

Meeting of
East Sussex County Council
on Wednesday, 24 September 2025
at 10.00 am

NOTE: As part of the County Council's drive to increase accessibility to its public meetings, this meeting will be broadcast live on its website and the record archived. The live broadcast is accessible at: <https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/your-council/videos-of-council-meetings/webcasts>



EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

To the Members of the County Council

You are summoned to attend a meeting of the East Sussex County Council to be held in the Council Chamber, at County Hall, Lewes, **on Wednesday, 24 September 2025 at 10.00 am** to transact the following business

1. **Minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2025** *(Pages 5 - 26)*
2. **Apologies for absence**
3. **Chairman's business**
4. **Questions from members of the public**
5. **Report of the Governance Committee** *(Pages 27 - 28)*
6. **Report of the Leader and Lead Member for Strategic Management and Economic Development** *(Pages 29 - 40)*
7. **Notice of Motion proposing a delay in the Mayor election to 2027** *(Pages 41 - 42)*

The Chairman has directed under Standing Order 36.9 (1) that the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Taylor shall stand referred to the County Council.

The Westminster Government has announced its intention to return to the Supplementary Vote (SV) system for mayoral elections, which compared to First Past The Post (FPTP) better reflects the preferences and values of residents particularly when electing a single powerful figure across a large constituency. The government has announced that mayoral elections will revert to the SV system as soon as they can get that change instituted, but this is likely to be too late for the 2026 elections. This would put Sussex among the disadvantaged counties that are in the fast track with our residents electing a mayor under an outdated and problematic electoral system.

When Sussex decided to join the priority programme there was no suggestion that there would be any democratic disadvantage from being at the front of the queue, (notwithstanding some of us were concerned about the haste and doubted that there was anything to gain).

It now appears that there will be distinct disadvantages as the process for Sussex is too hurried for the government to get the necessary statutory instruments properly in place. We should not have to implement a new mayoral authority under a poor and unrepresentative system. We therefore propose that the administration should work with West Sussex County Council and Brighton and Hove City Council to seek to delay the Mayoral election to the 2027 electoral cycle.

Advantages of delaying the Mayor election to 2027 are:

- It will coincide with the anticipated unitary elections for West and East Sussex, so the combined costs will be lower and there will be a higher turnout for both.
- It will be more equitable across the country for all coming mayor elections to have the same voting system.
- It is better for democracy as there will be more certainty for residents and political parties locally, and more time to communicate clarity about what the devolution

and government reorganisation mean for the local areas.

This council therefore requests the Leader:

1. to approach West Sussex County Council and Brighton and Hove City Council to open negotiations on a change to the schedule for implementing devolution in order to better reflect the preferences of residents in electing a Mayor; and
2. to work together with West Sussex County Council and Brighton and Hove City Council with a view to approaching the minister for local government to request to revise the timetable and/or withdraw from the priority programme and undertake the Devolution process according to a more appropriate timetable.

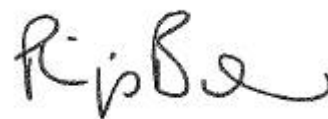
8. Questions from County Councillors

- a) Oral questions to Cabinet Members
- b) Written questions of which notice has been given pursuant to Standing Order 44

Note: There will be a period for collective prayers and quiet reflection in the Council Chamber from 9.30 am to 9.45 am. The prayers will be led by the Reverend Ben Brown – St Anne's Church, Lewes. The Chairman would be delighted to be joined by any members of staff and Councillors who wish to attend.

County Hall
St Anne's Crescent
LEWES
East Sussex BN7 1UE

PHILIP BAKER
Deputy Chief Executive



16 September 2025