



## **Ramsgate Town Council**

### **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES**

Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12, PART III (S9(1))

**Venue:** Radford House, 18–20 Effingham Street, Ramsgate

**Date:** Wednesday 11th March 2026 at 7pm

**Membership:** All Local Government Electors residing within the Parish of Ramsgate

**Present:** Cllrs Albon (Chair)

Moore

Hudson

Ara

Austin

Wing

Nixey

Green

Ovenden

Makinson

Crittenden

Cllr Shonk (Town & County Councillor)

Chief Inspector Ian Swallow (Kent Police)

Gareth Brett (Probe Security) & colleague

Laura Fidler (Town Clerk & RFO)

Dean Williams (Communications & Marketing Officer)

Two members of the public

#### **AM70 INTRODUCTION**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Annual Town Meeting and introductions were made.

#### **AM71 MINUTES OF THE TOWN MEETING**

The Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 2nd April 2025 (Minutes AM64–AM69) were approved.

## **AM72 REPORT FROM RAMSGATE TOWN COUNCIL**

A report was received on the Town Council's activities during 2025/2026 from the Chair, and more information was available via a printed "Annual Report for 2025/2026".

The Chair highlighted significant investment in community groups, youth services, mental-health support and local events; continued environmental progress including a 91% carbon-footprint reduction since 2020 and the fruit-tree and repair initiatives; visible improvements across the town centre; progress on the Custom House and Radford House; strengthening responses to anti-social behaviour; a growing tourism and events programme; delivery of major civic and heritage events and confirmation of strong financial management.

The Chair also encouraged residents to report potholes and highways issues to KCC; there are a lot of problems and KCC will act problems are reported to them.

Thanks were also given to the Council's staff.

## **AM73 GUEST PRESENTATIONS**

### **(a) Ramsgate Pride in Place Programme**

A written presentation was received providing an update on The Ramsgate Pride in Place Programme, outlining ongoing regeneration work and partnership activity taking place across the town. Key themes included: The programs role in long-term regeneration planning. Cross-agency collaboration between local partners and the Council. The importance of aligning community priorities with ongoing investment.

### **(b) Update from Chief Inspector Ian Swallow (Kent Police)**

Chief Inspector Swallow delivered a detailed update on policing and community safety in Ramsgate.

#### Key Points Presented

- **Continued focus on tackling anti-social behaviour, criminal violence, and criminal damage.**
- Use of a harm-intervention tools to identify where communities are most affected. The town centre remains a hotspot, though the overall harm index has fallen.
- Explanation of a recent significant damage incident which was not linked to regular drinkers, but to an individual under the influence of substances. CCTV response was fast: 13 minutes from spotting to police arrival, 15 minutes to custody.

- Confirmation that most serious violent incidents are isolated, not carried out by regular offenders.
- Ongoing work with the Violence Reduction Unit, youth services, and schools to address youth-related behaviour and break cycles of violence.
- Partnership work on tackling street homelessness, involving TDC, RISE and other agencies.
- Update on the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) legal challenge: a new, narrower proposal has been submitted for legal consideration.

#### Questions & Answers

Q1: “Who is the beat officer for Nethercourt Ward?”

A: Residents were encouraged to sign up to My Community Voice, where beat officers share their contact details, locations, and priorities.

Q2: Concerns were raised about street homelessness and the return of problems when the winter shelter closes.

A: This is addressed by the Community Safety Partnership, bringing together agencies such as TDC and RISE. Many cases relate to complex needs and require careful multi-agency intervention rather than solely policing.

Q3: A group of intimidating young teenagers (13–14 yrs) is regularly present between 4–6pm.

A: Work is taking place with schools, youth services and diversionary schemes. Some individuals come from troubled backgrounds. Police actions must be proportionate when no offences are committed.

Q4: Could local boxing gyms be used to divert and engage these young people?

A: Chief Inspector Swallow agreed that diversionary activities like this are beneficial.

Q5: What is the police position on the PSPO?

A: Police strongly support reintroducing it. Another legal statement has been submitted to TDC Legal, suggesting a streamlined version focusing on core enforceable elements.

#### **(c) Probe Security – Ramsgate Town Centre Patrols**

A presentation was received from Gareth Brett, Operations Manager, accompanied by Security Officer Jo, providing an update on the town centre security pilot.

#### Key Points Presented

- After three months, business feedback has been very positive, and there is a general feeling of improvement in the town centre.
- Officers patrol parks when the town centre is quiet; dog walkers report feeling reassured.

- Probe encourages more businesses to use ShopWatch radios.
- Officers focus on visibility and approachability, greeting people to improve community confidence.
- Patrol boundaries include the main town centre, reaching as far as Wetherspoons and Boundary Park where possible.

#### Questions & Answers

Q1: “What is the definition of the town centre for patrol purposes?”

A: Patrols typically cover the central area, extending to Wetherspoons and sometimes towards Boundary Park depending on need.

Q2: Residents praised officers’ friendliness and asked whether they could be stationed outside schools.

A: Officers are mindful not to create a “fear factor”, however, this is something that the Council could prioritise.

Q3: Concerns about cyclists riding through pedestrian areas.

A: Probe officers do ask cyclists to dismount, though situations can escalate and must be handled sensitively. Signage is acknowledged as poor. Police added that enforcement requires witnessing a *moving* vehicle to meet the legal definition of a nuisance.

Q4: Problems with e-bikes in pedestrian zones.

A: Officers agree this is an issue and intervene where appropriate.

Q5: Could Probe be delegated powers by Kent Police?

A: This is technically possible but would require legally watertight arrangements.

Q6: Overnight parking in the town centre.

A: Residents were advised to report these to TDC or raise them with town councillors for escalation to the appropriate officer (Penny Button).

#### **AM74 OPEN FORUM**

Q1: When a new bus pass is ordered at Margate’s Gateway it can take over three weeks for the pass to be received. A receipt can be issued by the Gateway that can be used as a temporary pass on the buses, however not all bus drivers accept this receipt.

A: County Cllr Shonk will raise this with KCC, as will Ramsgate Town Council, to ensure that there is an interim plan, understood by all, for how residents can access the bus service whilst waiting for a bus pass.

#### **AM75 CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 8.15pm.