

Northern Rother District Councillors' Report October 2025.

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Dear Clerks,

Our engagement with our residents in helping with planning applications has brought to light some concerns with time scales. Hopefully things will improve under the leadership of the new Head of Planning.

We have had talks with our PCSO's and have given them our views about the new police initiatives of meeting the public. It was good that residents had a chance to speak to them regarding their concerns. We will give a verbal report at the PC meeting regarding any criminal activities within our Parishes.

HOUSING DEVELOPMENT EVENT.

This event will bring together town and parish councils, developers, housing associations, and key industry stakeholders to network and collaborate on shaping the future of new housing in our community.

Highlights will include:

- Housing target overview and Local Plan update
- Presentation of a local case study in Robertsbridge
- Updates and discussion on the newly adopted Housing Development Strategy
- Opportunities to connect and exchange ideas with colleagues across the sector

The event is due to open at 9.30am and close around 14.30 and a buffet lunch will be provided.

All parish and town councils in the district have also been invited to send a representative.

[Rother support as “One East Sussex” is sent to ministers](#)

A plan for people in Rother and the rest of East Sussex to get all their council services from a single unitary authority has received the backing of the district council.

The One East Sussex proposal – which has been sent to government ministers - is for a single council to provide all the services currently run by the five borough and district councils and by the county council. If government agrees to the plan, the new authority could start work in April 2028.

Rother councillors approved the plans for submission to central government at their full council and cabinet meetings held on 24 September.

Developed by all the councils in the county over six months, the “One East Sussex” plan includes detailed evidence which shows it would save £64 million over its first five years, compared to the current model, and save £25m each year in future.

The business case also shows that other options, such as splitting East Sussex and its services into two unitary councils, would be hugely more complicated and expensive. Setting up two unitary councils would cost more than £400 million, in contrast a saving of £20m that would come from the move to a single new council.

The One East Sussex proposal also sets out how it would be:

- simpler for residents because one council would provide all their services.
- built on solid foundations because existing councils already work closely together and with other partners.
- owned by everyone in East Sussex, with a commitment to transform and develop services in discussion with all the county’s communities.
- able to meet the government’s requirements for new unitary councils, including population size, building on existing district boundaries and service footprints and representing areas with a strong shared identity.

The move to a new single unitary council follows surveys and discussions with residents and partners who gave more than 14,000 views. In a county-wide survey

almost three in four (74%) said it was the sole proposal that should go to government.

The One East Sussex plan has been agreed for submission to government by the cabinets of Rother District Council, Eastbourne Borough Council, East Sussex County Council and Lewes District Council.

The government is expected to begin a public consultation on the proposal (and any other valid plans submitted) in November before a final decision in March 2026.

ROTHER District Council has been accredited as a SILVER CARBON LITERATE (CLO), highlighting the authority's commitment to cutting emissions and addressing climate change.

Carbon Literacy training is one of the projects the council is undertaking to help reduce its carbon footprint and become a net zero district by 2030.

To become Carbon Literate employees have undertaken Carbon Literacy learning covering climate change, carbon footprints, what staff can do to help, and why it's relevant to employees and local communities.

The council previously achieved Bronze CLO status last year, and now with 30 per cent of staff accredited as Carbon Literate, the authority has received the Silver award.

Cllr Kathryn Field, portfolio holder for environment, licensing and climate strategy at Rother District Council, said: "I am very proud we have been awarded Silver Carbon Literacy accreditation.

"Since we declared a climate emergency in 2019 and launched our new Climate Strategy last year, the council has taken a number of steps to reduce emissions

The authority is on course for 50 per cent of council staff to be Carbon Literacy trained by 2026, which will enable the organisation to become gold-certified.

To further encourage staff to make greener, more environmentally friendly choices, the council recently joined the green travel scheme Easit East Sussex.

The initiative offers staff a range of travel-related discounts to encourage more sustainable travel choices, helping to reduce traffic congestion and pollution while also offering employees cost savings.

Earlier this summer, the authority was also named the most improved district council in the country for its efforts to tackle climate change, following its assessment by Climate Emergency UK.

The council's latest Climate Action Scorecard rated Rother 9th out of 51 district councils with a score of 50 per cent. In 2023, the council was rated 50th out of 51 district councils with a score of 19 per cent.

More information on the council's work to tackle climate change can be found online at www.rother.gov.uk/climate-emergency.

Kind regards,

Cllr. Tony Biggs & Cllr. Tony Ganly

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Northern Rother

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