



## **RAMSGATE TOWN COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of Active Ramsgate Working Group**

**Venue:** The Council Chamber, The Custom House, Harbour Parade, Ramsgate

**Date:** Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> August 2024 at 10am.

**Present:** Councillors: Albon (joined during item 3), Crittenden (Chair), Huxley, Ovenden and Shonk.

Also in attendance:

Mr S Davis; Active Ramsgate Project Manager.

Mrs R Smith; Town Centre and Tourism Manager.

Mrs J Edwards; Senior Tourism Officer, Visit Thanet, Thanet District Council.

Ms L Collingwood; Beach and Coast Manager, Thanet District Council.

Ms K Fahy, Junior Surveyor, Thanet District Council.

Mr D Williams; Marketing and Communications Officer. (Minutes)

### **APOLOGIES**

No apologies were received from the working group.

### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

### **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Active Ramsgate Working Group meeting held on Wednesday 19 June 2024 were received and noted.

**RESOLUTION:** The Minutes were noted as accurate.

### **REVIEW PREVIOUS MINUTES FOR ACTIONS**

The working group reviewed the actions from the previous minutes.

- Mrs J Edwards detailed that the Community Safety Team were responsible for the move of the Beach Hut the last time it was moved, and it is best to leave it where it is.
- Mrs J Edwards had invited Ms L Collingwood to the meeting, regarding the impact of the new registration pilot on licencing for small operators.
- The last action 'Mr S Davis and Mrs R Smith to work on a short document detailing the discussions surrounding the new registration form and licencing for operators, which will be sent to Councillor Albon, so he is aware as a Cabinet member.' will be carried forward.

At this point the meeting welcomed Ms L Collingwood and Ms K Fahy to the working group to give clarity on the criteria relating to licences for small operators offering activities.

*Councillor Albon also joined the meeting.*

Mr S Davis also recapped the discussion from the previous meeting that has brought about the question regarding licences.

- The minimum fee for obtaining a licence for an activity is £1,000.00, this applies for all operators.
- Licences are required if:
  - The business pays business rates.
  - The activity is on TDC land (and unusually the beaches in Thanet are TDC land, rather than Crown land).
  - The activity is paid for by the users (customers).
  - Charities would still be charged but would receive a discount.
- It was also noted that TDC have a duty of care to ensure that everybody is safe when using the beaches.

The meeting discussed a number of questions and concerns:

- Working group members were concerned that small / start-up operators are going to find the licence fee prohibitive and could prevent valuable wellbeing and other activities being available for residents and visitors.
- If an operator was wanting to provide the same activity in more than one location within Thanet, would they need a licence for each location. (KF)
- How long has the licence requirement been in place as described above. (LC)
- Rather than lots of small organisations each applying for licences, would it be possible for RTC to obtain a licence from TDC that would cover specific area(s) and a range of activities from more than one provider. RTC would then be responsible for checking to ensure that each provider had the appropriate documentation (eg, Public Liability Insurance and risk assessments). (KF)
  - *Action carried forward* - Mr S Davis and Mrs R Smith to create a short document on what would be required from RTC in this situation and pass to Councillor Albon as TDC Cabinet Member.
- Is there any grant funding available from TDC to help small providers with the cost of providing wellbeing activities for residents. Ms L Collingwood and Ms K Fahy's colleague, Natasha, has been working on wellbeing and health funding. (LC and KF)
- Discussions about the cost of licences and how to alleviate the difficulties put small providers under included questions and suggestions such as a staged licence fee, such as free for the first year and then rising to full (minimum) cost after 1-2 years. It was acknowledged that any such changes would potentially lead to a loss of income for TDC, although at present that income is not being received as it would appear that small activity providers are not obtaining licences.
  - Fees for licences are set as part of TDCs annual budget setting and any changes will need to be approved by Cabinet. This will need to go through Councillor Duckworth as Cabinet Member covering Estates to be discussed as part of the 2025/26 annual budget setting. (HC)
- The Walpole Bay pilot (of registering activities providers) is coming to an end and the meeting requested a report on the outcomes when available. (LC)

*Actions are indicated by initials in brackets – see below for summary of actions.*

### **PROJECT UPDATE**

The working group received an update from Mr S Davis, Active Ramsgate Project Manager. It was noted that:

- The Beach Hut is for Community use only and it was confirmed that they would need their own Public Liability Insurance and risk assessments for each activity using the Beach Hut.

- It was confirmed that the Beach Hut cannot be rented out and if there was no use for it or a community group was not found to take it over, it would be removed. Ms L Collingwood would find out if that was the case and report back.
- Mr S Davis, Mrs R Smith and Councillor Crittenden to review the use of the Beach hut by RTC and bring back to the next Active Ramsgate Working Group Meeting, ready for next year.

*Councillor Albon, Ms K Fahy and Ms L Collingwood left the meeting.*

- Mr S Davis updated on the leaflets that had been produced and 65,000 copies are now with PEAR Communications and 15,000 copies in the Ramsgate VIC, ready to be distributed hyperlocally.
- Mr S Davis' next focus is to update the digital estate for Active Ramsgate within the next quarter, zoning in on the audience leaflets and what needs to be worked on in the future.
- Mr S Davis is focusing on specific ideas to streamline for the coming year, including events around bigger themes such as cycling and walking.
- Mr S Davis will be working with Explore Kent to update the leaflets, as it was initially a joint venture.
- Mrs J Edwards stated that Visit Thanet is part of the National Coastal Tourism Academy, which runs competitions in the month you choose. Mr S Davis would liaise with Mr J Edwards when it was necessary.
- Mr S Davis stated that work can begin to undertake Strand 2 of the survey.

*Councillor Albon rejoined the meeting.*

#### **SUMMARY OF ACTIONS:**

##### **- LICENCE**

- **Ms K Fahy to find out the answer to the question 'would a licence be needed for each location around Thanet or for the activity as a whole.' and report back to the group.**
- **Ms L Collingwood to find out how long the fees and charges have been in place at TDC for the licence.**
- **Mr S Davis and Mrs R Smith to work on a short document detailing the discussions surrounding the new registration form and licencing for operators, which will be sent to Councillor Albon, so he is aware as a Cabinet member.**
- **Ms L Collingwood to ask Natasha if grant funding is available for health and wellbeing activities.**
- **Councillor Crittenden, as chair of Town Promotion, is to write to the Cabinet member, Councillor Duckworth, to request the fees and charges for licences are reviewed, in light of the impact on small and start up operators.**
- **Ms L Collingwood to report back on the Walpole Bay Pilot (for registration of wellbeing activity providers).**

##### **- BEACH HUT**

- **Ms L Collingwood to find out if the Beach Hut would be removed if not used.**

##### **- GENERAL**

- **Mr S Davis to focus on the digital estate, bookend events, leaflet updating with Explore Kent and undertaking Strand 2 of the Marketing Research going forward.**
- **Mr S Davis and Mrs J Edwards to work on a competition, when required as part of the National Coastal Tourism Academy.**

**DATES AND TIME OF NEXT MEETINGS**

The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2024 at 10am.

The Chair closed the meeting at 11:50am.