



## **MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR'S REPORT AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**November 2023**

I am certain that the news of £20 million endowment-style funding over the next ten years as part of central government's Long-Term Plan for Towns has now sunk in; it will present an opportunity to bring almost unimagined investment and renewal to the town. I'm delighted that the focus will be on the priorities of the local community, and I look forward to seeing how the Town Board takes shape and to RTC, in partnership with IWC playing a crucial part in getting it moving and supporting its work. We are still awaiting the final guidance about how this will be done, but we'll need to be very focused on this over the next few months to be ready to begin in April 2024. There will be no time to lose if the town is to fully benefit from this investment.

Meanwhile, staff and councillors have continued to work hard to develop and realise a range of projects, and to support other organisations to do so. In particular, the staff team has worked incredibly hard to support residents and to continue moving forward on many fronts, working with partners wherever possible.

The key event to impact the town over the past few months was the flooding experienced associated with Storm Babet on October 24/25<sup>th</sup>. Many properties and businesses were affected by this, both at Monktonmead Brook/Simeon Recreation Ground and surrounding streets and elsewhere in the town, including several properties in Binstead. This has been an extremely traumatic time for the residents and business owners involved and the work in clearing up is far from over. The next step for the Town Council is to review our procedures and to ensure that we are ready for similar events, should they occur. It will be important for us to work closely with other agencies and stakeholders, in particular the Isle of Wight Council, to ensure that we communicate quickly and well, are aware of our responsibilities and avoid duplicating services and offers. Staff and councillors – particularly those whose wards are affected, worked hard to support residents, and continue to do so. My thanks go to them, and also to staff at Aspire/Living Well, Citizens Advice Bureau and many other organisations and businesses for stepping in to offer support.

On a brighter note, I would like to congratulate the Ryde Skatepark Users Group, John Cattle's Skate Club and Wight Trash for completing the work on the skate park, despite rain and floods. This project, match funded by RTC, has allowed a well-planned and spacious 'meanwhile use' for the skate park and has received nothing but rave reviews from users. To find out more, visit <https://onthewight.com/ryde-skateparks-remarkable-transformation-community-spirit-fuels-concrete-makeover/?fbclid=IwAR2YgBK-zbmQbjob96BhCDCj3vBkJV/u9XmOSk6MIQuf0BnqtsDEedgKHITo>

I've continued to meet with key stakeholders, all of whom are very positive about the future of Ryde – and all expressed a wish to work together to realise the potential of the town to better support its residents and businesses – and to offer visitors a memorable experience.

Amongst the usual activities, meetings and training in the life of a councillor, since my last report/our last full council meeting I've been involved in supporting and attending the following meetings and events

- Attending a meeting and carrying on dialogue with members of the RTC/University of Portsmouth MoU steering group
- Joined the Community Development Officer to meet with Family Liaison Officers of all Ryde primary schools and the Year and House managers at Ryde Academy to ascertain support needed for young people and families in Ryde
- Opened the IoW Bus and Coach Museum/s Wight Rider event
- Attended the opening of Ryde School's nursery provision
- Met with the head teacher of Oakfield CE Primary School and housing officers to discuss the impact of antisocial behaviour and domestic violence on pupils and families
- Attended meetings about the incidence and aftermath of flooding
- Represented RTC at Remembrance Day events, including at the shrine in Lind Street and in Ryde Cemetery
- Attended a meeting with representatives of the Boston Town Deal to discuss the use of levelling up funding

Along with other councillors and volunteers, I've continued to spend time delivering copies of the Ryde Community Guide to residents across the town. My thanks again to Alison Pearce and the staff team for developing such an informative booklet of services, activities and businesses in the town, and my thanks to all the organisations that have supported this initiative.

**Cllr Richard May – Mayor of Ryde**

**Cllr Jo Elliott – Deputy Mayor of Ryde**

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