

A Town Council for Bexhill-on-Sea?

Tell us what you think.....



Following the outcome of the local elections in May 2019 and the overwhelming support for candidates that supported a Town Council for Bexhill-on-Sea, Rother District Council is undertaking a further Community Governance Review with a view to establishing a Town Council for Bexhill. The Council believes that local decisions should be made by local people at the lowest possible level of decision making.

This leaflet explains how this will affect you, including estimated costs and how you can respond to the consultation which runs between Monday 13 January and Friday 21 February 2020.

This will affect all Bexhill residents!

Every resident of Bexhill is invited to tell us what they think. We are also inviting responses from Bexhill businesses and local organisations.

What will a Town Council look like?

A new Town Council:

- 18 Town Councillors
- In 9 Wards across Bexhill
- 2 Councillors for each Ward
- Starts 1 April 2021
- First election in May 2021
- 44,200 residents in Bexhill

Bexhill would move from two to three tiers of local government in Bexhill-on-Sea. You would be represented by two Town Councillors, two Rother District Councillors and one East Sussex County Councillor for the ward in which you live. A map of the proposed parish wards is available on our website or at the Town Hall, Bexhill.

A Town Council would

- Elect a Mayor and Deputy Mayor
- Take over the civic traditions of the current Charter Trustees

The Bexhill Charter Trustees would cease to exist.

The services provided by a new Town Council could vary a lot and it would be a decision for the Town Council to decide. More information about what a Town Council could do and its powers and responsibilities is on our website at www.rother.gov.uk/communitygovernancereview

Rother District Council could transfer some of its services to a new Town Council. No decision has been made, but a transfer might include things like parks and open spaces and public conveniences. We cannot devolve some services, like Planning. Rother District Council would continue to provide many of the services currently provided.

A Town Council could support

- Some green spaces
- Sport and leisure
- Bins and benches
- Tourism and the local economy
- Support local youth services
- Give civic awards
- Run the public toilets

What will a Town Council cost?

All Parish and Town Councils need money to pay for services they provide. They are funded through a charge added to your Council Tax, known as a precept.

By way of an example, if Bexhill Town Council took over parks and open spaces and public conveniences this would cost around £910,000 a year. In addition, if the proposal went ahead, we estimate there would be additional costs of around £100,000 a year. The Town Council would have to employ a Town Clerk to manage the money, any staff, contracts and services, rent offices and meeting rooms and meet day to day operating costs. It is unlikely the Town Councillors will be paid an allowance but they would be reimbursed expenses for carrying out Town Council activities or duties – but that is a decision for the Town Council to make, once in place.

Assuming a total precept (cost) of **£1,010,000** this would mean a Council Tax charge for a band D property of **£62.34**. This would be offset by a reduction in the amount of Bexhill Special Expenses charged by Rother District Council to Bexhill residents. Overall we would expect the total Council Tax charged to Bexhill residents to increase by **£22.75** per annum based on a Band D property. The table to the right shows the amounts for each charging authority.

Charging Authority	Estimated 2017/18 Band D charge with a Town Council
East Sussex County Council	£1,314.36
Rother District Council	£169.32
Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner	£153.91
East Sussex Fire Authority	£88.40
Bexhill Special Expenses	£2.25
Bexhill Charter Trustees	N/A
Bexhill Town Council	£62.34
Total Charge at Band D	£1,790.58

For each Council Tax Band the expected annual increase in Council Tax for Bexhill residents is shown below:

Council Tax Band	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Estimated Annual Increase	£15.17	£17.69	£20.22	£22.75	£27.81	£32.86	£37.92	£45.50

What is the current arrangements for Bexhill?

There is no Town Council in Bexhill. Rother District Council provides local services to all Rother residents such as community safety, pest control and food hygiene inspections, waste and recycling collection, leisure and cultural services, planning, economic development, and much more.

The Council Tax you pay contributes to Rother District Council's services and to services provided by East Sussex County Council, East Sussex Fire and Rescue Authority and the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner. Outside Bexhill, the rest of Rother has parish councils. Residents pay parish councils for their services in a charge on their Council Tax.

The Council Tax bill for a Bexhill band D property is **£1,767.83** per household, each year. For Bexhill, the Council Tax is divided between public bodies like this:

East Sussex County Council	£1,314.36
Rother District Council	£169.32
Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner	£153.91
East Sussex Fire Authority	£88.40
Bexhill Special Expenses*	£41.05
Bexhill Charter Trustees**	£0.79
Total Charge at Band D	£1,767.83

* Bexhill Special Expenses

In Bexhill each resident pays the equivalent of £15 each year for Bexhill special expenses. It pays for specific services delivered in Bexhill by Rother District Council. The services include some of the costs for Bexhill parks, Christmas lighting, Bexhill Museum, bus shelters and Bexhill Town Forum.

** Bexhill Charter Trustees

Each year, Council Tax payers pay 79 pence to fund the Bexhill Charter Trustees. The trustees make sure Bexhill's civic traditions continue and appoint a mayor and deputy mayor annually. All Bexhill ward district councillors automatically become charter trustees while they are councillors. More information on the role of the Charter Trustees is at www.rother.gov.uk/communitygovernancereview

Consultation closes 4:30pm, Friday 21 February 2020

This consultation closes at 4:30pm on Friday 21 February 2020

This leaflet can be available in large print, Braille, audiotape or CD or in another language upon request. For all enquiries please contact democraticservices@rother.gov.uk

Tell us what you think:

Online at www.rother.gov.uk/communitygovernancereview

Or, if you are not on-line write to us at: Community Governance Review, Rother District Council, Town Hall, Bexhill, East Sussex, TN39 3JX.

Rother District Council will determine the outcome of this review and take account of your views.

Late submissions, duplicates and anonymous responses will be discounted.