



Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum's comments to the Strategic Plan 2009-2014

We agree in principle on the setting of the priorities of the Strategic Plan 2009-2014.

The RTW Town Forum would want to participate in the shaping and regeneration of the town centre and we would want to see a pro-active Council working together with KCC to make the town centre spine from Grosvenor Road down to the Pantiles more pedestrian friendly.

We feel that there is still a wide gap in the relationship of the town and KCC Highways. We refer not only to lamp posts and brick pavements and pedestrian friendly crossings in this case but as well to the badly maintained roads and footways in and around RTW.

We support the Council in looking for opportunities to save money. However if a relocation of the Town Hall needs to be considered due to financial strains, this should not happen in haste. We suggest that this needs serious consultation.

We welcomed the creation of Overview & Scrutiny Select Committees and on the few occasions we made an input we can only congratulate the team on their openness and willingness to discuss matters raised in a friendly way. We would very much like this to continue.

We like the initiative of Accredited Street Scene and Civil Enforcement Officers to issue penalty charge notices for environmental offences, but this needs to make a firmer impact. They should as well issue at least warning notices to owners of litter and rubbish filled patios and untidy front gardens in the town centre. We need to accept that if Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Centre is not attractive, there will be no reason for visitors to come. No one is keen in visiting slums. We welcomed the Dudley Road revamp initiative, but feel that this is not noticeable yet and quite some time has past since the announcement.

On the Housing issue we think more has to be done with the Empty Houses Strategy – Summerhill House, 73 London Road is a prime target for this. It is on the RTW TF's top grot spot list. – Private Landlords have to be put under stricter inspection and that includes the keeping of the outside of their properties in good order.

It was once said that Empty Businesses would pay business rates. This would be welcomed especially in the case of Morrisons' supermarket at the station and of course the shops on the cinema site.

We feel that the Tunbridge Wells Together – Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) is working well and transparent and we look forward to co-operating during the year with this initiative.

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