

## ROTHER ADOPT SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY



**The result of Labour Councillors' hard work pays off as Council adopt Duty.** At the first full Council meeting of the new term, Councillors voted to adopt the 'socio-economic duty', an unfulfilled part of the 2010 Equality Act which places a duty upon local authorities to consider those in financial hardship or from low income households when making decisions.

This duty has already been implemented by the Welsh and Scottish Governments, but the English Government has yet to implement this section of the Act. In the meantime, Councils like Rother are proactively choosing to voluntarily adopt the duty as a way of showing residents that their hardship will not be ignored. The Duty, first brought forward by Councillor Sam Coleman in September 2022 after passing the Council's Anti-Poverty Strategy, has now been implemented and will be a permanent consideration in Rother's decision making. In the words of Councillor Coleman (above), "This represents a real step change in how Rother deals with those in socio-economic hardship."

Also speaking at the inaugural meeting of Council was Councillor Christine Bayliss (right) who drew a link between the Socio-economic Duty and the work of the Anti-Poverty Strategy. Both speeches were met with applause from the public gallery.



### LABOUR'S NEW ROTHER CABINET POSITIONS



**Cllr Bayliss**  
Economic Development  
& Regeneration



**Cllr McCourt**  
Housing



**Cllr Coleman**  
Wellbeing, Equalities &  
Age-Friendly Communities

### UPDATED STATEMENT RE: NORTHEYE

The Rother Labour Group of Councillors continues to oppose the suggestion of using former prison site 'Northeye' as an asylum detention centre on humanitarian grounds and due to the lack of consultation with local people.

We continue to support the efforts by Rother District Council to intervene on this issue and trust that the Council will take any action it can, when it can to prevent this unsuitable scheme coming forward. As of writing this, a number of legal processes are ongoing which could have an effect on this proposal, should the Home Office continue to bring it forward.

We would appeal to residents across Rother to consider the human side of this and avoid giving air to the xenophobic and racist views that a small minority wish to spread. Rother has a long history of welcoming refugees and those seeking asylum, and this should not change.

To keep up to date on the latest with this issue, follow Rother District Council online or speak to your local councillors.

## LABOUR COUNCILLORS DECIDE TO STAY IN 'ROTHER ALLIANCE' COALITION

For the second term, Labour's Councillors join with Independents, the Greens, and the Liberal Democrats to re-form the "Rother Alliance", a coalition administration.



When the Rother Alliance first formed in 2019, critics said it wouldn't last until winter. Now into the second term of office following positive election results for all coalition partners, Councillors have shown that the Rother Alliance is a force to be reckoned with.

Far from the 'coalition of chaos' that often gets quoted in Conservative attack leaflets, the Rother Alliance thrives on the skills and passion of its different members. Is there disagreement? Yes, often. That is what makes the Rother Alliance an effective force for good on Rother. It was the US President Abraham Lincoln who famously formed his administration with a 'team of rivals' so that policies don't just sail through, they get checked and reviewed from different perspectives. The result is policy and action that is stronger, more effective and better for residents. From Labour's perspective, this second term presents great opportunities as the increased number of Labour Councillors means more of a say on the Alliance's priorities as well as three Cabinet Portfolios. Last term, with just two Councillors, Labour managed to deliver on every election pledge through this partnership working. Now they can do even more.



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