

Rother District Council monthly report – February 2026

In line with government policy, Rother District council can only raise their council tax by £5 or 3 %. At the Overview & Scrutiny meeting it was proposed that a band D property should rise from 210.65 to 216.95 an increase of 6.30. This will go before full cabinet .

Our PCSO Report we be a verbal one, we have been lucky so far in Northern Rother Parishes that crime in our area is quite low.

At the full council meeting in December the council vote through a **Nature Emergency Motion**

1. Nature is in long term decline and urgent action must be taken to reverse this. b. A thriving natural environment underpins a healthy, prosperous society. c. The nature crisis and the climate emergency are intrinsically linked and that the impacts of the climate crisis drive nature's decline, while restoring nature can help to tackle the climate crisis. d. Environmental protection is not incompatible with development, but is essential for lasting progress. e. Rother District Council's Local Plan Policies take account of the climate emergency, the biodiversity crisis and the Nature Recovery Strategy. This motion is extending these aims to cover all the Council's activities.
2. Continue to embed nature's recovery at the heart of all strategic plans, policy areas and decision-making processes.
3. Commit to tackling the climate and nature emergencies together and investing in nature-based solutions to climate change.
4. Develop and agree on an evidence-based strategy and action plan for nature's recovery and report through the Climate Change Steering Group on the progress made. This should be part of the commitment to Sussex Nature Recovery Strategy.
5. Set clear strategic goals for nature's recovery by 2030, for example, covering the following areas: a. Increasing space for wildlife and long-term maintenance and expansion of the Nature Recovery Network on our own land and through planning policy for new developments. b. Reducing pressure on wildlife.

TRANSFER OF ASSETS

Following our recent Business Case engagement, I wanted to provide an update ahead of the programme moving into the next stages.

*We are aiming to present all Business Case assessments and recommendations to RDC's member-led Panel in February to ascertain final Devolution approvals, prior to reporting to **Cabinet early March**, to get final approval to dispose the asset(s) to you. This will align with the decision by many councils to raise their precept for 2026/27.*

Nevertheless, it is important to note that transferring approved assets will be subject to the legal process. Currently, the aim is to complete all asset transfers in a timely and expeditious manner; however, you will appreciate that RDC will be working through a substantial number of assets earmarked to transfer, in sequence, and we cannot guarantee all asset transfers will be completed within 2026/27.

We are presently consulting with our internal legal team to review and streamline the process. To reiterate, all devolution disposals will be ‘transfer as seen’ transactions. This means that, whilst we continue to adopt an entirely transparent approach and endeavor to provide a comprehensive suite of information and documentation, the legal packs for your lawyers will be more akin to ‘auction packs’.

We will continue to keep you updated as this takes shape, but whilst RDC will work with you, it is not seeking to negotiate and will not respond to commercial property standard enquiries (CPSE’s) raised by your lawyers. Assets will be transferred in short form order, inviting your lawyers to work expeditiously with our legal team to avoid delay.

We will make every effort to get back to you with further updates in February and March, but in the meantime should you have any specific questions please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Kind regard etc.

Joe Powell

Head of Housing & Strategic Assets Dear Councillor,

Rother Draft Local Plan Consultation

I am writing to update you on the public consultation on the **Draft Rother Local Plan 2025–2042 – Development Strategy and Site Allocations** which has just been launched today. The consultation is now live on the Council’s website here: <https://www.rother.gov.uk/draftlocalplan2026>.

This is a significant milestone for the Council. As you are aware, central Government has set new housing targets, requiring councils nationwide to plan for significantly higher housing numbers than in previous years. For Rother, this means making some difficult decisions about where new development will go.

This “Regulation 18” consultation provides an opportunity for everyone to comment on the Draft Local Plan and draft site allocations. Additional site suggestions are also welcomed. Feedback from the public, statutory consultees, and the development sector will help shape the next version of the Plan, which will then be subject to a further public consultation (at “Regulation 19” stage), anticipated in late summer 2026. Following this process, a final version of the Local Plan will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for independent examination.

Public Consultation Details

- Opens: 26 January 2026
- Closes: 5:00 pm on 23 March 2026
- Consultation page: <https://www.rother.gov.uk/draftlocalplan2026>

Hard copies of the Draft Local Plan will be available at: **Bexhill Town Hall, Bexhill Library, Battle Library, Rye Library, Northiam Community Library and Wadhurst Library** during their opening hours, for residents unable to access the internet.

We will be holding a number of public exhibitions across the district during the consultation period. Once the times and locations of these are confirmed I will let you know, and the information will also be published on our website.

I will also be writing to all the Town and Parish clerks to let them know about the public consultation.

I hope this information is helpful, please contact me should you have any queries.

Kind regards,

Holly

Holly Harrison BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

Planning Policy Manager

Planning Policy and Placemaking Team

Kind Regards,

Cllr. Tony Biggs Cllr. Tony Ganly

Northern Rother

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