



Ramsgate Town Council

MINUTES

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

DATE: 26th March 2014.

VENUE: The Kings Theatre, Kings Place, King Street, Ramsgate.

PRESENT:

Chairman: Cllr K. Gibson, Mayor of Ramsgate.

Councillors in attendance: Campbell, Doyle, Dwyer, Everitt, Fenner, D.Green, Huxley, Moore, Nicholson, Poole and Shonk.

Town Clerk: Richard Styles.

Technical Officer: Dean Williams.

APOLOGIES

Cllrs: Alexandrou, Dark, E.Green, and Ovenden

AM19 *The Mayor opened the meeting and welcomed the public to the Annual Town Meeting. The Chairman briefly explained the format of the meeting as set out on the agenda, to the assembled members of the public and introduced the staff and members of the Town Council.*

AM20 **RECEIPT OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27th MARCH 2013.**

The Chairman proposed reception of the minutes.

Cllr Campbell seconded.

The meeting received the minutes.

The Chairman asked the meeting to submit any questions arising from the minutes at the public questions section later on in the meeting.

RESOLVED

AM21 **REPORT FROM THE MAYOR**

The Mayor gave a report of her activities during her year in office.

AM22 **REPORT FROM THE DEPUTY MAYOR**

The Deputy Mayor gave a report of her activities during her year in office

AM23 OUTLINE REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COUNCIL IN 2012/ 2012.

The Mayor introduced the Chairman of the four main Council Committees to run through their activities during the year:

Finance and General purposes Committee: Cllr Richard Nicholson.

Cllr Nicholson went through the presentation displayed on the screen and explained the function of each section, but the main message was that the Council precept was maintained for the third year running at £27.45 per annum for a band D property, yet Council services as described by the other Committee heads continued to function as effectively as before. This was achieved by continual vigilance on costs and good housekeeping on even the smallest items of expenditure.

Amenities: Cllr P.Campbell

Allotments: *98% occupation rates - smaller waiting lists - continual investment and improvements - management of TDC sites at Cecilia rd and Margate Rd. At certain sites there is no waiting list and it may be possible to be allocated an allotment plot on request.*

Decorative lights: *Continued investment and improvement-the 3 year improvement to the power supply is now complete and it is hoped to restore the entire length of the system in the next few years.*

Events: *Over 30 different events were supported in 2013, with grants and/or equipment and it is hoped to deliver even more innovative and popular events this year for residents and visitors alike.*

Town improvements: *The Town has acquired many of the former TDC palm trees and it is intended to display these and their accompanying floral displays in key sections of the Town. The Council had started to manage many of the Town Centre flower and shrub beds and these have been replanted with new larger shrubs and under planted with bulbs.*

Planning: Cllr C.Huxley

Heavy work load during the year, but key items that were scrutinised were the Slipways development in Ramsgate Harbour and the Manston Green Development.

The Town Plan is going forward and it is hoped to complete it sometime this year. RTC supported the initial efforts to start a Neighbourhood plan and has continued to support the Neighbourhood Plan steering group in its endeavours.

Town Promotion Committee: Cllr D.Green.

A new Committee that has oversight of the Visitors Information Centre (VIC), which is an independently volunteer run operation providing round the year information and advice service to visitors in Ramsgate. The Committee oversees the operation of the Town Website, which continues to prosper and engage with visitors and residents in providing a 24/7 service of news and information, regularly updated by the RTC Technical officer.

The Committee launched Active Ramsgate last year which has been a proven success in bringing in visitors to Ramsgate throughout the year with its innovative walking trails organised via visit Kent.

In 2014 it is hoped to build upon this success and to deliver other new initiatives such as a proposed Fish and Fishing festival week, highlighting the local fishing industry and fish gastronomy.

The Committee has also funded the activities of a local Town Promoter to engage with local small and medium sized businesses (SME) and support the functions of the newly formed Town Team.

