

BEXHILL-ON-SEA PARISH COUNCIL

FIRST ANNUAL STATUTORY MEETING of BEXHILL-ON-SEA PARISH COUNCIL to be held in the **Council Chamber, Bexhill Town Hall** on **Wednesday 19th May 2021 at 6.30pm** when it is proposed to transact the following business.

Linda A Butcher FSLCC
Proper Officer and Interim Parish Council Clerk

Observers are kindly requested to watch the meeting live, via the YouTube broadcast and NOT attend the Town Hall in person, unless it is absolutely necessary, due to the limited space available in the Town Hall as a result of the COVID-19 restrictions. All observers who are present will be required to adhere to social distancing guidelines and wear a face covering at all times.

- 1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR 2021/22**
- 2. DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE OF CHAIRMAN**
- 3. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**
- 4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
- 6. DOCUMENTS TO BE ADOPTED BY COUNCIL** (as discussed at the Induction/Training events)
 - 6.1 Standing Orders
 - 6.2 Financial Regulations
 - 6.3 Code of Conduct
 - 6.4 Complaints Procedure
 - 6.5 Scheme of Delegation and Council/Committee structure
- 7. TO AGREE MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES and ELECT CHAIRMEN OF THOSE COMMITTEES**
- 8. OFFICER'S REPORT**
 - 8.1 Planning Applications – to formally request RDC to inform BPC of all applications within Bexhill
 - 8.2 Accommodation for a Parish Council office – Egerton Park and other options
 - 8.3 Provisional Calendar of Meetings for 2021/2022
- 9. GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE**

To consider whether the Council wishes to adopt this power. To criteria of elected councillors has been met, the interim parish clerk is qualified. This agenda is formal notification of this subject for discussion and adoption.

10. APPOINTMENT OF CLERK/RFO TO THE PARISH COUNCIL

- 10.1. To appoint a Panel [maximum 3] to undertake short-listing and conducting interviews in order to make a recommendation to Council.

11. TOWN COUNCIL STATUS

- 11.1 To consider taking on the title of Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council which can be done by formal resolution.
- 11.2 To consider the Chairman and Vice Chairman taking on the title of Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor if the Council decides to adopt the title Town.

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AGENDA REPORTS

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR 2021/22

The Chairman is elected each year at the Annual Statutory Meeting and needs to be proposed and seconded before a vote, usually by show of hands, can formalise the position.

2. DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE OF CHAIRMAN

This declaration has to be signed in the presence of the Proper Officer and the Interim Clerk will bring this document to the meeting.

3. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

The Vice-Chairman is also a one-year appointment and needs to be proposed and seconded before a vote, again usually by a show of hands, can formalise the position. However, the Vice Chairman does not sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

This item will appear on all Council, Committee and sub-committee meetings and, when Members give their apologies, they should give a reason. This need not be detailed but could be 'work commitments', 'personal reasons'. The procedure is that the Council accepts the reason for the non-attendance and this can be recorded in the minutes. If a Councillor fails to attend meetings for six-months without the Council, Committee or sub-committee accepting the apology then the Councillor ceases to be a Member of the Council.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Members have been given forms to complete showing pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests and this document will be lodge with Rother District Council and a copy kept by the Parish Clerk. However, it is then necessary to briefly declare interests in any item that appears on any agenda of the Council, Committee or sub-committee and this is then included within the minutes.

6. DOCUMENTS TO BE ADOPTED BY COUNCIL (as discussed at the Induction/Training events)

- 6.1 Standing Orders
- 6.2 Financial Regulations
- 6.3 Code of Conduct
- 6.4 Complaints Procedure
- 6.5 Scheme of Delegation and Council/Committee structure

It is essential that these documents are adopted as soon as possible so the Council can legally act and start to do business. As previously advised to all Members there are items that are shown in Standing Orders in red/yellow which need to be confirmed but the whole document, and Financial Regulations, Code of Conduct and Complaints Procedure are based on the NALC recommendations [National Association of Local Councils]. The

Scheme of Delegation and Council/Committee structure are also based on tried and tested methods for larger Local Councils.

