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What happens next?

Rother District Council will take your views into account and determine the outcome of this review. The consultation responses will be published in full on our website when they are considered by the Community Governance Review Steering Group in the spring.



If you are unable to respond to the full consultation online you can reply by returning this slip to:

Rother District Council, Town Hall, Bexhill, TN39 3JX

Please select one:

I do want a town council for Bexhill []

I do not want a town council for Bexhill []

Name:

Address:

Post code:

Duplicate responses will not be counted.

Detach and return to us

2019-20 157

A town council for Bexhill?

Have your say at: rother.gov.uk/CommunityGovernanceReview

The consultation will run from
21 February to 3 April 2020



A town council for Bexhill?

We are carrying out another review into the system of local government for Bexhill, so we are seeking your views again.

We are asking you whether you want us to create a town council for Bexhill and what services it should provide.

Please take the time to tell us what you think. Your opinion on this important subject really matters.

What would change if we had a town council for Bexhill?

- A town council can listen to your say on Bexhill matters. It can provide local people with a strong voice. It can make decisions, guided by you, about local services. It can champion residents and local businesses. It can represent Bexhill's interests to other organisations.
- You may have heard of Neighbourhood Plans. A town council could produce its own. The plan would set out how Bexhill wants to evolve over time – for example, it could identify the location of new non-strategic housing sites, in line with targets for Bexhill. The process would start with getting your ideas about Bexhill's future. The plan would be drawn up after input from Rother and other organisations. After asking you whether you are happy with it, the plan would be put to an Inspector. When approved, Neighbourhood Plans are usually respected. After approval of the plan, developers will have to provide to Bexhill Town Council a greater proportion of the money they have to contribute towards local infrastructure. This can be spent on infrastructure such as community facilities and could amount to millions of pounds.
- A town council can encourage pride in Bexhill and build on the town's strong community spirit. By working with local firms, volunteers and community groups, it could deliver innovative services while providing good value for money.
- 18 Councillors would be elected to a Bexhill Town Council. The cost of setting up the council would be up to £100,000,

depending on the services provided. The first election would take place in May 2021. The town council would be responsible for electing the Mayor for Bexhill.

- A town council would bring Bexhill into line with the rest of Rother. There would be the county council, a district council and a town council.
- If everyone agrees, the other two councils could hand over some services to the town council, such as: parks, play areas, toilets, allotments and the museum. On top of that, the town council could take on other functions, also by agreement.
- A town council will mean an increase in your Council Tax bill. Councils for towns similar in size to Bexhill have budgets of about £1 million. If you are living in a Band D property this would involve you paying £59.87 a year in Council Tax to fund Bexhill Town Council
- Bexhill residents in such properties already pay £36.89 per year in 'Special Expenses' to Rother District Council to cover some of the services supplied within the town. If, as is likely, these services are transferred to the town council, **you will be paying an additional £22.11 a year – about 42p a week towards its operation.** If you receive the maximum Council Tax reduction, this would be an extra 8p a week. These figures will be less if you live in a smaller property.

What if there is no change?

- There would be no additional increase to Bexhill residents' Council Tax to pay for a town council.
- Bexhill households would continue to pay 87p a year to fund the charter trustees, who appoint the mayor.
- Rother District Council would continue to manage Bexhill Affairs. You will continue to pay towards Bexhill parks, bus shelters, Bexhill Museum and Bexhill Town Forum under the heading 'Bexhill Special Expenses' on your Council Tax bill.

Tell us what you think by 4:30pm on 3 April.

rother.gov.uk/CommunityGovernanceReview