

**Dept:** Executive Office  
**Telephone:** 01843 577108  
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**Date:** 12 September 2024



Dear John,

**RE: Tall Ships Regatta Proposal**

Thank you for your further letter dated 3 September 2024 regarding your proposal for a Tall Ships regatta to be hosted at Ramsgate.

You have clarified in your response that the Ramsgate Society's proposal for a £10k contribution by the council to fund the stage 2 feasibility study should be considered as a request for a grant. The council does not have a grant programme with which this request would be compatible. However we did still carefully consider your request for funding. The decision set out in my letter dated 23 August 2024 was based on the current level of uncertainty over how the event will be funded and how that fits with the proposed speculative allocation of public funds to further progress the development of the project.

Subsidy control is not relevant to the initial request for £10k for feasibility funding, it is however relevant to any subsequent contributions which may be made to the required start-up funding or to cover cash flow pressures. The council is bound by the requirements of the Subsidy Control Act 2022 which sets out the subsidy control regime for public bodies.

Where a robust business case exists the council may give consideration to the financing of activities via a loan but this would be subject to interest at a market rate being applied to repayments. Such a loan is normally only considered where it would support local services and the evaluation of the business case is fundamental in ensuring the terms of that financing fit with the council's risk profile as a local authority administering public funds. If the council did not apply interest at a market rate and did not require a business case to demonstrate viability it would be falling short of the principles and standards required by the Subsidy Control Act.

The position set out in my letter dated 23 August remains unchanged with regard to the request for a £10k contribution to fund the stage 2 feasibility study for the reasons set out above and in that letter. As mentioned before this is not a decision to reject such an event out of hand. We remain supportive in principle of a Tall Ships Regatta being hosted at Ramsgate subject to further development of the event plan. Without this the council cannot consider any financial contribution or resourcing commitment.

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It comes down to the fact that we do not have sufficient confidence at this stage that the obstacles set out can be overcome to be able to justify investing scarce public funds.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick Everitt", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Cllr Rick Everitt  
Leader of the Council