



TELSCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of an Extra-Ordinary meeting of **Telscombe Town Council** held on **Wednesday 20th August 2025** at 7.30pm in the Council Chamber at Telscombe Civic Centre.

Councillors Present:- Cllrs Gallagher, Lawrie, Ndeloa, O'Connor, Page, Robinson, Sharkey *Mayor*, and Watts *Deputy Mayor*

Also present: Stella Newman, Town Clerk & RFO (*minutes*)
18 members of the public

The Mayor, Cllr Sharkey, gave a brief announcement regarding building fire procedures, asked that mobile phones be turned off or onto silent and advised that public question time would be at the beginning of the meeting and was usually 15 minutes, but may be extended if required. She also advised that this is the only time that members of the public could speak during the meeting.

2484. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Clarkson due to work commitments, Cllr Judd due to a prior commitment, Cllr Williamson due to illness and these reasons for absence were accepted.

2485. TO RECEIVE MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN RELATION TO MATTERS ON THE AGENDA

None.

The meeting was adjourned at 7.35pm for public question time.

2486. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Resident 1 from East Saltdean asked how the local government re-organisation (LGR) will affect the local plan.

Councillor response - The Lewes District Council (LDC) plan will have legal weight even if our area is taken over by Brighton and Hove City Council (BHCC) as they do not have a plan cover this area so LDC's will stay in force. The same will apply if we stay within an East Sussex Unitary Authority and LDC's plan will stay in place until 2041.

Resident 2 from Telscombe advised she had worked with the Saltdean tennis club who had experienced problems with BHCC and it is now run by volunteers and asked what plans there are for sports areas and parks if the area goes within BHCC.

Councillor response - leisure services and green spaces are very important and cabinet at LDC are trying to protect them.

Another Councillor response - Wave Active are an off shoot of LDC and LDC have helped with the refurb of the Peacehaven Leisure Centre and want to ensure that services are maintained and that they put in place a legacy to protect public spaces. Leases will be transferred to a charity rather than a private company.

A Councillor advised that they knew how BHCC work due to their involvement in Saltdean Charity. They advised regarding the Peacehaven and Telscombe Council's Neighbourhood Plan and that 16 small spaces have been put up for protection.

Resident 3 advised they thought devolution meant smaller areas and BHCC only want us for numbers; the people of Telscombe are real people not numbers and deserve to be looked after as real people and they asked if the Council agreed.



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2486. Public Question Time (Contd)

Resident 4 advised they had lived in Central Avenue for 30 years and understood regarding modernization and Brighton is offering some things. However, what we have is working but what are we doing to modernize. The resident asked if LDC and East Sussex will unify or if BHCC will take over.

Councillor response - Unitary authorities will come into place and East Sussex want an East Sussex combined authority made up of all the local authorities. Regarding devolution, he advised that money would go to the new Mayoralty and that would be disseminated down for buses, transport, health etc and the unitary authorities will work in other areas. LDC's bin services are better and alternate weekly collections will be introduced in a few months to encourage use of the food waste system. Also, the LDC fleet of waste collection lorries are having their motors changed to electric which is evidence of the green approach LDC is taking. Finally, they advised that the old Co-op in Newhaven will be a new health hub containing 2 doctors' surgeries and Wave Active gym facilities, financed by LDC.

As there were still residents who wanted to ask questions, the Mayor agreed to extend the public question time session.

Resident 5 from East Saltdean said they had heard a lot about the plans that government want but where do the people get involved and how can residents have their say? Residents are being told what is happening, but the Government are elected by the public and should work for them, but cannot see that they are.

Councillor response - Work had been ongoing for several years regarding a Neighbourhood Plan which included public participation and had been advertised on the Council's website and put in the newsletter which is delivered to all households.

Another Councillor response - A representative from the Telscombe Residents Association (TRA) regularly attends our Council meetings and shares information with the group and that if an individual feels intimidated by attending a Council meeting, it is a useful meeting to go to. Also, Councillors' contact details are on the website and they can be approached directly.

Resident 6 advised that an item was raised at a Peacehaven meeting that BHCC were told by the government not to look west and they should stick to ceremonial boundaries and wanted to know if this was true.

Councillor response - This was not correct. A white paper was issued in December last year and initially BHCC were looking westwards and only announced in July that they were looking to the east.

Another Councillor response - all Councils had to give initial proposals by March and then Jim McMahon MP said about looking at ceremonial boundaries. He also added that BHCC did not contact LDC or ESCC to say that they were looking east and ask to discuss.

Resident 7 from East Saltdean advised that East Saltdean (ES) is never mentioned, they were disappointed with the amount of people at the meeting, that ES residents feel vulnerable and asked if ES would be a sacrificial lamb.

Councillor response - there are no plans for ES to change.

The resident then advised that Brighton and Hove buses cover Sussex not just Brighton and the Royal Sussex County Hospital is used by residents across Sussex.

Another Councillor gave a brief update on a previous plans regarding possible unification of Saltdean, advising LDC did not want to pay for a referendum so it did not progress. They explained that to alter ES would be a totally separate issue and would need to be referred to the Boundary Commission. Regarding buses, they advised that transport will come under the Mayoralty and BHCC will not be responsible for them.



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2486. Public Question Time (Contd)

There was brief mention of talk about the Tye going into a trust and it was noted that Telscombe Town Council own and manage the Tye and it was an absurd idea for it to go into a trust.

Resident 5 from East Saltdean queried the set up of LDC and Eastbourne Borough Council (EBC) as they are listed under Aspiration Homes on Companies House and why this information wasn't widely shared with the public.

They were advised that Aspiration Homes is a separate corporation to allow them to borrow money and that LDC is leading in social and council housing and had to set this up to facilitate it. Also it is not possible to share everything that a Council is doing with the public and that if they left their email address, a Councillor would respond to them in more detail.

The meeting resumed at 8.15pm.

2487. TO APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 16th JULY 2025

It was proposed by Cllr O'Connor seconded by Cllr Watts and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting on 16th July 2025 were a true record of the proceedings and were signed as correct by the Mayor, Cllr Sharkey.

2488. TO AGREE TELSCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE CONSULTATIONS BY LEWES DISTRICT COUNCIL AND BRIGHTON AND HOVE CITY COUNCIL REGARDING LOCAL GOVERNMENT RE-ORGANISATION AND TO CONSIDER WHETHER TO WRITE A LETTER TO THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT & ENGLISH DEVOLUTION EXPRESSING OUR CONCERNS AND OBJECTIONS AT BEING INCLUDED WITHIN BRIGHTON AND HOVE CITY COUNCIL'S PROPOSALS

The Town Clerk was thanked for drawing up a draft letter to be issued to the Minister of State for Local Government & English Devolution, Mr J McMahon OBE MP, which had been circulated to Councillors for comment; the content of which could also be used to respond to both LDC and BHCC's consultations.

Members of the public were asked for a show of hands regarding staying within an East Sussex unitary authority and 83.33% were in favour, 11.11% were against and 5.56% abstained.

There was discussion about the content of the letter, including a sentence advising residents had expressed a clear desire to remain under East Sussex governance which had been backed-up via the vote. It also gave details of joint working with Peacehaven Town Council on the Neighbourhood Plan and the 3 Towns Community bus shared with Telscombe, East Saltdean, Peacehaven and Newhaven. It was proposed by Cllr O'Connor, seconded by Cllr Lawrie and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the following changes be made to the letter, that the final draft be approved by a majority of Councillors via email and then signed and issued by the Town Clerk and that the content be used for the Town Clerk to respond to both the LDC and BHCC consultations:-

Third paragraph – add the word 'semi' so it reads 'Telscombe is a semi-rural coastal town'.

Fourth paragraph – add the word 'historical' so it reads 'Telscombe includes a rural historical village'.



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2488. **To agree Telscombe Town Council's response to the consultations by Lewes District Council and Brighton and Hove City Council regarding local government re-organisation and to consider whether to write a letter to the Minister of State for Local Government & English Devolution expressing our concerns and objections at being included within Brighton and Hove City Council's Proposals (Contd)**

The third from last paragraph – add more information about the Tye including its size, archaeological information and the fact it is in the South Downs National Park and leads from the Village to the sea.

Final paragraph – add the word 'steadfastly' so that it reads 'and to steadfastly affirm our continued position'.

Generally throughout the letter – ensure that East Saltdean is also mentioned where appropriate.

The Town Clerk was asked to publish the letter along with the minutes of the meeting on the Council's website.

8.30pm – 2 members of the public left the meeting.

2489. **URGENT MATTERS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR NOTING OR INCLUSION ON A FUTURE AGENDA**

There were no urgent matters.

The Mayor closed the meeting at 8.35 pm.

Signed, Mayor.....

Date of next Council meeting – 17th September 2025