

## **NORTHERN ROTHER DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORT JUNE 2026**

We are waiting for our PCSO's reports which are delayed due to annual leave and shift patterns so we will have to give a verbal reports at the Parish meetings. With all the extreme hot weather we have had, people will have left windows and doors open, hopefully this will not have led to an influx of unwanted incidents.

This week **1-5 June is volunteer's week**, and we would like to say a big you to all the people who volunteer in our villages of Northern Rother. Without you a lot of organisations and clubs would cease to exist and that would to a great loss to residents who attend these meetings. For some it is the only contact they have with other people.

We were asked to present a small token of appreciation to some of these volunteers who help at Community Open Space events held at the village hall in Staplecross. It was a privilege to attend this event and witness the residents in attendance show their appreciation to the volunteers for all the work they do.

### **Government Consultation**

Today, the Government has launched a consultation on proposals to transfer parts of Lewes District in East Sussex into an expanded Brighton & Hove, as part of its local government reorganisation programme.

You will be aware that most councils across East Sussex have supported the One East Sussex proposal (a single unitary authority for the county) which we consider provides the strongest option for effective governance, service delivery and long-term financial sustainability.

While Ministers have recognised the "positive strengths" of this approach, they have expressed concerns regarding the current footprint of Brighton & Hove City Council (BHCC). Consequently, the Government is proposing that approximately 24,000 residents in Peacehaven, Telscombe, East Saltdean and Falmer would transfer to BHCC from 2028. This would require the disaggregation and reorganisation of services and staff. The remaining population of East Sussex (around 537,000 people) would form a new unitary authority.

The consultation will run until 15 June and seeks views on whether these proposals would strengthen local governance, service delivery and financial resilience.

The intention is to respond jointly with East Sussex councils supporting One East Sussex.

You can see the consultation here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/modified-proposals-for-local-government-reorganisation-in-east-sussex-and-brighton-and-hove>

## **Meditation Plus**

“Dear Cllrs,

I am writing to you, as a Neighbourhood Mediation Coordinator for Mediation Plus, to offer our support to your constituency by giving information regarding all the mediation support we can offer them. This could be in the shape of coming to do a talk or setting up at your/a 'clinic' and helping people face to face?

Please do let us know if this is something we can do?

Mediation Plus offers a FREE service to residents, covering East Sussex. The service started about 30 years ago and has since been providing a professional service in this field ever since. The fact that we are still here, surely is a testament to the successful work we do!

Our service is independent, confidential and voluntary. The free services we offer are Neighbourhood Mediation (for neighbours in conflict) and Intergenerational Mediation (when there are difficulties in communications between parents/carers and young people aged 12-18 approx.).

With any form of mediation- we do not make judgments about the situation or take sides. The aim of mediation is to provide a safe space for people to talk through issues in a positive way and for them to work towards solutions that are acceptable for everyone involved. Mediation will only work if all parties wish to engage.

With Neighbourhood Mediation we would support neighbours in conflict, starting with 1-2-1 support for each household and then, if appropriate, support them in having a conversation together to help them resolve their issues.

I look forward to your response,  
Thank you in advance,

Kind regards,

Ms Alison Cooper (she / her)

Neighbourhood Mediation Coordinator

Mediation Plus

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## **Motion on the National Planning Policy Framework**

The Council notes:

The recent Government consultation on proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which are intended to support the Government's growth and house building targets.

These reforms will limit local planning authorities' ability to set high environmental standards for new homes, preventing councils from setting policies that have higher standards than national building regulations, particularly in the areas of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and Net Zero Construction policy.

Council believes:

The proposed NPPF changes will be a step backwards and will downgrade recently established standards to support nature recovery and tackle climate change.

Government should not prevent councils from going further and faster in response to the Climate and Nature Emergency.

Building to higher standards has been shown to be technically, legally and financially viable.

New homes must be fit for the future. If 1.5m homes are to be built in England, these must be energy-efficient homes, which deliver lower energy bills for residents and which contribute to statutory, national Net Zero targets.

Sustainable, climate resilient homes are good for public health by addressing air quality, over-heating, damp and cold, energy efficiency (tackling fuel poverty) and supporting active lifestyles.

Measures to embed nature-friendly design features, such as "swift or bat Bricks" and sustainable drainage systems, stronger protections for habitats of high environmental value and integration of Local Nature Recovery Strategies into planning decisions, are welcome.

Local knowledge, local policy-making and local decision-making are essential to a robust and fair planning system. Council therefore:

A) Objects to the proposed NPPF changes regarding BNG and Net Zero Construction.

B) Calls on the Government to empower councils to protect and restore nature and to set ambitious energy and sustainability standards for new developments, through local plans processes.

C) Endorses the letter, coordinated by the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) and signed by over 60 local authorities, businesses and NGOs, on this issue.

D) Requests that the Leader write to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government on this matter.

**From May to September 2026, the terrace at the De La Warr Pavilion will come alive** with a vibrant programme of outdoor events celebrating music, movement, creativity and community. Outside On the Terrace brings together experiences for all most of which are free!

From live music and dance events to cultural celebrations, workshops and summer gatherings by the sea. Across the sunny months, visitors can enjoy exciting community-led festivals and family-friendly activities as well as Bexhill's Big Summer Sounds, all set against the iconic backdrop of the Pavilion and the Bexhill coastline. Most events are free to attend, making Outside On The Terrace the perfect affordable way to experience the best of the summer by the sea.

**Bexhill Beach Garden** is delighted to host the **Quatro Sax Quartet** on 7th June from 2pm to 4pm. The event is free to attend, and refreshments will be available to purchase. This performance forms part of the Bexhill Festival of Music, featuring a variety of events across the town throughout June and July.

### **Licenses to occupy public conveniences in Rye and Bexhill on Sea.**

Since 2025, Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council (BTC) and RTC have managed eight of the Council's public toilets, ensuring that they remained open during peak summer periods and holidays. At present, no formal legal agreement was in place, leaving both parties exposed to risk.

Legal licences have been drafted to formalise the arrangements and allow BTC and RTC to continue to operate and maintain the facilities for 12 months as an interim arrangement, pending devolution or commercial leasing. If neither occurred within that period, the licence could be renewed, rolled over, or ended. The facilities would continue to operate on a peppercorn rent, with BTC and RTC responsible for internal works and the Council retaining responsibility for structural repairs and maintenance. It was noted that whilst there were other public conveniences across the district that were closed and/or derelict, the Council has worked with those town councils that wished to keep certain toilets open.

If the Council did not agree the licences, operations would continue without a formal agreement, increasing risk if issues arose, and BTC and RTC would have no obligation to keep the facilities open. The only alternative was closure, which was not in the public interest, or direct operation by the Council, which had previously been found to be financially unviable.

It was considered that none of the Bexhill Special Expenses collected by Rother District Council (RDC) covered any of these public conveniences; should any other community assets within Bexhill and Rye where RDC had collected a special expense for 2026-27 transfer before the end of the financial year, the Council would reconcile

the spending on those assets and come back to Members to determine what would happen with the funding that had been collected.

Cabinet approved the licence agreements, supporting the continued availability of public conveniences in Bexhill and Rye.

Kind regards,

**Cllr. Tony Ganly & Cllr. Tony Biggs.**