Rother District Council

COUNCIL

21 February 2022



Minutes of the Council meeting held at the Town Hall, Bexhill-on-Sea on Monday 21 February 2022 at 6:30pm.

Present: Councillors B.J. Drayson (Chairman), K.M. Harmer (Vice-Chairman), J. Barnes (MBE), Mrs M.L. Barnes, C.A. Bayliss, R.K. Bird, J.H.F. Brewerton, G.S. Browne, T.J.C. Byrne, J.J. Carroll, C.A. Clark, S.J. Coleman, Mrs V. Cook, P.C. Courtel, G.C. Curtis, K.P. Dixon, Mrs D.C. Earl-Williams (in-part), S.J. Errington, K.M. Field, P.J. Gray, A.K. Jeeawon, J.M. Johnson, L.M. Langlands, C.A. Madeley, C.R. Maynard, A.S. Mier, M. Mooney, Rev H.J. Norton, S.M. Prochak (MBE), G.F. Stevens, H.L. Timpe and J. Vine-Hall.

Advisory Officers in attendance: Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer and Democratic Services Manager.

Also Present: 2 members of the public in the Council Chamber and 7 members of the public via the live webcast.

C21/57. **MINUTES**

The Chairman was authorised to sign the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 31 January 2022 as a correct record of the proceedings.

C21/58. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A.E. Ganly, L. Hacking, Mrs E.M. Kirby-Green, D.B. Oliver, P.N. Osborne and R. Thomas.

C21/59. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Declarations of interest were made by Councillors in the Minutes as indicated below:

Barnes, J - Agenda Item 9 – Personal Interest as a Council Appointed Director of Alliance Homes (Rother).

Clark - Agenda Item 9 – Personal Interest as a Council Appointed Director of Alliance Homes (Rother).

Drayson - Agenda Item 9 - Personal Interest as a Council Appointed Director of Alliance Homes (Rother).

C21/60. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Chairman made the following announcements:

- The Chairman thanked Councillor Kathy Harmer, the Vice-Chairman, for so competently taking up the reins on his behalf at the meeting held on 31 January.
- With only one official activity in the three weeks since the last meeting, the Chairman had little to report at the meeting. The one engagement was at 2.30pm that afternoon when, together with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Bexhill Town Council they launched Bexhill's Free Trade Week, aimed at raising the awareness of the benefits of the scheme to both consumers and producers.
- At Cabinet two weeks ago, approval was given to a COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund aimed at providing Non-Domestic Rate Relief for businesses who had not been eligible for similar funds. The prompt and diligent work of the Council's officers within both Finance and Benefits throughout the pandemic has meant additional funds being made available by the Government through RDC to those in most need. Under the 'Making a Difference' umbrella alone almost £700k had been paid to Rother businesses.
- Thursday saw the launch of the Council's Community Lottery aimed at raising funds for the Council's Community Grants Scheme while at the same time, raising money for the groups taking part. It was very pleasing to see over 30 groups attended the virtual launch.
- Finally, the Chairman reminded those groups who were planning to hold a community event to celebrate HM the Queen's Platinum Jubilee that the Community Grants Fund was still open to applications and if they were looking to hold a street party there was still time to apply for a road closure.

C21/61. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

1. Pursuant to Paragraph 10 of the Council Procedure Rules the following question was put by Mr Bernard Brown and answered by Councillor Prochak.

Question: In the Budget for the current year there is a Capital Sum of £460,000 for the Development of the Town Hall. The forecast last seen suggests a spend in this financial year of £445,000 with £15,000 transferred to 2022/23.

Can the Council give an update on the progress made to date, when the output from this expenditure is expected to be published and the timescale for implementing its conclusions. Is there any reason to believe the original guesstimate of £14m will be substantially varied?

Answer: The Town Hall Renaissance project is still in the design process and is currently in stage two of the RIBA development process. The project has undertaken planning pre-application meetings with the Council's planning department to inform the final proposal. It is anticipated that a full planning application will be ready for submission in the early summer with an aim to have this considered at Planning

Committee before Christmas. In the meantime, a full report on the business case for the development will be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in July and then to Cabinet and Full Council in September. Whilst we are still in the design process, the professional team are aware of the budget constraints and we do not anticipate a significant variance from the original budget estimates at this stage. There will be an opportunity for a full debate on the commercial case for this project once full costs are available.

Supplementary Oral Question: Thank you for the very detailed reply which was very very helpful. There are just a few little bits of information that I would like you explain. Is it intended that the project will still be cost neutral and if so, over what period of time? Also, I do not see the project on the capital programme, when is it going on there and how much has been spent so far?

