

Protecting and Renewing Community Assets: Next Steps

Update

Following the last Policy and Finance group the Town Clerk wrote to a range of organisations about the Town Council's interest in developing a campaign to protect and renew the Town's community assets. 17 responses have been received, only one response not interested, some enthusiastic, but very few coming up with ideas. List of respondees below, those who it is proposed to invite to a virtual focus gr. Phone conversations have also been held with the owners of Shepherd Neame and Macknades.

Proposal for next steps

Invite a group of 6/7 respondees to take part in a virtual focus group discussion covering the terms of reference of a campaign, short term priorities for action, organisational arrangements, name/branding. This session to be chaired and minuted by the Town Council.

Following this session to go back to all of those interested to propose a way forward against the headings above and to gain their formal commitment to the initiative.

Suggested terms of reference

1. The xxxxxx (campaign) has been set up to allow Faversham based organisations to work together on projects which will provide added value to individual organisations efforts to protect and renew themselves following the economic dislocation which has resulted from the recent pandemic and lockdown.
2. It will particularly focus on the protection and renewal of local assets and services which make a key contribution to the local quality of life and the attraction of the town to visitors, whether they are publicly, community or privately owned.
3. Although it will take an interest in the regeneration of local business it will not seek to replace the work of organisations or campaigns which are expressly involved in supporting business recovery following the pandemic.
4. Examples of activities that it might undertake are:
Fundraising to ensure the survival and renewal of local assets and services
Encouraging more community volunteering
Encouraging more use of local services and locally produced products
Encouraging more visits to the town
5. It is expects to work over the period that economic recovery will take, which could be several years.
6. It will always seek to work constructively with external partners like Swale Borough Council, Kent County Council and Visit Kent who have an interest in these areas

Suggested short term priority for action

To identify assets and services that are at serious risk of being lost after the pandemic and ways that that partners can work together in order to ensure their survival.

Suggested organisational arrangements

A provisional steering group is set up, with a chair. The group includes the mayor and one other town councillor. It is serviced by the Town Clerk and Town Clerk staff. No formal entity is created for the moment but the group finalises terms of reference and invites organisations to confirm they want to be members.

Suggested Identity

The initiative is identified as a campaign. It is given a name, something like Faversham Renewal. Promotional materials aimed at local people use phrases like 'rediscover Faversham, support your town'.