Sefton Council

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (REGENERATION & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES)

TOWN CENTRES WORKING GROUP FINAL REPORT NOVEMBER 2014

Overview & Scrutiny

Overview & Scrutiny

'Valuing Improvement'

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LEAD MEMBER'S INTRODUCTION

I am very pleased to introduce this Overview and Scrutiny Final Report for Regeneration and Environmental Services.

The context for the investigations undertaken by the Working Group was to conduct a review of policy related to town centres based on the terms of reference agreed at the scoping meeting. The intention is to assist the Council in its policy deliberations by making a series of improvement recommendations based on the evidence given during investigations and the key findings of the process. We requested that all witnesses produce a SWOT analysis as part of their input, which enabled the Working Group to ask directed questioning in a focused way, thereby quickly getting to the crux of the matter in hand.

This report is timely as the scale of cuts imposed on Authorities such as ours has drastically reduced the ability of the public sector to make positive interventions to support growth, and stimulate demand through increased employment. Our town centres are suffering shortfalls in demand partially as a result of falling incomes due to downward pressure on wages and the changing nature of shopping habits and the emergence of online shopping via the internet. These factors inevitably threaten the long term viability of traditional town centres. These challenges cannot be ignored and the investigation has enabled us to highlight some of the positive innovative work undertaken by the Council, in this respect the Council continues to act as the catalyst for change that otherwise would not happen if left to the private sector alone. The various Council sponsored initiatives are different and reflect the fact that one size doesn't fit all, however what they will provide is a framework for identifying and sharing good practice.

I am pleased with the results of the work as I do believe it provides a basic template/action plan that, if implemented, will ensure that the Council's assets are organised in an effective whole organisation manner where we can continue to have a positive impact on town centres in spite of the very difficult times the public sector finds itself in.

I wish to thank all those people who took part in interviews and facilitated visits and for giving up their valuable time to inform the Working Group. I am tremendously grateful to my fellow Working Group Members for their commitment to our project and I would like to thank Ruth Harrison for her support and professionalism throughout this process.

Councillor Patrick McKinley
Lead Member of the Economic Development and Development of Local Town Centres and Economies Working Group; and
Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration & Environmental Services)

1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 At its meeting on 18 September 2012, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Environmental Services) resolved that:-

Councillors Bennett, Gatherer, Jones, Lappin, McKinley and Maguire be nominated to serve on the Employment Development and the Development of Local Town Centres and Economies Working Group.

1.2 At its meeting held on 13 November 2012, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Environmental Services) were informed that Councillor Weavers had also joined the Working Group.

1.3 At its meeting on 22 January 2013, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Environmental Services) resolved that:-

1.4 Councillor Dutton replace Councillor Jones on the Employment Development and Development of Local Town Centres and Economies Working Group.

1.5 Details of Working Group meetings are as follows:-

Date	Activity
26.10.12	Scope Review
13.9.13	Re-affirm Terms of Reference and Objectives; and Interview Key Witness – Alan Young, Sefton MBC
4.10.13	Interview Key Witnesses: Mark Catherall, Southport BID and Andrew Walker, Sefton MBC.
18.10.13	Interview Key Witness – Dave Marrin – Sefton MBC
15.11.13	Interview Key Witness – Hugh Evans – Southport BID
17.01.14	Next Steps Meeting
31.01.14	Interview Key Witness – Catherine Caddick, Crosby Town Centre
14.02.14	Interview Key Witness – Bob Greenhalgh, Manager, Bootle New Strand Shopping Centre
28.02.14	Interview Key Witness – Nick Thompson, Waterloo Town Team
13.03.14	Interview Key Witness – Pete Spiers, “A Better Crosby”
27.03.14	Interview Key Witness – Ged Gibbons
10.04.14	Interview Key Witness – Cabinet Member- Regeneration and Tourism
	Reflections from Members – Next Steps
	Consider Draft Final Report (Employment Development)

1.6 For the purposes of conducting this review, Members agreed to investigate Employment Development first, and to consider Development of Local Town Centres and Economies in a later session. This report addresses the town centres objectives of the Working Group.

1.7 Members of the Group drafted and agreed the following terms of reference and objectives of the review:-

2.0 TOWN CENTRES

2.1 Terms of Reference

(1) To engage with town centre stakeholders including centre managers, town centre businesses, Council services supporting town centre functions, trade bodies, and town centre users

(2) To scrutinise the Council's performance as regards the vitality, viability and economic potential of Sefton's Town Centres

(3) To make recommendations for the improvement of Sefton's town centres and the contribution of the private, public and Voluntary Community and Faith sectors to their prosperity.

Objectives

(1) To understand the role of Town Centres in the local economy and the many functions they fulfil

(2) To focus on a list of settlements which make up Sefton's Town Centres and profile their performance using available data, including the impact of the "double dip" recession

(3) To review stakeholder perceptions of the value, effectiveness and long-term prospects of each of the listed centres

(4) To critically assess the Council's policy towards town centre improvement, in terms of core functions (cleaning, safety & movement, planning), and additional activity such as marketing, regeneration and town centre management

(5) To understand the new national policy context for town centre improvement set out in the Portas Review and subsequent announcements, and assess the implications for Sefton

(6) To make recommendations to Cabinet for short, medium and long-term action on the priorities identified above.

3.0 METHODS OF ENQUIRY

- Background reading
- Presentations

4.0 RESEARCH AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

4.1 Town Centres

4.1.1 Almost 90% of us live and work in towns and cities. Nearly all of us depend on them for meeting friends and colleagues, for shopping, entertainment, leisure, culture, public services and transport. As individuals and families, we depend on them for jobs. As businesses, we depend on them for our survival, profits and growth.

4.1.2 High Streets are changing, and there is a realisation that retail space will have to shrink in some cases to survive. This does not mean that high streets should disappear or stop reinventing themselves; just that they will simply be different in the future.

