

Ramsgate Future Investment Plan and Levelling Up bid Specification

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Thanet District Council, as the lead local authority, recently submitted a Town Investment Plan for Margate as part of the Governments Town Deal programme. The process of delivering a programme of stakeholder engagement to inform a strategic plan for Margate is something that the local authority, and we would like to replicate for Ramsgate.
- 1.2. The ambition is to put together a plan for Ramsgate that supports a thriving town centre and supports its communities, but also establishes it as a unique destination with a signature experience.
- 1.3. The Council, working with key stakeholders and partners in Ramsgate has been successful on a number of government funded programmes for Ramsgate, including funds from the Towns Fund programme such as the Future High Street Fund (FHSF) and the High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) programme. These schemes provide a good basis to develop from on supporting Ramsgate's Town Centre.
- 1.4. Ramsgate is also a Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) area which covers the whole of the town. The Historic England HAZ initiative seeks to use Ramsgate's historic environment to achieve both economic and social impact. The Council, working in partnership with Historic England, local community groups and residents has developed projects to improve and promote heritage assets, undertaken a body of historic research and is working to raise awareness and understanding of Ramsgate's rich heritage.
- 1.5. Alongside Ramsgate's unique heritage, which includes the Royal Harbour, there is also a commercial Port. The Council has started to understand the options available for this large, underutilised site. In 2019 the Council engaged consultants to put together a feasibility appraisal for the wider Port and Harbour area to help understand the opportunities available, and in 2020 there was a period of stakeholder engagement to understand the community's views on the proposals. This was a high level piece of work which needs further consideration in order to understand the interdependencies on the site, and the scale of its regeneration potential. It is clear that all of Ramsgate's stakeholders and communities consider the Port and Harbour as part of the rich mix of opportunities for growth in Ramsgate.
- 1.6. There is a shared ambition in Ramsgate to make the most of its assets, to put together a compelling Investment Plan, that is not aimed at any one particular funding source but considers all the opportunities available to deliver something truly unique and regenerative for Ramgate.
- 1.7. **Background**

- 1.8. A new book "*Ramsgate: The Town and its Seaside Heritage*" researched and published as part of the Ramsgate HAZ initiative outlines the town's rich heritage and its development from quiet fishing village to popular seaside resort.
- 1.9. The construction of Ramsgate Harbour began in 1749 and was completed in about 1850. The harbour has the distinction of being the only Royal Harbour in the UK. Because of its proximity to mainland Europe, Ramsgate was a chief embarkation point during both the Napoleonic wars and for the Dunkirk Evacuation in 1940.
- 1.10. Once visited by a handful of intrepid sea bathers, improvements in passenger boats and the arrival of the railway in 1846 opened up Ramsgate to thousands of holidaymakers, requiring new bathing facilities and entertainment venues to be built. Ramsgate was patronised by royalty and boasted terraces, crescents and squares which were the height of fashion. The Victorian era brought with it many elegant civic buildings and new places of worship from the Montefiore synagogue, to St Augustine's church designed by Augustus Pugin, renowned for his work on the Palace of Westminster.
- 1.11. The economic decline experienced by many seaside towns in the 20th century is also outlined. Ramsgate faces challenges and opportunities today in seeking to redefine itself as an attractive place to visit, live and work.
- 1.12. However, although coastal deprivation has been documented for many years, we have yet to see an sustainable approach to address many of the fundamental issues facing coastal resorts. Our economy is largely built upon micro and Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) businesses, with many based in sectors that are typically, low paid and often seasonal by nature. Although in the relatively affluent South East our economies are wildly different along the coast, due to the surrounding coastline, rather than other economic areas. Newington, Eastcliff Central Harbour, Northwood and Sir Moses Montefiore are within the top 10% most deprived wards in the country, particularly in the following indicators - income, employment, education, health, crime, housing and living environment.
- 1.13. This situation does not completely define Ramsgate though - coastal towns are great places to live, with accessibility to the sea, its history and heritage, character housing and leisure and health benefits. The work to bring together a plan that outlines the future for Ramsgate will enable those stakeholders and the communities involved in Ramsgate to help further realise its potential and support its 'levelling up'.
- 1.14. The Council is also commissioning consultants to deliver some community and stakeholder engagement activity as part of developing the Ramsgate Future Investment Plan (Annex 1) and it is expected that the consultants will work together to draw in the information gathered through engagement into the development of the Investment Plan.

