

Report to: Lead Member for Resources and Climate Change

Date of meeting: 31 March 2025

By: Chief Operating Officer

Title: Former Sidley Depot Site, Bexhill – Alternative Occupation Arrangements

Purpose: To consider Rother District Council taking a lease of Sidley Depot, Bexhill for a period of 10 years to use as a Refuse Vehicle depot.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Lead Member for Resources and Climate Change is recommended to:

- 1) Approve Rother District Council taking a new lease of Sidley Depot, Bexhill for a period of 10 years to use as a Refuse Vehicle depot; and
 - 2) Delegate authority to the Chief Operating Officer to determine the detailed terms of the lease, to approve the final lease negotiations and the signing of the lease by East Sussex County Council and to take any other actions considered appropriate to give effect to the above recommendation.
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1 Background

1.1 On 17 October 2023, the Lead Member for Resources and Climate Change formally declared Sidley Depot, Bexhill (the Site) to be surplus to the requirements of the Council and gave approval to dispose of the Site in accordance with s123 of the Local Government Act 1972 ([Decision - Former Sidley Depot, Elva Way, Bexhill-on-Sea - Disposal of Freehold | East Sussex County Council](#)). The expectation was that the Site would be sold in return for a capital receipt.

1.2 The Site is shown as Appendix 1 to this report.

1.3 Rother District Council (RDC) is part of the East Sussex Joint Waste Partnership (the Partnership) with neighbouring authorities Hastings Borough Council (HBC) and Wealden District Council (WDC). The Partnership deliver waste collection and street cleansing services to local residents, which, in order to comply with Government legislation, will include a new weekly food waste collection service from 1 April 2026. The Partnership were unable to identify a site suitable for the parking, cleaning and maintenance of the additional refuse collection vehicles required within their own estates.

1.4 RDC approached East Sussex County Council (ESCC) with an offer to purchase the Site. RDC Cabinet gave approval for the purchase of the site on 4 March 2024 - [Decision - Purchase of former Sidley Highways Depot site, Elva Way, Bexhill and Food Waste Collections 'New Burdens' Capital Funding - Rother District Council](#). The expectation was that the Site would be fully operational by 1 April 2026.

1.5 As part of due diligence checks, a contamination survey was jointly commissioned. Contamination was identified on site, although the extent of the contamination has not yet been fully identified. Further investigation is required. Due to the identified contamination and a rise in costs associated with the project, RDC approached ESCC to request that an alternative occupation arrangement be put in place in the form of a lease. It is proposed that RDC rent the land from ESCC instead. RDC intend to use the money that would have been

paid for the Site, to go towards the costs of contaminations clearance and development works.

2 Supporting information

2.1 The lease is proposed to be for a term of 10 years. RDC will pay for the contamination clearance works, in addition to funding works necessary to enable the use of the site as a Refuse Vehicle Depot.

2.2 The draft lease terms are included as an Appendix to a later exempt item.

2.3 If agreed, RDC will sublet the Site to the Partnership's appointed waste contractor, Biffa. It will be used as a vehicle depot to support the delivery of the waste collections and street cleansing service, to include the parking, cleaning and maintenance of refuse collection vehicles. No storage or waste processing is planned or will be allowed onsite. All vehicles parking on the site will be empty of waste.

3 Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 By entering into the proposed lease arrangements with RDC, ESCC can help to support a public sector partner in the expansion of waste collection services in the local area. The proposed terms are considered to reflect the best consideration for the Site in accordance with s.123 of the Local Government Act 1972. The Lead Member for Resources and Climate Change is therefore recommended to approve the proposed new lease terms of the Former Sidley Depot Site, Bexhill.

3.2 To facilitate the timely completion of the lease documentation, the Lead Member is also recommended to delegate authority to the Chief Operating Officer to approve the final lease negotiations, the signing and completion by ESCC of the new lease and any related documentation and to take any other actions considered appropriate to give effect to the above recommendation.

ROS PARKER
Chief Operating Officer

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LOCAL MEMBER

Councillor Abul Azad – Bexhill North

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None