4.1.3 The business of town centres is a serious and highly complex subject requiring energy, skill and enterprise. That is what we are seeing with the Town Team phenomenon, where a group of like-minded people have come together to establish their Town Team, and begin creating marketing material to illustrate what they want to do to make their place better. Indeed, simply having the conversation is a great catalyst to start implementing this change.

4.1.4 The business of town centres is more than just retail – it includes businesses across the board in all guises, and from both private and public sectors. The town centre is a community, one that needs to be dynamic, and change with the times. Times have changed, and turning the clock back is not an option – although the careful conservation of certain town centre features to encourage character and belonging is.

4.1.5 It is a fact that that Internet and multi-channel ("omni commerce") trading will increase, especially with the development of "smart phones" and this must be embraced. All physical retailers will have to grasp new technology for future survival.

4.1.6 A town centre that offers its own diverse and distinctive environment, with a strong sense of place, is a magnet that attracts people to work, visit and live. However, it has to meet several key challenges in order to survive and succeed:

- It must be easily accessible, clean and safe at all times of the day.
- It must have its own unique identity, using architecture, events, marketing and all forms of media to reinforce vital points of difference.
- It must have professional, active management.

For all the above to happen, stakeholders and organisations should come together rather than fight for recession-squeezed resources.

4.1.7 Sefton is home to a number of national and strategic assets which lie at the heart of the city region's prosperity: the Port of Liverpool at Seaforth, the maritime cluster of port-related businesses; important employment centres including Dunningsbridge Road and Southport Business Park; a rejuvenated Seafront and Town Centre in Southport; major visitor destinations including golf, events and the award-winning natural coast; location of choice for household name companies such as Santander and Fujitsu; a data communications hub (Hibernia Atlantic, The Vault); a major Office Quarter in Bootle with the headquarters of the Health & Safety Executive, and three Further Education learning and enterprise sites.

4.1.8 Southport is the premier visitor destination and was once the primary shopping destination for Merseyside and the North West. It's also an important seaside resort destination which provides key leisure facilities for visitors and tourists. The future is in Leisure and its core retail/leisure offer is at the heart of a cluster of hospitality businesses and their supply chains. The town's distinctive infrastructure and public domain defines its identity and underpins conference, golf and shopping-led visits from the UK and beyond.

4.1.9 In the recent past there has been planning permission granted for retail allocation for example Sainsburys, Southport, Members agreed that such developments will have a deterimental affect on the Boroughs Town Centres. There is an urgent need for Town Centre Strategies to be developed across the Borough.

4.1.10 Bootle is identified as the second largest shopping centre in Sefton and the key retail and service sector destination in the south of the Borough and in that respect the Group interviewed the Bootle Strand Manager, as detailed in paragraph 5.7 of the report.

4.1.11 The economic downturn has lasted more than five years and has had a dramatic impact on Town Centres. Falling retail sales, reduced consumer spending, increased business failures, rising vacancies and the growth of Internet Shopping have resulted in "fragile" business consumer and investor confidence in retailing and High Streets.
The recession and competition from out of town malls have resulted in closed-down businesses, run-down high streets and the proliferation of charity shops and betting offices, creating a spiral of decay.

4.1.12 It has become apparent that "temporary is the new permanent". Whereas 20 years ago retailers tended to sign 15 or more years leases or more on shop premises, they now sign much shorter deals. Landlords have to pay business rates on their premises if they stand empty for more than three months, so they're prepared to lease them to charities for little or nothing, just to avoid being hit by rates. This means that we're seeing many more charity shops or temporary users and "pop-up shops".

In the past these used to be a seasonal phenomenon, around Bonfire Night (selling fireworks etc.) and Christmas, but now some premises are hosting pop-ups all year round. We can not do things the way they were done in the past.
(Reference: Recommendation 4 to the report).

4.1.13 In the past there was resistance to having too many food and drink outlets on our high street due to concerns about breaking up the retail line. That changed some years ago and it could be said that the cafe culture has helped sustain our town centres in keeping them vibrant places that visitors and the local community want to visit. The introduction of street theatre, in pedestrianised Town Centres, to compliment the cafe culture should be encouraged with management of such activities being through the Neighbourhood Plan.

4.1.14 During the time spent researching Town Centres the Group took a view that looking at our Town Centres from a retail-focus missed a real opportunity to explore the wider activities that take place in Town Centres and that their success doesn't and shouldn't depend on shops alone; they also need offices and services. Some thought is required to attracting service providers and office-based users to remain in or relocate to Town Centres. This will become more important as the population gets older and is living longer as people in their seventies and eighties, along with other age groups, don't want to have to make a special journey to visit a health centre.

4.1.15 The Working Group also recognised that it can't be assumed that the affluent Town Centres are best equipped for the future. Each Town Centre needs to develop an identity and scale which works for its local community. There isn't a "one size fits all" solution for all the Town Centres. Different Town Centres will need different approaches. There needs to be a balance of competing needs while ensuring an environment in which investment can flourish and a vibrant mix of uses thrives.
(Reference: Recommendation 5 to the report).

4.1.16 The Working Group explored the issue that Local Authorities are responsible for a diverse range of assets including theatres, cinemas, civic centres, schools, parks, care homes and leisure centres. With this in mind it could be stated that Local Authorities are stewards of their localities and have an important economic development remit and planning powers as well as the diverse asset base stated above. It became apparent that while there was a need to drive efficiency in the use of all public assets, it makes financial sense to encourage assets that give Town Centres a focal point, lever in resources and create strong multiplier effects in local economies.
(Reference: Recommendation 5 to the report).

4.2 Sefton's Town Centres

4.2.1 The following Town Centres make up the Borough of Sefton:

- Southport
- Formby
- Bootle
- Maghull
- Crosby Village
- Waterloo

4.3 Transport and Access

4.3.1 The Working Group were advised that in line with City Region City Deal, Sefton Council was leading a Liverpool City Region Steering Group to develop a package of sustainable transport measures and minor highway improvements, aimed at improving access to the Port of Liverpool for all modes of transport. A major highway scheme is a possible long term outcome. The Working Group welcomed those plans as Members believed that any transport improvements should improve transport access to Town Centres beyond the Port.

5.0 KEY WITNESSES – SWOT ANALYSIS AND SUMMARY OF STATEMENTS

5.0.1 Members of the Working Group gathered evidence through various methods, including presentations and briefings and receiving reports. Evidence was also given when Members had the opportunity to interview key witnesses, various Officers and Partners.

5.0.2 As part of their brief, key witnesses were asked to submit a SWOT analysis of their service.

5.0.3 The following points are a summary of the discussions held with key witnesses who had been invited to attend Working Group meetings:-

5.1 Alan Young – Strategic Planning and Information, Sefton MBC

SWOT Analysis – General issues relating to all Town Centres

Weaknesses

- Recent major retail developments at Liverpool 1, 'Project Jennifer' and the opening of M&S, Next, and TK Maxx at Aintree Retail Park (using planning loopholes) have and will likely draw trade away from established centres.
- The recent 'National Planning Policy Framework' (NPPF) has reduced the Council's ability to successfully resist 'out-of-centre' retail developments.
- The rise of internet shopping is taking a greater proportion of retail expenditure away from town centres.

Opportunities

- First signs of economic recovery
- Availability of development opportunities in and around most centres in Sefton

Threats

- Online retail expenditure is forecast to significantly increase in the years ahead.
- Inflation continues to erode disposable incomes.
- Uncertain investment climate and reluctance to invest in town centres.
- Perception about lack of free car parking
- Business rates perceived by some retailers as being high relative to profitability

Bootle Town Centre

Strengths

- Adjacent to the Bootle Office Quarter – the Strand is used by a large number of office workers.
- In an area of high density housing – a large and loyal catchment population lives within walking distance.
- Recently opened Asda is trading well, with evidence of linked trips to-and-from the Strand
- Presence of M&S as the key 'anchor' retailer
- Recent investments by Wilkinson and Tesco in new stores within the Strand. New Aldi and Lidl stores constructed near to the Strand.
- Good public transport links, by both bus and rail.

Weaknesses

- Recent major retail developments at Liverpool 1, 'Project Jennifer' and the opening of M&S, Next, and TK Max at Aintree Retail Park compete with existing centres.
- Somewhat dated (at least in part) 1960s shopping centre building. Adjacent to poor quality 1960s office blocks, some of which are vacant.
- Many of the units within the Strand are of a size which is poorly suited to modern retail requirements
- The recent loss of key tenants including TJ Hughes, JD Sports.
- 19% of units were vacant at July 2011, accounting for 11.9% of floorspace. This is higher than the national average. The rear of the Strand is currently largely vacant.
- Bootle has declined 13 places in its national retail ranking, from 247th in 2005, 267th in 2007 and 260th in 2011.
- ASDA sells similar goods to shops in the Strand, but with free parking
- Centre closes down completely at 17:30 – very limited night time economy

Opportunities

- Expansion of Hugh Baird College has and will bring more students to the area, providing more customers for shops in the Strand.
- Potential re-development opportunity at the large car park site fronting Stanley Road accessed via Trinity Road.
- Potential to convert large office buildings to new uses
- Central Government staff relocating from Liverpool into Bootle buildings giving short term boost to numbers
- The Strand has recently been acquired by a new investor
- Public realm improvements to Stanley Road frontage

Threats

- Public sector spending cuts are likely to mean there are fewer office workers in Bootle in the years ahead (the Office Quarter is dominated by public sector occupiers)
- Benefit reform (including the 'Bedroom Tax') is likely to reduce local spending power.

Southport Town Centre

Strengths

- Recent investments in the Atkinson Centre, Kings Gardens and the Market Hall.
- Benefits from being a Merseyside and wider high quality tourism destination. Tourism economy draws in additional visitors to the centre.
- Major visitor attractions e.g. Flower Show, Air Show, Royal Birkdale, etc.
- Attractive historic Town Centre, particularly Lord Street.
- Relatively affluent catchment population
- Railway station centrally located bringing visitors straight into the Town Centre.
- Strong and active private sector groups/traders associations etc.
- Small boutique streets/arcades e.g. Wesley Street and Wayfarers Arcade, with independent retailers.
- Attraction of successful cafe culture.

Weaknesses

- Catchment area is reduced by coastal location.
- The development of Liverpool 1 has inevitably drawn some trade away.
- Few redevelopment opportunities to expand/develop new retail floor space within the Town Centre.
- Many existing units are too small and/or are poorly suited for major chain stores.
- Prominent vacant units.
- Poor quality pedestrian linkages between Lord Street and the Promenade.
- 13.4% of units were vacant at July 2011, accounting for 13.6% of floor space. This is higher than the national average.
- Southport has declined 37 places in its national retail ranking, from a peak of 44th in 2005 to 81st in 2011.
- Poor transport links from the east.
- Station site and other gateways are perceived as visually unattractive.
- The convenience of car parking.
- Perceived issue with the Evening Economy.

Opportunities

- Development opportunity at the former “Pleasureland” Site on the Promenade.
- Potential Business Improvement District – from March 2014.
- Refurbishment of the former Waitrose building on Tulketh Street.

Threats

- National chains looking to reduce number of stores due to changing consumer habits, and already having a presence in Liverpool One or Manchester.
- A growing trend in low end retail operators.

Formby District Centre

Strengths

- Low vacancy rates (6.9% in August 2011).
- Presence of Waitrose at the main “anchor” retailer. This is the only Waitrose in Merseyside which attracts customers from a wider catchment.
- Affluent catchment population with high disposable income.
- A number of specialist independent shops.
- Good balance between retail/leisure/services users.
- Central Pool, leisure facilities, and a number of GP surgeries are located next to the centre – brings in additional people.
- Attractive Town Centre environment, including planters and trees. Buildings generally in good condition.

Weaknesses

- Low density housing means that fewer people live within walking distance.
- Some distance from the Formby train stations.
- Not located on a major through road.
- The convenience of car parking.
- The Police Station has recently closed.
- Perception that there are too many charity shops in the centre.

Opportunities

- Development opportunity at former Holy Trinity Primary School.

Maghull District Centre

Strengths

- Low vacancy rates (6.2% in August 2011)
- Relatively affluent catchment population with higher disposable income.
- Thriving and bustling discount retail environment at peak periods.
- Good mix of conventional retail and service facilities (banks/building societies etc.) affording linked trips.

Weaknesses

- Severed by major roads from residential areas to the east resulting in poor connectivity.
- Poor quality, unattractive 1960s units in “Maghull Square”.
- Limited availability of car parking.
- The main supermarket (Morrisons) is relatively small compared to those in other similar sized centres
- Significant distance from Maghull Train Station.
- Perception that subways and passageways facilitate opportunities for crime and anti-social activity.
- Perception of poor quality public realm.

Opportunities

- Maghull Square and adjacent land is in a single ownership. Potential opportunity to reconfigure or redevelop this land with modern town centre floor space.
- Council-owned redevelopment opportunity at Stafford Moreton Way (former library and youth centre – both currently vacant)

Threats

- Landowners intentions regarding implementing recent planning approval at Maghull Square and uncertainty for tenants.

Crosby District Centre

Strengths

- Relatively affluent catchment population with higher disposable income.
- Low rents in locations such as Cooks Road and Endbutt Lane has seen a number of independents start up.
- Good transport links by both road and public transport (bus)

Weaknesses

- Uncertainty following the refusal of Sainsbury's proposals in 2010.
- The pedestrianisation of Moor Lane has been subject to criticism.
- The Centre is surrounded by busy roads on all sides. This inhibits pedestrian access into the centre.
- The main shopping parades back on to Liverpool Road/Moor Lane, providing an unattractive street frontage.
- Vacant land and buildings in and around the Centre.
- Traffic congestion in and around the Town Centre.
- A number of prominent empty units
- The convenience of car parking
- Centre shuts down at 17:30 with little activity thereafter
- Centre is looking tired and dated.
- Lack of identity for the Centre.
- Low rental in peripheral roads means the centre is spreading down Coronation Road and others.

Opportunities

- The Council is currently seeking to prepare an Investment Strategy for Crosby Centre.
- Potential to redevelop one or more of the Council-owned car parks on the edge of the Centre, and other vacant/under-used sites.
- A private sector group has formed to help guide future development.
- The continuing growth of Crosby Market and the potential Crosby Night Market.

Threats

- Sainsbury's have confirmed that they are no longer interested in expanding their current store.
- Proximity to Liverpool City Centre.
- High rents in the Centre may deter independent retailers.

Waterloo District Centre

Strengths

- Large proportion of independent and local, committed retailers.
- Good public transport links by both bus and rail.
- In an area of relatively high density housing – a large catchment population lives within walking distance.
- Proximity to the beach attracts additional visitors in summertime.
- Good opportunities for night time activity after shops close.
- Cinema continues to succeed against all expectations.

Weaknesses

- Proximity of residential dwellings to bars/restaurants causing harm to amenity.
- Perceived dominance of non-retail uses.
- Congestion on Crosby Road North.
- Pressure on car parking spaces close to shops.

Opportunities

- Potential redevelopment/refurbishment sites on Crosby Road North, Brighton Road, and elsewhere.
- Potential for better use of former Bus interchange.
- Potential improvements to junction with Haigh Road to relieve congestion.

General Issues Discussed:

Unitary Development Plan

- The Council's policy position is as set out on our adopted UDP where the Council seek:-
    - To protect Sefton's retail hierarchy
    - To give priority to Town Centres and only allow development at out of town centres, based on a sequential approach (i.e. town centres first, edge of centres then out of centre and then where a clear need with no major detrimental impact on town centres.
    - As far as possible to only allow bulky goods retail sales on our retail parks, although there are exceptions where "planning loopholes" have been exploited.

National Planning Policy Framework

- The National Planning Policy Advice was published in March 2012. It:
    - Continues to support competitive Town Centres and existing retail hierarchies
    - Continues to apply tests to out of centre development but now limits them to applying a sequential test, as referred to above.

Local Plan

The Council has now prepared draft policies supporting the retail hierarchy in existing town, district and local centres.
The Council are not proposing any new retail allocations.
There is a separate Working Group reviewing the Local Plan and findings of that review are proposed to be available towards the end of July/beginning of August.

Other Issues

There is little doubt that the demand for retail floor space is going to reduce over the next five years due to changing retail habits and the internet. Some national figures indicate up to 20%.

Major food stores, which have anchored retail growth in many town centres, are cutting back radically their investment programmes. This means that new food stores are likely to be smaller than in the past and will only happen when there is a significant unmet demand or “market gap”.

Challenges for Sefton (but not unique to Sefton) include:-

- Planning positively in a situation where retail demand is reducing.
- Ensuring that other non-retail uses can fill the void left by vacant retail floor space.
- Ensuring that particularly Bootle and Southport maintain the vitality and viability in difficult times.
- How do we revitalise the Crosby Centre post-Sainsbury’s withdrawal from proposals to build a new food store? (this was a big issue at the local plan consultation amongst Crosby residents).
- The Local Plan process can enable but can’t, in itself, deliver much needed town, district and local centre investment.
- The challenge will be to positively engage with key landowners, retailers and developers.

(Reference Recommendation 1 and 5 to the report).

5.2 Mark Catherall – Southport Business Improvement District Development Officer – Sefton MBC

Town Centre Management

Strengths

- Town Teams established in 4 Towns: Crosby, Maghull, Southport and Waterloo.
- A strong Partnership approach in a number of Towns across the Borough.
- Town Centres along with Town Centre Management models high on the local and National agenda.
- Sefton M.B.C Neighbourhoods Team provide some support, guidance and co-ordination to Town teams.

Weaknesses

- Many centres lack a clear vision with little buy-in from the private sector.
- Reduced resources mean it's difficult for Sefton MBC to facilitate any town centre management approach.
- Lack of a Strategic Policy for Town Centres across the Borough.
- Lack of promotion in relation to the "Green Pound".

Opportunities

- A Business Improvement District proposal for Southport .
- Funding for Town Centres available from the Portas funds, High Street Innovation Fund and Development Fund.
- Approved funding for Bootle, Crosby and Southport Investment Strategies.
- Increased Leisure facilities.

Threats

- The disillusion of the private sector.
- Continuing reduction of public spending.
- Local Authority Bureaucracy along with fees driving the private sector away (Town Centre Management Involvement).
- Consumer habits are changing – difficult questions to be asked regarding retail being converted to residential.
- Car parking charges will always be controversial – need to strike a careful balance – Lord Street Parking was being used by the retail workers so the occupation of spaces all day by retail proprietors/staff vehicles was deterring shoppers away – Pay and Display can be useful as it ensures a higher turnover of shoppers.

(Reference: Recommendation 1 to the report)

5.3 Andrew Walker – Head of Direct Services – Sefton MBC

Strengths – Security

- Sefton Security operate from the Head quarters at Linacre Lane which is the alarm receiving centre. Sefton Council are the only Local Authority to receive a triple Gold Star accreditation for the operation of the Security System.
- Throughout Sefton there are 3.5 thousand cameras of which 100 monitor public areas and Town Centres. Sefton Security have a number of systems in place. One of the most valuable features of those is that the police have I-Pads that are compatible with the cameras, which means that they can be directed as required, in liaison with Sefton Security and can ascertain what, if any, assistance is required.
- Sefton Security has been awarded 3 Gold Stars which means that the Council can undertake certain privileges and make independent decisions in terms of Security and Cameras and this allows the Council to operate and trade.
- Sefton Security are audited six times per year – every incident is recorded and the monitors are reviewed in that respect.
- Security across the Borough's Town Centres is deemed a strength, in terms of prospective business investors.

Strengths – Cleansing

- The Council collects refuse from commercial operations/businesses, providing a service that's cost effective. Local Authorities have a statutory duty to provide commercial refuse collection and in that respect some Local Authorities seem to have taken a different approach by pricing themselves out. Sefton provides a Service that is cost-effective and we see that as a strength.
- Street cleansing is a visible positive that can be seen by all who visit or trade in the Town Centres across the Borough.

Weaknesses/Threats - Security

- Some of the older cameras are 10/11 years old. Technology has and will continue to move on at a rapid rate, but with no budget to update or renew the equipment, the Council needs to look at innovative ways of updating the existing cameras.
- The I-Pads used by the Police can only be linked to the 3 G cameras and as stated earlier, many of the cameras are relatively older.

Weaknesses/Threats – Cleansing

- Culture issue in that a vast majority of visitors have no interest in the amount of litter generated so there are disposal issues along with litter picking.
- Fewer Enforcement Officers to enforce the local laws of littering (pavement culture).

Opportunities - Security

- Sefton Security are currently undertaking a review of all the cameras across the Borough and will rank them in order of replacement need.

Opportunities – Cleansing

- Transformation may allow the opportunity to review the smaller issues of different agreements previously agreed in terms of side alleys along with new and innovative ways of providing a cleansing service.
- Number of different agencies involved in Street Cleansing, with different Departments responsible for various and different elements of the service. Over the past 12 months the Council has made progress in re-aligning all those elements to cleansing in order that the service is no longer disjointed.

(Reference: Recommendation 2 and 7 to the report).

5.4 Dave Marrin – Service Manager, Traffic and Transportation – Sefton MBC

Town Centre Parking Policies

Parking continues to be an emotive and sometimes difficult issue and one where a consistent, strategic approach is required, but has been lacking. Consequently, as part of Phase 2 of the Parking Review a framework will be developed that can be presented to Members and agreed for the Authority. Key stimuli for the work are:

- Ongoing parking review – initially focusing on management and enforcement, but second stage will include strategy and policies.
- Emerging Local Plan – in terms of development requirements, allocations and the need to prepare a coherent set of development policies.
- Existing policies and standards coming under increasing scrutiny about whether they are effective or appropriate.
- Request from Development Control colleagues for a coherent strategy and specific, agreed policies that they can present to developers.
- Parking surveys undertaken in 2010 in Bootle and Southport, but no use made of results yet.

Strengths

- Established Operation / Management.
- Public Awareness of existing arrangements.
- Flexible – reflects local circumstances.

Weaknesses

- Lack of control over competition.
- Lack of clearly defined and agreed policies.
- Public perception.
- Is it fit for purpose? – response to economic situation.
- Clarity about what is needed / desired.

Opportunities

- Local Plan
- Policy Review (Parking Review)
- Managing Traffic in Town Centres
- Upgrade of Operational Systems (payment methods)
- New Developments

Threats

- Competition – Private Operators
- Lack of Control over Competition
- Ongoing Economic Situation
- Town Centre Viability
- Operational Systems at end of life.
- New Developments

(Reference: Recommendation 3 to the report)

5.5 <u>Hugh Evans – Southport Improvement District</u>

Key points:-

- There have been misgivings in relation to the value of the Portas Review.
- Towns throughout the Borough have seen an increase in empty properties.
- The Government have moved on apace with Business Improvement Districts (BID). One of the advantages to BID is that it devolves the running of business to the proprietors themselves.
- Southport began the process of a BID in March 2013 when a consultation began. It's important that a BID is produced that's owned and managed by the businesses themselves.
- A well produced BID should increase footfall, reduce crime and make the Town a vibrant and great one to visit, looking and feeling nice in order that visitors have a desire to return.
- The Southport BID will need to make improvements to the look and feel of the Town, improve signage and focus on improvements to the side streets and businesses operating there.
- The levy formula is based on the rateable value of the property. All money collected is spent on projects agreed by the proprietors and the scheme only works well if businesses work collectively together for the good of the Town. A cap has been introduced for those businesses with a rateable value of £2000 so that they do not pay a levy.
- Businesses include retail, accommodation and hospitality.
- Sefton Council's involvement in the BID is as follows:-

- Supportive in progressing the BID (expertise within the Council to advise and guide)
- Resource to follow the BID through.
- Manage the levy payments.
- The Council will have one of the twelve seats on the Board.
- Help and assistance with base line agreements.
- Ensure the Council delivers on what it has said it would deliver.
- Evaluation of the impact of the BID will be done by producing an Annual Report identifying all the achievements, what has worked well and what has not worked so well, demonstrating how footfall has increased and crime decreased as a result of the BID and the interventions in place.

(Reference: Recommendation 5 to the report)

5.6 **Catherine Caddick – Proprietor of business, Crosby Town Centre**

Key points:

- Condition of Crosby Village has deteriorated over the years and the town is in great need of regeneration; for the proprietors it is soul destroying. It's not a great shopping experience.
- Too many betting shops and charity shops.
- Maghull Developments have erected hoardings that are not in keeping with the quality of the high street in Crosby. They are a health hazard and unprofessional and need to be able to withstand the elements. Past experience has demonstrated that Maghull Developments are unapproachable. Since the proposal of Sainsbury's trading in Crosby collapsed, very little progress has been made on that site. If Sainsbury's had gone ahead it would be open now with 2/3 hours free parking which would have encouraged increased footfall. The ideal would be to operate a minimum of 2 hours free parking with the introduction of a tariff thereon thereafter.
- In 1993 Crosby Town Centre was badly pedestrianised and two years earlier car parking charges were introduced. Instead of addressing the issues it's spiralled out of control.
- People are frustrated. Crosby town looks and feels tired, and doesn't portray a positive image of the town. If the general housekeeping such as painting the lampposts and cleaning the town up was addressed, then businesses operating in the area would have a fighting chance. It's the little things that let the Town down, such as the caging around the Christmas tree being left for some time after the tree had been taken down.
- ABetterCrosby has established a Town Team in Crosby with various representatives in eligible positions across Crosby and the Team was successful in obtaining £10,000 of Portas monies.
- There doesn't seem to be any spirit in Crosby but if proprietors, residents and visitors saw the Town moving forward then the Town and spirit would evolve, thereby making it a wonderful place to visit with a happy ambiance.
- Car parking charges has become a fund raiser for the Local Authority. If the money or a percentage of the money went back into the Town for development and improvement work, then this would also contribute to the progress of the Town.
- Having been involved with the Business Village Partnership many years ago which was a vehicle for Crosby to have a voice, Town Teams provide a similar opportunity. Establishing a Town Team would require some communication and commitment from local Councillors and some key players.

(Reference: Recommendation 5 to the report)

5.7 Bob Greenhalgh, Bootle Strand Centre Manager

Strengths

- The Strand attracts shoppers from local Community and Neighbourhoods (95% live within Bootle, loyal shoppers) along with office workers in the area. The Health and Safety Executive employ approximately 1200 Members of staff and Hugh Baird College has approximately 2500 students who may shop at the Strand.
- Strong traffic links to the Strand.
- New owners who have stated they intend to be in it for the long haul and are committed to spending money on the Centre to try to increase footfall. They have drawn up a 10 year plan involving significant investment to make aesthetic improvements to the Centre, making it an enjoyable shopping experience in order that shoppers spend more time in the Centre and return.

Weaknesses

- Loss of major retailers (T.J.'s, International Clothing, Thorntons, Textile World, Clinton Cards)
- Reduced footfall by 12% (190,000/week reduced to 165,000/week)
- Unable to attract any of the major retailers.
- Port – unloading and loading the vessels used to take up to 3 days which meant all the staff on the vessels were visiting the Strand and spending money. Now the operators turn the loading and unloading around in a day so the Strand has lost that trade.
- An attempt was made at attracting evening trade. However, it never portrayed the appropriate image, atmosphere and ambiance so the idea was rejected by the tenants at their tenants meeting.

Opportunities

- The possibility of using the lampposts outside the Strand as advertising space, possible income generator.
- Valentines promotions.
- Theme activities.
- The use of vacant units as kiosks for Community Groups and local schools.
- We have been Members of the Chambers of Commerce. This didn't give the Centre many benefits, but it provided networking opportunities and gained new contacts in order that the Centre can use local trades people for work such as signage.
- Intention to have markets outside the Centre on a six weekly basis to increase footfall/trade.
- Introduction of incentives to attract traders to rent units and to continue to remain in the Centre.
- Need to look at alternative uses for the Centre.

Threats

- On-line shopping has contributed to reduced footfall, with a predicted 20% of surplus space.
- There are 28 flats located within the Centre that are tired and in need of investment and improvement works.
- The conversion of St. Georges House into flats would prove difficult and creating residential units wouldn't provide a viable return unless rents of £800+/week were secured.

(Reference: Recommendations 4 & 10 to the report)

5.8 **Nick Thompson - Waterloo Town Team**

Strengths

- The coast.
- The seaside.
- Seafront Gardens.
- Restaurants and Pubs.
- Active local communities.
- Church ward forum.
- Active and supportive Councillors.
- Resilient High Streets.
- Good public transport and highway links.
- Good relationships with SMBC.
- Strong voluntary sector.
- Good mix of different types of housing.
- Connectivity to the wider city region.

Weaknesses

- Poor image regarding pubs/drunken behaviour.
- Illegal parking on South Road.
- Linear structures of South Road and St. John's Road can lead to disconnection.
- The need to develop a strong traders association.
- SMBC relationship can be overwhelming and contradictory.
- Retail based economy.
- Subject to downturns in the economy.
- Little promotion of Waterloo as the area where the Gormleys begin.
- Lack capacity to progress work programme.