Answer: Thank you Mr Brown, welcome to the Council, good to have you here again. Before I answer your supplementary question can I just say that this is a long-term project, certainly pushed on by COVID also pushed on by the fact that we have signed up to be carbon neutral by 2030 and the Government by 2050 so this has pushed us along this track. I do not know if anybody knows how much we spend on our energy bills at the moment but it is something like £60,000 a year and as you can imagine, this is not a building where you can switch off one rooms' heating, the whole building has to be heated. So that is the long-term aim and so the carbon neutrality of the new build will help enormously towards reducing our carbon footprint.

I would like also to say the reason why we chose this route apart from what I have already mentioned is if we did nothing at the moment with this building there would still be incredible costs to meet because there's lots of repairs needed, so it is not an ideal working environment for our officers and as I have mentioned, we have had the COVID and also the whole thing about climate change. So, the reason why I am explaining that is that it is cost neutral over a long period and we have already got people signed up to rent once it is done. In terms of how much we have spent at the moment I have not got the answer in front of me but I'll certainly get that answer for you. I think what we said already is that actually it is in the second phase as I have said in the answer here, it is the second phase of the development process but I am happy to get the specific answer to you at a later stage.

C21/62. REPORT OF THE CABINET ON MATTERS FOR DETERMINATION

- 1. It was moved by Councillor Prochak and seconded that the reports of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 7 February 2022, as set out in the Agenda be approved and adopted with the exception of Minute CB21/75 which would be considered at Agenda Item 9.
- 2. The Chairman of the Council having called over the reports, all the Minutes were reserved for discussion:
 - 7 February 2022

CB21/76 and CB21/77

3. On the Motion of the Chairman of the Council, duly seconded, the Chairman proceeded to deal with the reserved minutes.

C21/63. **RESERVED MATTERS**

Cabinet – 7 February 2022

CB21/76 – CAPITAL STRATEGY 2022/23 TO 2026/27 CB21/77 – DEVELOPMENT AT BEECHING ROAD, BEXHILL

RESOLVED: That Minutes CB21/76 and CB21/77 be approved and adopted, as submitted.

C21/64. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE ON DECISIONS TAKEN BY CABINET AS MATTERS OF URGENCY

It was moved by Councillor Prochak and seconded that it be noted that there were no executive decisions taken by Cabinet as matters of urgency at its meeting held on 7 February 2022.

RESOLVED: That the report be received.

C21/65. **BUDGET 2022/23**

CB21/75 - DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET 2022/23

It was moved by Councillor Prochak, seconded and agreed that Council Procedure Rules 14.4 (content and length of speeches) and 14.5 (when a Member may speak again) be waived for the duration of this item.

It was moved by Councillor Prochak and seconded by Councillor Vine-Hall that the formal Council Tax Resolution at Appendix A to the report be approved and adopted and Minute CB21/75 from the Cabinet meeting held on 7 February 2022 be received.

It was moved by Councillor J. Barnes and duly seconded that the Motion be amended by the addition of the following words at 6):

"To require the Cabinet in view of the rapidly deteriorating financial position of this Council to report before the end of the financial year 2021/22 on a detailed plan to achieve savings of not less than £1.75 million in the financial year 2022/23 together with a clear indication of how they intend to increase property investment income by at least £0.75 million."

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 17.5(b) a vote by roll call on the Amendment was taken.

FOR the Motion (11): J. Barnes, Mrs. M.L. Barnes, R.K. Bird, G.S. Browne, J.J. Carroll, G.C. Curtis, Mrs D.C. Earl-Williams, J.M. Johnson, C.R. Maynard, M. Mooney and G.F. Stevens.

AGAINST the Motion (20): C.A. Bayliss, J.H.F. Brewerton, T.J.C. Byrne, C.A. Clark, S.J. Coleman, Mrs V. Cook, P.C. Courtel, K.P. Dixon, B.J.

Drayson, K.M. Field, P.J. Gray, K.M. Harmer, A.K. Jeeawon, L.M. Langlands, C.A. Madeley, A.S. Mier, Rev. H.J. Norton, S.M. Prochak, H.L. Timpe and J. Vine-Hall.

ABSTENTIONS (1): S.J. Errington.

The Amendment being put forward was declared **LOST**.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 17.5(b) a vote by roll call for the substantive Motion was taken.

FOR the Motion (21): C.A. Bayliss, J.H.F. Brewerton, T.J.C. Byrne, C.A. Clark, S.J. Coleman, Mrs V. Cook, P.C. Courtel, K.P. Dixon, B.J. Drayson, S.J. Errington, K.M. Field, P.J. Gray, K.M. Harmer, A.K. Jeeawon, L.M. Langlands, C.A. Madeley, A.S. Mier, Rev. H.J. Norton, S.M. Prochak, H.L. Timpe and J. Vine-Hall.

