

Response to Ramsgate Market Petition

Meeting	30th March 2023
Report Author	Mark Peace Interim Director of Property
Portfolio Holder	Cllr David Saunders
Status	For Information
Classification:	Unrestricted
Ward:	All Ramsgate wards

Executive Summary:

The report outlines a petition that was received by the Council and The petition requests the reopening of the weekly market in Ramsgate town centre, and the proposed response notes that the market saw a steady decline in revenue since 2010 and ceased operation in October 2020. The Council has started the process to relaunch the market by talking to potential operators prior to inviting Expressions of Interest.

Recommendation(s):

The report is for information only.

Corporate Implications

Financial and Value for Money

Response to petition has no financial implications.

Legal

Response to petition has no legal implications.

Risk Management

Response to petition poses no considerable risk to the council.

Corporate

Petitions are an important way of the public engaging with the Council on matters of importance to them. We have responded positively to the petition and engaged with the public, Ramsgate Town Council, and Kent County Council to begin the process of reinstating the market with the future benefit of bringing increased pedestrians and shoppers into Ramsgate Town Centre.

Equality Act 2010 & Public Sector Equality Duty

Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to the aims of the Duty at the time the decision is taken. The aims of the Duty are: (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, and (iii) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Protected characteristics: age, sex, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief and pregnancy & maternity. Only aim (i) of the Duty applies to Marriage & civil partnership.

This report relates to the following aim of the equality duty: -

- To advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- To foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Corporate Priorities

This report relates to the following corporate priorities: -

- Communities and Community engagement.

1.0 Introduction and Background

1.1 The Council has received a petition with 438 valid signatures relating to the reopening of the Ramsgate outdoor Market. An official response should be provided for an ordinary petition that is signed by 50 or more petitioners, but fewer than 1500. The senior Officer of the Council, after consulting with the relevant portfolio holder, should respond to the petition, and a report on the petition noting what action has been taken should be referred to the next meeting of Cabinet or Council for their information.

1.2 This response ensures that the petitioners are informed of the Council's actions and that the Council is held accountable for addressing the concerns raised in the petition. It also provides transparency and accountability to the public, which is an important aspect of democratic governance.

2.0 The Current Situation

2.1 The Petition Prayer

"We the undersigned believe that Ramsgate in general and Ramsgate town centre in particular will benefit greatly by the re-introduction of our weekly market in the high street. We believe the market to be vital for the recovery of the local economy and was a much valued meeting place for friends and family. We strongly urge RTC/TDC to bring the market back as soon as possible. Please sign below if you agree with the opinion expressed above."

2.2 The Response

2.2.1 The formal response to the petition that was sent to the petitioner is attached at Annex 1 to the report.

2.3 The Current Position

TDC have met with Ramsgate Town Council and kept them updated on a regular basis on progress towards relaunching the market. In mid February, TDC's Case Officer met with Councillor Steve Albon on site to discuss how the market could work going forward and potential stall locations and layout.

Regarding consents, we have established that an updated / amended planning consent is not required. However, an amendment to the Traffic Regulation Order issued by KCC which governs access to the High Street, King Street and Queen Street may be required, specifically in relation to access times.

We are currently in the process of drafting a specification for discussion and agreement with our Procurement team with a view to inviting Expressions of Interest (Eoi).

Contact Officer: Andrew Dockerill, Interim Estates Surveyor:
Reporting to: Mark Peace, Interim Director of Property

Corporate Consultation

Finance: *Chris Blundell; Acting Deputy Chief Executive*

Legal: *Sameera Khan; Interim Head of Legal and Monitoring Officer*