



Ramsgate Town Council

Meeting: Ramsgate Town Meeting
Date: 31st March 2021.
Item: The Council year 2020/21 in retrospect
Item no: N/A

The start of the year:

- Ramsgate Town Council started the year with an expectation that it would continue to progress with various projects and its work in making small but significant improvements within the Town. These are deep cleaning streets, picking up waste/fly tipping + undertaking small repairs.
- The public is noticing these activities and RTC is making more effort to point out to the public that it is doing these things, without being tedious with self praise.
- RTC's vehicles are distinctive, mostly electric, use recycled components and have a long life.
- In its own small way, RTC is not only talking the talk, but walking the walk on carbon reduction. It is a start on the path to a carbon free future.

- By February 2020, there was growing concern about a respiratory disease that struck heavily in China. No one quite knew what to do or what the immediate future might hold.
- By March 2020, the worst fears were realised and RTC like the rest of the country went into lockdown. We would now see how resilient the Council was, and how resilient Ramsgate + Thanet might be.

RTC was resilient:

- The administration diversified and the technician work force carried on, but in a covid secure way (which it still does).
 - Requests from the public were answered promptly, emails were replied to promptly, phone calls were answered promptly. Apart from face to face contact, everything continued as before. The Council was resilient, many other were not.
 - The work of the technicians was altered so that their health and well being was not compromised.
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Thanet was not resilient:

- It was soon found that the local economy, relying as it does on tourism and hospitality, was unable to support the incomes and lifestyles of many of those workers.
 - The Furlough scheme, Universal Credit and a rolling ban on domestic tenant evictions, mitigated against the worst aspects of poverty, but these safety nets were not comprehensive enough to avoid food poverty.
 - There was growing evidence that a sizable and growing section of the community in Ramsgate and Thanet, were unable to feed themselves properly.
 - The number of food banks grew, to meet this demand. Ramsgate + Thanet responded well with voluntary schemes.
 - The big problem was making sure that the food banks could keep going with adequate supplies of good quality, nutritious foodstuffs.
 - RTC extemporised a food bank supply or logistics scheme, using Radford House as a warehouse and Council vans as collection/delivery vehicles, driven by Council staff.
 - It worked well. Over 100 tonnes of food was collected, stored and delivered to Thanet's food banks over 5 months.
 - Only one other Council assisted (Westgate TC).
 - It cost RTC over £20k. KALC/NALC are still asking the Central Govt to contribute, with no result as yet.
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Afterwards

- RTC carried on with its improvement work in Ramsgate.
 - The redevelopment of Radford House continues and a planning application for its restructuring and change of use from a Fire station is in the TDC planning system.
 - Emergency work, such snow clearing, gritting/salting and picking up of waste etc continued.
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2021/2022

- RTC will continue with its focussed improvements to the public realm and infrastructure.
 - Radford House has reached the development stage. If the planning application is successful then, a schedule of works and a development plan will be drawn up and RTC go looking for the money to fund the redevelopment of Radford House.
 - RTC is working with KCC on funding for two possibly more EV charging points at Radford House.
 - RTC will be funding events to bring in tourists/visitors into Ramsgate as the covid restrictions fall away.
 - RTC will assist in the Welcome back scheme announced this week by Central Govt.
 - This will mean in practical terms, more flowers, a spring clean and a better looking Town for visitors and residents alike.
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