lots of families around and in Bexhill opened their doors for our children and women. We appreciate the support from all citizens and the government. We try to participate as much as possible to enrich the Town culture. Our idea is to make a mosaic that can symbolise and represent the friendship between our countries. This would not just be static artwork, but something rooted in community participation. Would like to hear how this could be provided in the town without spoiling it, discuss a suitable location, what documents need to be provided and how this job can be managed. Appreciate any advice and direction.

Response – *I have been to some of your events, and they are not just singing and dancing, they are educational. I learned a lot about the history of Ukraine. It's really interesting. So, I'd recommend anybody to go along to the next one. Regarding your idea, you should contact our Town Clerk to guide you through the process.*

A representative from the Association of Ukrainians in Britain thanked the Council for organising the Civic Awards. Would like to ask if it is possible to share this practice in Towns such as Hastings, Rye and Battle. Also, would like to ask if it is

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possible to get some support, such as a venue or advertisement; and who to communicate with.

Response – *If you contact our Clerk through the email address on our website, you can liaise between yourself and the Clerk to see what we can do. With regards to if Rye and Hastings could do what we do, that's a little bit awkward because Rye has a Town Council the same level as us, but Hastings is a Borough Council so it could be a little awkward for us to suggest this. But we can go away and think about this.*

Second question is how does the Council ensure that diverse community groups in Bexhill are consistently represented and heard in its decision-making process? And what pathways exist for a community like ours to participate in engagement in a structured and ongoing way.

Response – *we try and do as much engagement as we can. Our meetings are open for any member of public to attend, speak and ask questions. We do various events where people can come along and talk to us, which is probably more than what a lot of Councils do.*

Is there a specific body or group?

Response – *You might want to attend one of our Communication and Engagement Committee meetings. At the start of the meeting, you're able to tell us what you actually want. Through that process, we can then put it into the system and work with an idea or project. All meetings are uploaded onto YouTube. And next year we will have elections for Town Council. I am not too sure what the status is for somebody that is Ukrainian standing in a Town Council. Could be possible, maybe look into that.*

Response – *There is another route, Pride in Place, are always looking to engage with varying groups. So, you could get in contact with them to share your thoughts which might lead to future plans.*

The meeting was closed at 19:00pm.

Date.....

Signed.....

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