2. The Investment Plan

- 2.1. This Investment Plan needs to include short, medium and long-term projects, it should provide the strategic case for investment in Ramsgate, with evidence providing the basis

for the selection and design of the projects proposed in it. It should set out a vision for the town and a plan that can set the direction for the economic resurgence and resilience of the town.

- 2.2. The Plan will need to identify and recommend projects to be submitted to the Government's Levelling Up Fund including projects that can start spend in 2021/22, with a bid deadline of 12 noon on 18 June, 2021. The Plan should also provide recommendations to other routes for funding of the projects for Ramsgate's Future, including 10% match funding required.
- 2.3. The Plan needs to set out investment priorities that build on the strengths and assets of the town. It should:
 - Support economic growth and recovery
 - Identify/prioritise tactical investment opportunities to help unlock further investment
 - Build on and add to existing partnerships, projects (including known project proposals); assets and plans for the town, and complement pre-existing strategies
 - Consider the wider strategic approach and relevant pan-regional strategies
 - Align with the government's clean growth objectives
- 2.4. It is expected that bidders should be familiar with the prospectus, technical note and bid application form set out in the recently published [Levelling Up Fund](#), with an understanding of the Government's strategic requirements for investing funds into regeneration programmes.

3. Scope of work

- 3.1. Thanet District Council is seeking to appoint an independent multi-disciplinary consultant team to prepare an Investment Plan for Ramsgate, this will be a key document that will inform engagement with Government, other public and third sector organisations, funders and the private sector. The Plan will include:
 - 3.1.1. a vision, a spatial interpretation of the vision (a masterplan) and the strategic argument for the need for investment in regeneration and levelling up, backed-up by evidence;
 - 3.1.2. a series of (short, medium and long term) interventions that help to realise that vision; and
 - 3.1.3. a completed Levelling Up Fund application, in the Government's [template](#), in the Business Case content.
- 3.2. The Council is interested in receiving proposals from experienced teams within the proposed timescales, that draws on the bidders' applied experience of preparing similar plans.

3.3. While there is a degree of flexibility in how the project will be delivered, the following should be interpreted as a minimum specification against which bidders should deliver outputs:

- Review of available evidence / fill critical gaps in evidence, including opportunities and influencing factors beyond the town that may influence the town economy and be relevant, whilst still retaining the town focus
- Using existing documents/strategies, and working with the Stakeholder Engagement Consultants put together a clear vision that will be used to guide the strategy and masterplan
- Preparation of draft masterplan – a spatial interpretation of the vision for the town and key interventions - using previous evidence documentation and current stakeholder engagement
- Use maps, plans and images to tell the story of Ramsgate and promote the opportunities identified within the plan
- Undertake headline deliverability and business case checks for key projects to ready them for future funding programmes. The plan should not include projects that would not pass funding criteria from Government, other public and private sector investors
- Ensuring there is a clear demonstration of commitment from public/private sector stakeholders for interventions and projects being led/delivered by them, which support the plan
- Set out proposals for future community and business involvement in delivery of the Investment Plan
- Finalisation of the Investment Plan for sign off by the Council, and publication of the plan
- Business Case application to the Levelling Up Fund

3.4. The team of consultants are expected to have knowledge of relevant Government funding programmes and other significant funding streams in order to ensure that the Investment Plan can be a useful tool to support investment in Ramsgate.

3.5. Work with the consultants engaged with to deliver the stakeholder and community engagement, as part of a wider 'Team' with the Council

3.6. Engage with other key professionals/experts, as identified by the Council, who can support the delivery of projects within scope of the plan/Levelling Up bid.

4. Consultant Competencies Sought

The consultant's team should cover the following competencies:

- **Regeneration strategy:** consultants should have the ability to devise a compelling vision and work with a range of different evidence sources and stakeholders to inform the identification of well aligned projects and interventions

- **Place making skills:** the consultants will need to have urban design and place making skills to ensure that the Investment Plan enhances the assets and opportunities that Ramsgate has
- **Interpretation of data:** the Investment Plan requires data and evidence to back up the proposals for Margate and the consultants should be familiar with and able to interpret a variety of data from different sources, understanding their relevance and suggesting other sources
- **Delivery skills:** the consultants will need to be able to scope delivery actions to inform the way in which projects are assessed for readiness for inclusion in Town Deal funding discussions with Government
- **Business case skills:** a business case is required for the Levelling Up Fund, for the proposed projects being put forward.

Knowledge of Ramsgate (Thanet) and / or experience of similar master planning and strategic investment planning activities in a similar coastal town context will assist in quickly mobilising on the project and working to the tight project timescales.