

**MINUTES OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STEERING GROUP MEETING HELD ON  
THURSDAY 6 MARCH 2025 AT 9.15AM IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM,  
FORMER NATWEST BANK, ST THOMAS SQUARE**

Members Present: Cllr Diana Conyers (Chair), Toby Eaglen (Sovereign Network Group - SNG), Cllr Richard May, Alison Pearce (Community Development Officer), Rebecca Swan (Network Ryde Representative), Liz Dutton (RTC Representative), Jo Dodd (Ryde Library) Keith Sheldrake (RISS)

**1/25 APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies.

**2/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

**3/25 MINUTES**

The minutes from the meeting on 5 December 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

**4/25 REPORT OF THE FROM THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER**

i. Oakfield Pantry

The CDO gave an update. RTC was providing support and assistance with financial reporting. The freezer had now been picked up and delivered. Michael gave an update regarding support from IWC on food pantries and the longer-term vision. There were plans being developed to have the RISS taking part in outreach sessions at the Pantry to provide longer-term support and add further sustainability.

ii. Cookery Sessions

It was reported that the cookery sessions had been well attended by people from a wide range of backgrounds. The CDO read out some very positive feedback received from those taking part.

iii. Sherbourne Centre

Thanks was given to the CDO for her time and support given to the trustees of the Sherbourne Centre in assisting them to move forward.

iv. Riboleau Gardens

A number of different gardening groups are continuing to make use of the for space the time being. The social prescribers were on board with the project. Vegetables had now been planted and fish have been donated.

v. 2 year Strategy Plan

It was noted that would need to be reviewed and potentially updated following RTC's forthcoming visioning strategy day.

**5/25 CHARITABLE STATUS**

There was a short discussion that some funding opportunities including for RISS and cooking lessons were being missed due not having charitable status and therefore whether RTC should investigate setting up a charitable arm of the organisation. It was suggested that if other town or parish councils could be identified that had succeeded in developing a charitable arm, the CDO would reach out and establish if this would work for Ryde.

**6/25 VISIONING STRATEGY**

An informal visioning day for councillors and key staff would be held in the near future to help formulate priorities and update the Council's corporate plan. There was a general discussion around what the future priorities should include, and it was agreed that measures to tackle poverty, deprivation and social isolation were crucial. It was thought that developing face to face support to enable residents to overcome challenges and the removal of barriers (perceived or actual) to provide sustainable and longer-term solutions should be facilitated. It was agreed that initiatives should enable and encourage for people to seek self-help solutions. It was noted that outcomes should be achievable and realistic, and it was recognised that the cost of housing remained a huge challenge for many. It was important to include under-represented and hard to reach groups eg the housebound in all initiatives.

The meeting reiterated that housing remained a priority and recognised it should be a key priority for the council who should work with others to help achieve a solution.

The meeting was informed that updated guidance relating to the Town Board had very recently been published and there was a very brief discussion around this.

**7/25 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

This was agreed to be held on Thursday 5 June 2025 at 9.15am.

CHAIR:

DATE: