

Playden DC Report October 2019

1. Older People's Day 2019

There is a huge range of events taking place across East Sussex throughout September and October for Older People's Day celebrations.

For more information about individual event visit

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/media/13503/opd-2019-events-programme-ebook.pdf>

2. Full Council Meeting 16th September, of note:

2.1 Bexhill Community Governance Review

It was proposed that a Steering Group comprising seven Members be appointed in accordance with political balance requirements to manage the process, but after consideration of the political make up, Council concluded that nine Members should be appointed (perhaps to dilute the number of Conservative Members...?!) and draft Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Steering Group were agreed. It was noted that all Members of the Council would have the opportunity to contribute to the review.

In May, Cabinet had sought advice from SALC, who had advised that as the Council had conducted a full CGR in 2016/2017, it would not be necessary to repeat this process again, and that a consultation would only be required. This was against RDC officer advice. Cabinet did not want to use the words 'Community Governance Review' as many who advocated a town council for Bexhill had publicly spoken that it would not be necessary. The Executive Director advised that in order to implement a CGR, it was essential that the Council conformed to the relevant local government legislation. Failure to conduct a thorough CGR could result in reputational damage and expose the process to the risk of legal challenge. But this advice was ignored and Cllr. Bayliss proposed that recommendation be reworded: the draft ToR for a Community Consultation (rather than a Community Governance Review) to consider the implementation of a new Parish Council covering the Bexhill-on-Sea area of Rother District Council be approved and updated accordingly. This was strongly objected to by Conservative Members and thus duly passed by the may Full Council Meeting.

At the Full Council meeting on 16th September, the Conservative Councillors had drawn up a motion to amend the wording to what it should be, so as to avoid misleading the public and ensure the process is legal. The good news was that Cllr. Bayliss clearly recognised her gross error and submitted her own motion to do the same. We welcomed this.

2.2 Climate Emergency

A motion to Council was submitted by the Rother Alliance - Councillors Mrs C.A. Bayliss, K.P. Dixon and D.B. Oliver - that Rother District Council will declare a 'climate emergency'. There were various proposals put forward on how to do this and one of the pledges is that RDC should become carbon neutral by 2030. We were all in favour of this motion which was unanimously passed, as it has been in RDC's Core Plan since 2014 to reduce carbon emissions (Chapter 13 - Sustainable Resource Management) and the Council has already been implementing ways to do so. This includes Cabinet approval in November 2018 that £46,200 be invested in the installation of solar panels and associated works on Amherst Road offices and Bexhill Museum, funded from Rother 2020 earmarked reserves (achieving a return of £9,041 per annum) and delegated authority was granted to the Executive Director to agree future expenditure as per the CLS Energy Report on solar

panel installations on Council owned assets where there is financial viability for energy efficiencies and increasing income, contributing to Rother 2020.

Please see link below to story in The Observer -

<https://www.bexhillobserver.net/news/rother-councillors-declare-climate-emergency-1-9077766>

3. RALC Workshop on speeding 26th September 2019

I attended the workshop, which highlighted everyone's concerns about speeding throughout Rother District.

Problems were defined, views, findings and ideas consolidated. We also considered barriers to change (such as Highways criteria of safety did not fit in with village residents criteria of enjoying their environment). Examples of successes at reducing speeding were considered, although it was clear that many who engage with Speedwatch did not wholly consider it to be successful in reducing speeding, but is to some extent in collating data.

What can we do now? What are the next steps? The organisers will come back with some key messages for the October RALC meeting.

4. Cabinet Meeting 30th September

Apologies - I will update you in next month's report as I have just returned from Manchester, attending the Tory Conference!

SAH