AGAINST the Motion (10): J. Barnes, Mrs. M.L. Barnes, R.K. Bird, G.S. Browne, J.J. Carroll, G.C. Curtis, J.M. Johnson, C.R. Maynard, M. Mooney and G.F. Stevens.

The Motion being put forward was declared **CARRIED**.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1. (a) That Council approves the Rother District Council General Fund Council Tax Requirement of £7,392,337 for 2022/23 and the resultant Band D tax of £193.38 as set out in this report.
 - (b) The expenses incurred by the Council, set out in the minutes of the Cabinet of 7 February 2022 in the sum of £637,460 in respect of Bexhill and £64,430 in respect of Rye, be approved as the Special Expenses chargeable to residents of Bexhill and Rye respectively. All other expenses incurred by the Council (excluding Parish Precepts) be approved as general expenditure for the purposes of section 35 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. (This resolution will be reviewed annually).
- 2. That it be noted, the following amounts for the year 2022/23 in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992, made under section 33 (5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:
 - (a) 38,227.0 being the amount calculated by the Council in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 2012, as its Council Tax base for the year.

(b)

Ashburnham & Penhurst	188.60	Etchingham	412.20	Rye Foreign	159.60
Battle	2,713.50	Ewhurst	553.40	Salehurst &	1,027.00

				Robertsbridge	
Beckley	548.20	Fairlight	903.10	Sedlescombe	670.20
Bexhill	16,826.70	Guestling	643.40	Ticehurst	1,681.10
Bodiam	166.50	Hurst Green	581.30	Udimore	190.20
Brede	860.40	Icklesham	1,218.40	Westfield	1,116.70
Brightling	199.50	Iden	237.80	Whatlington	158.60
Burwash	1,255.20	Mountfield	197.80		
Camber	663.90	Northiam	1,048.40		
Catsfield	377.80	Peasmarsh	505.10		
Crowhurst	367.30	Pett	473.90		
Dallington	172.80	Playden	164.50		
East Guldeford	30.60	Rye	1,913.30		

being the amounts calculated by the Council in accordance with Regulation 6 of the Regulations, as the amounts of its Council Tax base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

3. That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2022/23 in accordance with sections 32 to 38 of the Local Government and Finance Act 1992 as amended:

a.	£49,849,298	Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in section 32(2)(a) to (e) of the Act. (this amount is the Council's gross expenditure including the Parish Council Precepts and the Special Expenses for Bexhill and Rye).
b.	-£39,405,194	Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in section 32(3)(a) to (c) of the Act.
C.	£10,444,104	Being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with section 32(4) of the Act, as its council tax requirement for the year.
d.	£273.21	being the amount at 3(c) divided by the amount at 2 above (Item T), calculated by the Council, in accordance with section 33(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year.
e.	£3,051,701	Being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in section 35(1) of the Act
f.	£193.38	Being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by the amount at 2(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates.

PARISH COUNCIL AREA	Band D £
Ashburnham & Penhurst	262.31
Battle	336.31
Beckley	238.98
Bexhill	254.49
Bodiam	259.33
Brede	238.64
Brightling	232.17
Burwash	277.66
Camber	289.02
Catsfield	272.79
Crowhurst	272.70
Dallington	242.19
East Guldeford	193.38
Etchingham	366.84
Ewhurst	326.45
Fairlight	270.89
Guestling	207.65
Hurst Green	270.09
lcklesham	322.72
lden	260.66
Mountfield	259.61
Northiam	288.76
Peasmarsh	266.63
Pett	241.91
Playden	223.78
Rye	325.62
Rye Foreign	205.91
Salehurst	298.32
Sedlescombe	280.84
Ticehurst	281.15
Udimore	228.24
Westfield	282.63
Whatlington	238.15

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 3(f) above the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above divided in each case by the amount at 2(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

h.

