

Annual Parish Conference 2025

RDC Budget

Income: Council tax, government grant, business rates and car parking.

Currently £5M in reserves

£694K from reserves

..... Fine loss £420K

Aborted capital schemes £900K

Overspend £250K

Reserves down to £2.7M by 31/03/26

Fair funding cuts

Business rate reset £600K loss 26/27; £1.8M over 12 years

Savings proposed to date £687,774

Grant proposed to date £493,050

Further savings needed

Update on key projects

Camber welcome centre opened 02/10/25

Blackfriars Battle: 200 new homes, 130 affordable, 46 affordable rent, 84 shared ownership

Rother wine triangle: wine trail across Sussex

Climate change: Rother was ranked 50 out of 51 in the past and is now ranked 9th.

Sidley Hub: is underway and due to open in 2026

Local Plan Milestones

2024 Consultation on RDC draft plan

Regulation 18 on site allocations: public consultation in summer 2026

Will not meet our allocation; currently 215 houses / year

Gypsy pitch sites: 18 extra required

Governance, Standards and Member Conduct

See slides

Audience was asked which members were clerks?

There are more disputes with Parish councils than with Town councils

How will these be dealt with by a unitary authority

Devolution & mayoral authority: communicating Rother's priorities

Areas that Mayor is responsible for:

- Transport and Infrastructure
- Skill and Employment
- Housing and Planning
- Economic Development and Regeneration
- Environment & net zero
- Health and Wellbeing; Public Sector Reform
- Public Safety

The audience broke into groups and each group was given one of the topics above to discuss how Rother should communicate with the mayor on the topic. Mu group had the Skill & Employment topic. We came up with things that were not really in our remit. During the general discussion afterwards we all came to the conclusion that we did not know what was actually meant by the topic heading!

Usual grips about infrastructure; not sure how the mayor will deal with this given that the government cannot achieve anything in this area.

RDC will collate all of the responses and sent out the details with a copy of the presentation slides.

P. Lamont

15/10/25