Opportunities

- Need to develop a stronger traders association.
- Recognition by the Portas and SMBC through high street fund that Waterloo has potential.
- Port development could offer jobs to local residents.
- Tourism – promotion of the Gormleys.
- Improved Street Scene.
- Develop branding for the area.
- Continual development of the Waterloo Town Team.
- Access to the wider city region's opportunities.

Threat

- Port development could lead to environmental degradation, increase in traffic and little benefit for local people regarding the accessing of jobs.
- Lack of local support.
- Council cuts.
- Hidden poverty affecting the area.
- Lack of affordable housing.
- Poor community engagement by lack of public or private agencies.
- Small businesses and projects not taken seriously.
- Regeneration agencies with no local knowledge.
- Local agencies fail to understand lack of capacity.

A Town Team has been established in Waterloo. The journey began 4 years ago. It was important to have the right, like-minded representatives on the Team. The Team comprises of representation from Traders, Voluntary Groups, Faith Sectors and Statutory Bodies from Health, Police and the Fire Service.
There was a desire from all representatives to create a Strategy to shape Waterloo into a great place to live, work and visit.
The successful bid for Portas money gave Waterloo Town Team a goal and focus. The team gelled well together, and it became clear that Waterloo is one of Sefton's hidden gems. Tapping into visitors attractions is important and a golden opportunity and one advantage is Waterloo being in front of Gormleys statues.

(Reference: Recommendation 5 to the report)

5.9 **<u>Pete Spiers, Adrian Swift and Jamie Scott - A Better Crosby</u>**

<u>Key Issues:</u>

- Great Crosby is a relatively large suburb of the Liverpool City Region, comprising around 21,000 households and 52,000 residents.
- This large catchment area should be well capable of supporting a successful and vibrant Crosby Village centre.
- Over the last 10-15 years, the strength and vitality of Crosby Village has suffered dramatically, as a result of the combined impact of limited investment, poor pedestrian and cycle access, parking constraints and costs, and a rising number of vacant properties.
- In 2010, Sainsbury's announced plans to develop a new superstore in Crosby Village. Although this development would have led to much needed investment in the area, there were concerns by residents and local politicians about the proposed scale and design of the development and it did not receive planning permission.
- A local community group, ABetterCrosby, was formed in 2010 with the aim of bringing about positive change in the Crosby area by building on its heritage and looking to help direct its future in a more positive manner.
- It was recognised that a much wider consensus of local community groups, traders and politicians was required in order to effect meaningful change of Crosby Village.
- In 2011, The Crosby Area Partnership (CAP), formed The Crosby Village Redevelopment Group (CVRG). The aim of the group was to start developing a clear strategy to support the revitalisation of Crosby Village.
- The CAP's 2012 outline Business Plan highlights the key initiatives and actions that are required to support the transformation of Crosby Village into the thriving retail and leisure area that the residents of Crosby would like to see.
- The inability of Crosby Village to attract a much wider variety of stores and restaurant/cafe facilities is symptomatic of a number of issues:-
  - A general lack of investment in Crosby Village and its stores.
  - Ownership of parts of the Village real estate being in the hands of property development companies which are prepared to wait, rather than to actively invest in the area.
  - General poor access issues, with pedestrians and cyclists having to negotiate busy road crossings and inadequate "pay and display" parking spaces for car users.
  - Residents preferring to use other local centres, with superior facilities, for their retail and leisure needs (eg Formby, Southport, Aintree)
  - A lack of confidence by traders and residents to engineer change.
- Over the last 10-15 years, Crosby Village has suffered from the classic "vicious circle" of a lack of attractive shops, leading to lack of customers, leading to an even greater lack of shops. There is a real danger that unless action is taken to reverse these trends and to break this vicious circle, the decline of Crosby Village could become terminal.

- Crosby Area Partnership has identified a number of strategic initiatives, featured in the outline business plan, to help underpin the realisation of Crosby Area Partnership's vision for Crosby Village. The initiatives are grouped in three core areas:-
  - Business Promotion and Attracting More People
  - Investment
  - Transport and Access
- For each initiative, specific targets and measures have also been identified to help support the monitoring process.

1. Business Promotion /Attracting More People	
Active Marketing and Promotional Activity	
<u>Targets</u>	<u>Measured by</u>
• Secure Crosby as a Fairtrade town	• At least 4 events each year including "Annual Goose Fair", Christmas Lights Switch on
• Annual event programme developed in conjunction with local businesses to complement the area and encourage more footfall for retail and leisure activities	• Ideas include a website advertising services available, retailers joining together to offer online ordering and delivery services
• Using the concept of Totally Local, develop a brand identity for Crosby that all local businesses can sign up to	• Measure increase in footfall, turnover rate of car parks as Key Performance Indicators
• Develop an understanding of Crosby's customer base and potential for improvement	• Promotion of ideas with businesses, property owners and developers in Crosby Village.
• Research and develop practical ideas for promoting mixed use retail in Crosby village	• Preparation of "Investment and Opportunities Prospectus"
• Undertake a "Good News" campaign	• Development of positive relationship with local media, including regular news releases and updates on achievements

2. Investment	
New Business Start-Ups	
<u>Targets</u> Innovative new businesses in other parts of Crosby provide exemplars of what can be achieved with the right approach in the right location.	<u>Measured by</u>
• Develop a business incubator programme to offer seed funding for new business initiatives and support focusing on promoting retail development and usage. Ideas include the development of a local retail and service sector academy to support utilising expertise of existing businesses to share ideas, guidance and tips on how to set up and run a successful small business and small grants to allow potential retailers to test the market with their business idea in Crosby Village.	• Attracting funding packages via the Local Economic Partnership, Invest Sefton (and other similar bodies) from public and private sources
• Work with landlords so that unused upper floor accommodation is made available to local start-up entrepreneurs for offices and workshops.	• Examination of feasibility of establishing a Community Interest Company to promote and if necessary undertake the provision of appropriate space, e.g. underused upper floors; provision of "micro-business" space, e.g. stalls, kiosks for specialist traders, etc .
• Increase expertise in the Partnership to support businesses	• Establishment of links with the National Skills Academy for Retail and number of participants/local businesses undertaking training/courses.
	• Invest expert speakers on relevant subjects
	• Benchmark good practice elsewhere.