Valuation Bands

LOCAL TAX								
AREA	Α	В	С	D	E	F	G	Н
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Ashburnham								
& Penhurst	174.87	204.02	233.16	262.31	320.60	378.90	437.18	524.62
Battle	224.21	261.58	298.94	336.31	411.04	485.78	560.52	672.62
Beckley	159.32	185.88	212.42	238.98	292.08	345.20	398.30	477.96
Bexhill	169.66	197.94	226.21	254.49	311.04	367.60	424.15	508.98
Bodiam	172.89	201.70	230.51	259.33	316.96	374.59	432.22	518.66
Brede	159.09	185.61	212.12	238.64	291.67	344.71	397.73	477.28
Brightling	154.78	180.58	206.37	232.17	283.76	335.36	386.95	464.34
Burwash	185.11	215.96	246.81	277.66	339.36	401.07	462.77	555.32
Camber	192.68	224.80	256.90	289.02	353.24	417.48	481.70	578.04
Catsfield	181.86	212.17	242.48	272.79	333.41	394.03	454.65	545.58
Crowhurst	181.80	212.10	242.40	272.70	333.30	393.90	454.50	545.40
Dallington	161.46	188.37	215.28	242.19	296.01	349.83	403.65	484.38
East Guldeford	128.92	150.41	171.89	193.38	236.35	279.33	322.30	386.76
Etchingham	244.56	285.32	326.08	366.84	448.36	529.88	611.40	733.68
Ewhurst	217.63	253.91	290.17	326.45	398.99	471.54	544.08	652.90
Fairlight	180.59	210.70	240.79	270.89	331.08	391.29	451.48	541.78
Guestling	138.43	161.51	184.57	207.65	253.79	299.94	346.08	415.30
Hurst Green	180.06	210.07	240.08	270.09	330.11	390.13	450.15	540.18
lcklesham	215.15	251.01	286.86	322.72	394.43	466.15	537.87	645.44
lden	173.77	202.74	231.69	260.66	318.58	376.51	434.43	521.32
Mountfield	173.07	201.92	230.76	259.61	317.30	375.00	432.68	519.22
Northiam	192.51	224.59	256.67	288.76	352.93	417.10	481.27	577.52
Peasm arsh	177.75	207.38	237.00	266.63	325.88	385.14	444.38	533.26
Pett	161.27	188.16	215.03	241.91	295.66	349.43	403.18	483.82
Playden	149.19	174.05	198.91	223.78	273.51	323.24	372.97	447.56
Rye	217.08	253.27	289.44	325.62	397.97	470.34	542.70	651.24
Rye Foreign	137.27	160.16	183.03	205.91	251.66	297.43	343.18	411.82
Salehurst	198.88	232.03	265.17	298.32	364.61	430.91	497.20	596.64
Sedlescombe	187.23	218.43	249.63	280.84	343.25	405.66	468.07	561.68
Ticehurst	187.43	218.68	249.91	281.15	343.62	406.11	468.58	562.30
Udimore	152.16	177.52	202.88	228.24	278.96	329.68	380.40	456.48
Westfield	188.42	219.83	251.22	282.63	345.43	408.25	471.05	565.26
Whatlington	158.77	185.23	211.69	238.15	291.07	344.00	396.92	476.30

being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 3(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in Valuation Band "D", calculated by the Council, in accordance with section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different Valuation Bands.

4. That the Council notes that for the year 2022/23 East Sussex County Council, the Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner and the East Sussex Fire Authority have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown overleaf:

	Valuation Bands							
Precepting Authority	Α	В	С	D	Е	F	G	н
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
East Sussex County Council	1,075.56	1,254.82	1,434.08	1,613.34	1,971.86	2,330.38	2,688.90	3,226.68
- Council Tax	948.60	1,106.70	1,264.80	1,422.90	1,739.10	2,055.30	2,371.50	2,845.80
- Adult Social Care Precept	126.96	148.12	169.28	190.44	232.76	275.08	317.40	380.88
Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner	149.94	174.93	199.92	224.91	274.89	324.87	374.85	449.82
East Sussex Fire & Rescue	66.25	77.29	88.33	99.37	121.45	143.53	165.62	198.74

5. That, having calculated the aggregate each case of the amounts at 3(h) and 4 above, the Council, in accordance with section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2020/21 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Valuation Bands