However, it is worth bearing in mind that adopting these documents now so the work can start does not prevent the Council revisiting them later in the year to make amendments which better satisfy the needs of Bexhill-on-Sea Parish Council.

7. TO AGREE MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES and ELECT CHAIRMEN OF THOSE COMMITTEES

At the present time not all forms have been returned so it is not possible to give a breakdown of Councillors' choices of committees but hopefully these will be available for discussion and changed if appropriate during the Induction session on Tuesday evening so a final document can be presented to Council at the meeting on Wednesday.

8. OFFICER'S REPORT

8.1 Planning Applications – to formally request RDC to inform BPC of all applications within Bexhill

It has been assumed by the Interim Parish Clerk that Bexhill Parish Council will wish to make observations to RDC when planning applications fall within the area covered by the new Council. To this end the Parish Council needs to make a formal request in order to receive details of all applications. A formal vote needs to be taken on this item.

8.2 Accommodation for a Parish Council Office – Egerton Park building and other options

There has been much talk about the building in Egerton Park which previously housed the Cygnets Nursery and is currently under discussion between RDC and ESCC but it is understood nothing has yet been signed. It was suggested at an early stage that no major decisions should be taken by either Council until the Parish Council was in situ and could be included in any discussions. However, with regard to another lease that was advertised regarding the Tennis Club and part of Egerton Park, it was pointed out that this was, in fact, just an extension and not new policy. It is understood this is not the case with regard to the former Nursery building. It has been suggested that in order to secure the whole building that the Parish Council take on the building in total, using the first floor for its own office and then leasing the ground floor for the Cygnets Nursery. In order to progress this matter further, if that is the wish of the Parish Council, then a formal resolution needs to be voted on at the Council meeting. Council may feel it appropriate to form a small Working Party to take this matter further?

In the meantime, the Interim Parish Clerk has been in discussions with ESCC about other possible options, one in particular being office space within the Bexhill Library.

8.3 Provisional Calendar of Meetings for 2021/2022

A provisional Calendar of Meetings for 2021/2022 was previously sent out to all Councillors and following comments received it has become clear that it may be necessary to hold monthly Council meetings in the first instance although the adopted committee structure will be able to deal with many matters, some of which would be delegated and not need Council endorsement. A revised Calendar will be provided at the Induction.

9. GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

To consider whether the Council wishes to adopt this power. To criteria of elected councillors has been met, the interim parish clerk is qualified. This agenda is formal notification of this subject for discussion and adoption.

As explained in the Interim Parish Clerk's letter of 9th May 2021 without the GPC, the Council can only do things for which it has a specific power and although these are far-ranging there are certain things that are excluded, i.e. supporting businesses and with the recent COVID-19 implications perhaps the Parish Council would wish to have some involvement. The initial budget did, in fact, include an item under COVID-19 but at the present time, it could not use those funds.

10. APPOINTMENT OF CLERK/RFO TO THE PARISH COUNCIL

10.1. To appoint a Panel [maximum 3] to undertake short-listing and conducting interviews in order to make a recommendation to Council.

All Members have received a copy of the advertisement, job description and person specification for the post of Clerk and Section 151 Officer (RFO) and the closing date for receipt of applications is Monday 17th May 2021 with interviews taking place 1st/2nd June. However, we do need to three agree Councillors who would be prepared to firstly consider applications for short-listing and then be available on 1st/2nd June for the interview process [at this point in time it is not possible to say if we will need both days but it is essential that the same people are available for the whole process if two days are required]. Ideally these three people will have had experience of either being employees or employers but not necessarily qualified experience as we will be receiving guidance from East Sussex Association of Local Councils.

11. TOWN COUNCIL STATUS

11.1 To consider taking on the title of Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council which can be done by formal resolution.

It has been noted that previous literature referred to Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council and that seems to have been accepted but the law can only create a Parish Council so if the Council wishes to be known as Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council then it will need to make a resolution to that effect

11.2. To consider the Chairman and Vice Chairman taking on the title of Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor if the Council decides to adopt the title Town.

Likewise, the Council can then decide if the Chairman and Vice Chairman should be known as Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor.