14th January 2020

Council Budget 2020 – Response from Bexhill Heritage

Thank you for including Bexhill Heritage in this consultation.

We understand and appreciate the considerable challenges facing the Council.

We are grateful that the Council's consultation paper explains the issues clearly and sets out an imaginative strategy for the future.

We note that the Council is seeking opportunities to devolve services to other organisations. Although such a strategy is not without its risks, we feel that it has the potential to strengthen our community and to engage people who are willing and able to contribute to the development of an even more vibrant, attractive and caring town. Bexhill Heritage is ready to work with officers and members of the Council to explore options for our charity's greater involvement in the protection, promotion and more effective use of our town's heritage buildings and open spaces.

We are concerned, though, that the further development of housing and business in Bexhill may, in some cases, threaten our town's heritage assets. We support further residential and economic development but not at the expense of our heritage. New housing and business developments should be planned to incorporate heritage assets rather than to cast them aside. We are strongly of the view that such an approach will be of benefit to our community in the short, medium and long term by enhancing people's 'sense of place' and helping us all to understand our ancestors' legacy. Through such an understanding comes a predisposition to respect and improve both our built and our natural environments, and to strengthen our community. We are ready to work with officers with responsibility for economic development and planning to achieve imaginative solutions that recognise the critical importance of both development and heritage.

Yours faithfully,

Raymond Konyn, Chairman