

### **Mayor's Update and Report – 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

I wish to highlight that it has not been an easy time for RTC over the last few months due to flooding of offices, staff sickness and the continuation of the realities of continued Covid19 and the consequences of this new normal.

I do wish to really thank the staff team for their outstanding commitment, creativity, innovation and sheer hard work in very difficult circumstances. The Lind Street Offices are still unusable due to flooding and the RTC Lind Street team have had to move temporarily to the Ryde Rowing Club at Appley Beach with some of team working from home. However, there are some real achievements that do need to be highlighted and celebrated.

#### **Deckchairs are back on Ryde beaches!**

The brand Ryde Leisure is now in full operation and it is fantastic to see this new team in action in hiring out deckchairs, parasols, sun beds, kayaks and paddle boards. This has brought the Ryde beaches to life and kickstarting our income generation strategy. This has been a real team effort and needs celebrating. This beach activity is also complimented by the various RTC supported busking around the town which is just creating a fantastic atmosphere. I have spoken to many visitors to the Town over the past weeks and they just love Ryde and want to come back.

#### **Ryde in Bloom – What amazing colourful flower displays!**

Ryde in Bloom has just been joyous and wonderful this year and perhaps with a little help from the rain has just been bloom-in gorgeous! I wish to thank our RTC team, Mike Pitt, Contractors, all entries to Ryde in Bloom for all their hard work.

#### **Network Ryde and our Youth Team**

The Network Ryde allotment has been amazing including the young people who have really embraced growing your own and the fantastic produce which evoke a sale at Network Ryde offices on the High Street. The Kickstart programme has slowly grown giving a number of Ryde young people employment and opportunities. St Thomas' has yet to have a final completion time but is further evidence of the fantastic work our youth team are doing.

#### **Ryde Skate Park**

I wish to thank the Ryde Skate Park Working group in bringing everyone together and we have the great news IWC are now negotiating and working on a longer term lease.

#### **Ryde Carnival Events 2021**

Although sadly, the Ryde Carnival is not being held this year, a programme of events was held in true carnival and community spirit. The fantastic thing about the event was the partnership working of so many organisations especially Ryde Arts, Ryde HAZ, New Carnival Company, Ryde Business Association, and Shademakers among others. Shademakers new home at the Packs building and its window displays are just bringing the top of Union Street/Cross Street alive. I enjoyed the little cinema playing videos/films of past Ryde carnivals which were fascinating. The sheer number of shops that took part in the red dot spot the unusual object competition really showed how the town is coming together.

**Beach Sports Festival – 24<sup>th</sup>/25<sup>th</sup> July 2021**

The Beach Sports Festival on Appley beach despite the weather was a real triumph with teams coming from all over to compete in football, volleyball, beach tennis, cricket, and rugby. It was great to see so many families involved. There have been a number of other beach sports days and training and I wish to publicly thank Luke and his team.

**IW Thank You Day – Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2021 at 11am on Esplanade**

Although we must accept Covid19 is not over and many residents are still testing positive although the spread is being reduced through testing and vaccination. RTC are holding a 'Thank You' day event hosted by myself as Mayor with the Deputy Mayor, Jenna. The aim is to publicly thank those in Ryde who helped and supported others over the last 18 months of the pandemic. The Honours Working Group met and agreed a list of nominations. The event has received a grant via IW Community Action as part of activities across the Island. All Councillors are invited, and it links to the Classic Car Event. We cannot thank everyone, but I will be writing with Jenna to all the Care Homes, shops, GPs and many Ryde organisations that contributed so much to Ryde getting through the World's worst pandemic.

**Ryde Covid19 Community Response HUB**

This team jointly led by RTC and Aspire with Network Ryde, Ryde Foodbank, Sovereign Housing and Ryde Family Centre met on zoom regularly over the last 18 months and wish to thank all involved.

**Classic Car Extravaganza 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> September 2021 and in October Harp on Wight Event**

It is fantastic that not only this wonderful event of about 1000 classic cars is being held in September but the fact it is 2 days not one which will really give our economy a boost.

**Planned Away Day for Staff and Councillors**

Lisa and I are working on getting a 2021 staff and councillors way day in October so we can all look at the Corporate Plan, review it and start to discuss the 2022/23 plan and budget. It has been difficult to get everyone together for many reasons, so this day is important.

**Overall – Ryde is buzzing!**

I just wish to say that my observation from walking around the town, seeing the deckchairs on the beaches, seeing the buskers, and talking to residents, businesses, and visitors that Ryde is not only buzzing there is a real sense of Ryde has a future.

Cllr Michael Lilley – Mayor of Ryde