LOCAL TAX								
AREA	Α	В	С	D	E	F	G	Н
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Ashburnham								
& Penhurst	1,466.62	1,711.06	1,955.49	2,199.93	2,688.80	3,177.68	3,666.55	4,399.86
Battle	1,515.96	1,768.62	2,021.27	2,273.93	2,779.24	3,284.56	3,789.89	4,547.86
Beckley	1,451.07	1,692.92	1,934.75	2,176.60	2,660.28	3,143.98	3,627.67	4,353.20
Bexhill	1,461.41	1,704.98	1,948.54	2,192.11	2,679.24	3,166.38	3,653.52	4,384.22
Bodiam	1,464.64	1,708.74	1,952.84	2,196.95	2,685.16	3,173.37	3,661.59	4,393.90
Brede	1,450.84	1,692.65	1,934.45	2,176.26	2,659.87	3,143.49	3,627.10	4,352.52
Brightling	1,446.53	1,687.62	1,928.70	2,169.79	2,651.96	3,134.14	3,616.32	4,339.58
Burwash	1,476.86	1,723.00	1,969.14	2,215.28	2,707.56	3,199.85	3,692.14	4,430.56
Camber	1,484.43	1,731.84	1,979.23	2,226.64	2,721.44	3,216.26	3,711.07	4,453.28
Catsfield	1,473.61	1,719.21	1,964.81	2,210.41	2,701.61	3,192.81	3,684.02	4,420.82
Crowhurst	1,473.55	1,719.14	1,964.73	2,210.32	2,701.50	3,192.68	3,683.87	4,420.64
Dallington	1,453.21	1,695.41	1,937.61	2,179.81	2,664.21	3,148.61	3,633.02	4,359.62
East Guldeford	1,420.67	1,657.45	1,894.22	2,131.00	2,604.55	3,078.11	3,551.67	4,262.00
Etchingham	1,536.31	1,792.36	2,048.41	2,304.46	2,816.56	3,328.66	3,840.77	4,608.92
Ewhurst	1,509.38	1,760.95	2,012.50	2,264.07	2,767.19	3,270.32	3,773.45	4,528.14
Fairlight	1,472.34	1,717.74	1,963.12	2,208.51	2,699.28	3,190.07	3,680.85	4,417.02
Guestling	1,430.18	1,668.55	1,906.90	2,145.27	2,621.99	3,098.72	3,575.45	4,290.54
Hurst Green	1,471.81	1,717.11	1,962.41	2,207.71	2,698.31	3,188.91	3,679.52	4,415.42
lcklesham	1,506.90	1,758.05	2,009.19	2,260.34	2,762.63	3,264.93	3,767.24	4,520.68
lden	1,465.52	1,709.78	1,954.02	2,198.28	2,686.78	3,175.29	3,663.80	4,396.56
Mountfield	1,464.82	1,708.96	1,953.09	2,197.23	2,685.50	3,173.78	3,662.05	4,394.46
Northiam	1,484.26	1,731.63	1,979.00	2,226.38	2,721.13	3,215.88	3,710.64	4,452.76
Peasmarsh	1,469.50	1,714.42	1,959.33	2,204.25	2,694.08	3,183.92	3,673.75	4,408.50
Pett	1,453.02	1,695.20	1,937.36	2,179.53	2,663.86	3,148.21	3,632.55	4,359.06
Playden	1,440.94	1,681.09	1,921.24	2,161.40	2,641.71	3,122.02	3,602.34	4,322.80
Rye	1,508.83	1,760.31	2,011.77	2,263.24	2,766.17	3,269.12	3,772.07	4,526.48
Rye Foreign	1,429.02	1,667.20	1,905.36	2,143.53	2,619.86	3,096.21	3,572.55	4,287.06
Salehurst	1,490.63	1,739.07	1,987.50	2,235.94	2,732.81	3,229.69	3,726.57	4,471.88
Sedlescombe	1,478.98	1,725.47	1,971.96	2,218.46	2,711.45	3,204.44	3,697.44	4,436.92
Ticehurst	1,479.18	1,725.72	1,972.24	2,218.77	2,711.82	3,204.89	3,697.95	4,437.54
Udimore	1,443.91	1,684.56	1,925.21	2,165.86	2,647.16	3,128.46	3,609.77	4,331.72
Westfield	1,480.17	1,726.87	1,973.55	2,220.25	2,713.63	3,207.03	3,700.42	4,440.50
Whatlington	1,450.52	1,692.27	1,934.02	2,175.77	2,659.27	3,142.78	3,626.29	4,351.54

6. The Chief Finance Officer as Section 151 Officer be authorised to authenticate and serve all notices etc. required in connection with the Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rate.

Assessment as to whether change in Council Tax is excessive

7. That the Council's relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2022/23 is not excessive in accordance with the principles approved under section 52B(3) of the Local Government Act 1992.

(When it first became apparent, Councillors J. Barnes, Clark and Drayson each declared a Personal Interest in this matter as Council Appointed Directors of Alliance Homes (Rother)).

C21/66. NOMINATIONS FOR CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN 2022/23

Nominations were received for the appointment of Councillor Harmer as Chairman and Councillor Mier for Vice-Chairman respectively of the Council for the Council Year 2022/23.

RESOLVED: That the names of Councillors Harmer and Mier be presented to the Annual Meeting of the Council for appointment respectively as Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council for the Council Year 2022/23.

CHAIRMAN

The meeting closed at 7:50pm

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