

Full Council Meeting 2 September 2019

Report from Planning Committee on Production of Ryde Place Plan

Background information to support a letter from Chris Ashman regarding a Place Plan for Ryde.

1. At a meeting of Full Council on 2nd July 2018, it was agreed, on the recommendation of the Planning Committee, that Ryde Town Council would prepare a Position Statement.
2. The decision was taken after considering two alternatives, a Neighbourhood Plan and a Place Plan. A Position Statement was considered preferable because it would be quicker and cheaper to prepare than a Neighbourhood Plan and would have more legal weight than a Place Plan.
3. This strategy proved to be correct. The Position Statement was produced in time to contribute to both the consultation on the IW Council's Regeneration Strategy and production of the draft Island Planning Strategy and it has been agreed in principle that it will be incorporated into the Island Planning Strategy as a supporting document.
4. However, recently it has been suggested, particularly (but not only) by the IW Council's Regeneration Team, that Ryde also needs a Place Plan. On 9 August the Chair of Planning and Planning Clerk met the IW Council's Director of Regeneration to discuss the possibility of preparing such a plan. A verbal report on the meeting was made to the next meeting of the Planning Committee, held on 13 August. At this meeting, the Chair of the Ryde Regeneration Group, Zoe Thompson, spoke in support of the idea. The Committee agreed to refer the matter to Full Council for a decision.
5. This paper explains what a Place Plan is, the arguments for a Ryde Place Plan, how it would be produced, and the implications for Ryde Town Council.

What is a Place Plan?

1. A Place Plan is a document that sets out what sort of physical, social and economic development a community would like to see in its area. It is usually produced by some sort of steering group, composed of representatives of the local authority and community organisations, and public consultation is an essential element of its production.
2. Unlike a Neighbourhood Plan, it is not a statutory document. There are no legal requirements regarding its content or form and it has no legal weight in the planning system. However, in areas where place plans have been widely produced (such as Wales), they are recognised as 'reference documents', which are taken into consideration when making planning decisions.
3. On the Island, the Regeneration Team is encouraging the production of place plans in order to facilitate public participation and guide regeneration activities. The Newport Place Plan, which was produced in 2018, is regarded as a model. It has led to the initiation of several development projects and the employment of a Town Officer.

Arguments for a Ryde Place Plan

Four main arguments for a Ryde Place Plan have been put forward:

1. It would supplement statutory documents by providing more detailed guidance on the type of development considered appropriate (and inappropriate) in certain parts of the town, especially the Esplanade and town centre.
2. It would increase the likelihood that the wishes of the Ryde community are respected when making decisions about or considering applications for future development, especially decisions involving controversial issues or areas.
3. It would facilitate the selection and prioritisation of development projects by the Ryde Regeneration Group, Ryde Town Council and other bodies.
4. It would facilitate access to funding for such projects, both within the Island (through the Regeneration Team) and externally.

Production of a Ryde Place Plan

1. The production of the Ryde Place Plan would be much simpler and quicker than that of the Newport Place Plan because most of the information needed is already available from previous planning exercises, such as the preparation of the Position Statement and the consultation on the Regeneration Strategy.
2. The precise scope of the Plan has yet to be determined, but it would focus on key geographical areas and/or issues of concern, especially the Esplanade and town centre.
3. The Plan would be produced by Arc Consultants, who played a major role in the consultations on the Regeneration Strategy.
4. The Ryde Regeneration Group would oversee the production of the Plan. The membership of the Group might be increased to ensure representation of all sectors of the community.
5. The Plan would be subject to the approval of the various members of the Group, including Ryde Town Council.
6. The IW Council would commission the consultants.
7. Production of the Plan would begin later this month and be completed by the end of the year.
8. The cost of production would be £6-8,000. This cost will be split 50/50 between the IW Council and Ryde Town Council.

Implications for Ryde Town Council

1. Ryde Town Council would oversee the preparation of the plan through its membership of the Ryde Regeneration Group.
2. The Plan would have to be approved by Ryde Town Council.
3. Ryde Town Council would be required to fund 50% of the cost of its production; i.e. £3-4,000.

Diana Conyers
Chair of Planning
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