AM24 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

The Chairman then gave the floor to the public to ask questions. They were answered straight away using current information:

- ❖ Mr Tim Garbutt :Why do we have to wait a year for the Minutes to be published?*
- ❖ Answer: This was not answered directly on the night, but following on from current practice a draft version will be published on the Town website in future.*

- ❖ Ms Janet Fielding: Can we have a section on the Town Website giving details of the local residents association?*
- ❖ Answer: we are working on it right now.*

- ❖ Ms Janet Fielding: What is the future for the Commercial port and Royal harbour?*
- ❖ Answer: Cllr Campbell replied and pointed out that this is a TDC matter, but he believes among other initiatives there is a possible scheme for integrated repair for the larger yachts that visit the port but cannot not receive hull maintenance in Ramsgate at present.*

- ❖ Ms Leslie Smith: On visits to France have you compared the cleanliness of their streets with those of Ramsgate?*
- ❖ Answer: Cllr D.Green said the type of waste mentioned came from seagull proof bags which were being misused by residents.TDC are considering what options there are on enforcement which is an expensive business but may be necessary if residents will not heed the requests to act correctly.*

- ❖ Mr Neville Besant: Could you explain some of the terms on the budget and what improvements can Ramsgate expect this year?*
- ❖ Answer: The various items in the budget were explained to Mr Besant and the meeting and Cllr Campbell said that a programme of improvements delivered by TDC, but negotiated by RTC members, will be announced ON April 10th.*

- ❖ *Mrs Janet Woods: What progress is being made on the Pleasurama site?*
- ❖ *Answer: Cllr Everitt said that TDC had taken legal advice and was in the process of recovering control of the site from the holder of the 3 leases. This would be a long process, that will require patience and perseverance because of the complicated nature of the matter.*

- ❖ *Mrs Janet Woods: The Pleasurama site was referred to as a public amenity site in past local plans why was this changed to housing?*
- ❖ *Answer: Cllr D.Green said that TDC is in the process of producing a draft local development plan. They will consider various proposals for the Pleasurama site, but Govt regulations require that they(TDC) offer good reasons why a site should not be developed for housing if a proposal is made by a developer.*

- ❖ *Janet Fielding: In the former motor museum site documents, why was a 'longstop' not included?*
- ❖ *Answer: Cllr Campbell said that the TDC Scrutiny Cttee was looking in to this matter and was enquiring why a longstop was not included in the documents or who may have authorised its removal.*

- ❖ *Mr Roddy Burns: What has happened to the Wetherspoon's proposal for the Royal Victoria Pavilion?*
- ❖ *Answer: Cllr Everitt said that a report is due to go to the TDC cabinet on 3rd April, which will give independent advice on the most viable proposal acceptable to both TDC and the current leaseholder in delivering a restored fully occupied pavilion in the future. The Mayor pointed out that there was an alternative to the Wetherspoons proposal and in reply Cllr Everitt said that the Independent advice would evaluate both options in terms of viability.*

- ❖ *Ms Pat Scott: Will you lobby against the transport of livestock through Ramsgate Harbour?*
- ❖ *Answer: Cllr Campbell replied that it was a matter of concern that TDC having stopped the trade on grounds of animal welfare, for which the operator had been convicted, resulted in a large claim for loss of business from this same operator.*

- ❖ *Mr Jocelyn McCarthy: Is there to be any action on improving the regular weekly market in Ramsgate?*
- ❖ *Answer: There is a proposal on improving the market in Ramsgate and the details will be announced by TDC on 10th April.*

- ❖ *Mr Jocelyn McCarthy: What happened to the heritage lottery money awarded to Thanet for improved heritage street lighting?*
- ❖ *Answer: The Dalby square project in Margate was given a higher priority and the money was spent there; however, the Ramsgate conservation areas*

will be next on the priority list, if more heritage lottery money becomes available.

- ❖ Ms Maxine Morgan: Are there any plans to improve the look of Harbour Street for visitors?*
- ❖ Answer: RTC are encouraging the Town team to derive a scheme of small improvements to Harbour street to improve its attractiveness as a thoroughfare for visitors to the High street.*

AM25 PRESENTATIONS FROM COMMUNITY GROUPS

Neighbourhood Planning: *Cllr Campbell gave an explanation of the process by which a Neighbourhood Plan is derived and adopted as policy within a Local Development Plan. He went on to describe the work that had been done so far towards a plan or plans for Ramsgate.*

He also invited interested residents who wish to join the Neighbourhood Planning steering group to contact the Assistant Town Clerk, Eileen Richford, at the Custom House, Ramsgate on 01843 598751.

Montefiore Woodland: *Cllr M.Fenner announced that RTC had been successful in applying for Village Green status for the land at Montefiore woodland. This means that the land is now protected from development for the foreseeable future.*

After the presentations the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.45pm.