2.Investment	
Built Environment (continued)	
Targets	Measured by
• Raise the standard and quality of design of new development in Crosby Village	• Working with Sefton Council and other partner agencies to pursue external funding opportunities for capital improvement works and amount of funding attracted.
	• Amount of Section 106 and Section 278 monies raised in conjunction with development opportunities as they arise and ensuring that it is allocated to enhancement projects in and around Crosby Village.
Development Opportunities	
Targets	Measured by
• To capitalise on investment opportunities when they come along with focus on best outcome for Crosby	• Proactive and constructive engagement with Sainsbury's and Maghull Group on potential investment proposals through Design Charettes, Workshops and consultations.
• To influence development in and the regeneration of Crosby Village	• Promotion of the role of centres in the preparation of an "Economic Strategy for Sefton", in the Sefton Core Strategy, in the Local Transport Plan and other such strategies at the appropriate stage of consultation.

3. Transport and Access	
Crosby Cycling Hub	
Targets A network of cycle routes will be introduced, with a focal hub in the village, connecting all schools into the village. A key route to the station and beach will be created, feeding into the Sefton Coastal Park, and links to Liverpool and Southport.	Measured by
• Cycle training for school children and their families is provided in the village.	• The length of cycle routes improving physical accessibility into the village.
• Tourist routes linking the village, beach, train and the Iron Men bring people in.	• Number of secure cycle parking stands/facilities provided in Crosby Village.
• A cycle friendly cafe/cycle hire/community venue created in the village	• Numbers of school children receiving cycling proficiency training.
• This network drives new internet use which is linked into marketing of the whole village.	• The success in promoting Local Sustainable Transport Initiatives to owners and employees of business and services in the village.
	• The attraction of Local Transport Plan/Merseytravel funding
Promotion of Local Public Transport	
Targets Working in partnership with Merseytravel and bus operators to encourage more people to use public transport to get to Crosby Village.	Measured by
• Promotion of the No. 53 Quality Bus Partnership.	• Regular meetings with Partnership Officers at Merseytravel.
• Local circular bus service between rail stations and key shopping areas including Crosby Village, St. John's and South Road (all in the Crosby/Waterloo area).	• Dissemination of information about services via media; via availability of travel/service information leaflets to local residents; collection of data from operators to measure success.
• Improved bus facilities for users around Crosby Village.	• Commissioning of Feasibility Studies for both proposals.

3. Transport and Access	
Promotion of Local Public Transport (continued)	
Targets	Measured by
• Longer term ambition of a new bus station	• Inclusion of proposals in Local Transport Plan programmes
Access to Village Centre	
Targets .	Measured by
• Look at potential for de-pedestrainisation of Moor Lane in Crosby Village to encourage more passing trade and improve security at night. Particularly relevant to potential Sainsbury's development.	• Preparation of feasibility study by Council in conjunction with any forthcoming developing/redevelopment proposals.
• In conjunction with Sefton MBC, research innovative new ways of looking at parking charges in Crosby Village.	• Agree an access and parking strategy with Council including encouraging and facilitating short-stay parking in the village.
• Further exploration of parking issues within residential streets surrounding Crosby Village, particularly in relation to potential Sainsbury's development.	• Negotiate with Council about possibility of managing pricing structure to encourage visits and increase dwell times at quieter periods.

(Reference: Recommendations 5, 6 & 11 to the report)

5.10 **Ged Gibbons – Regional Chairman of the Association of Town and City Management**

Key points:

- Town Centre Management – need to have individuals with a "can do" mentality and who want to drive a shared vision forward. It's difficult to deliver actions with individuals that have a parochial vision and we need to have "like minded" people on board. Beware of the Progress Prevention Officer.
- "If you always do what you've always done then you'll always get what you've always had."
- Threats to town centres: online shopping, budget cuts – no funds to pay for Town Centre Managers, conflict in managing the hope, expectation and demand of the younger generation – lifestyles have changed.
- Retail offer has changed; individuals are shopping around. Town Centres are seeing an increase in shops such as Poundland, Home Bargains, Pound World, B&M, charity shops etc.
- Two different shopping experience:-
  - Basic regular shopping for food and other everyday incidentals; and
  - Leisure – sense of destination.
- The culture of all the town centres throughout the Borough are all diverse; they all have their own character – one size doesn't fit all – important to tap into opportunities such as publicising local historic buildings to increase footfall by way of visitor attractions.
- Requirement in the future for the private sector to work with the public sector, less funding with greater demand – essential to look at the make-up of town centres; the competition needs to be balanced with different players.
- Town teams should have regular meetings with the Head of Planning Services and draft a 10 year plan with a clear vision.

(Reference Recommendations 1, 4 & 12 to the report)

5.11 <u>Ian Maher – Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Tourism</u>

Key points:-

Town Centres play a key role in making communities attractive and vibrant places to live. They also generate investment and jobs and attract visitor spend from a wide catchment area. If Town Centres go into decline, then they reduce opportunity for everyone. For these reasons, the future of Sefton's Town Centres is one of six top priorities endorsed by Cabinet.

Town Centres are varied and need to be looked at individually:

- Town Centres (many convenience and comparison goods, wide catchment area, variety of non-retail uses, extensive transport links, investment opportunities, major public realm) – Southport and Bootle.
- District Centres (mainly convenience goods, smaller catchment area, mainly retail, local transport links, opportunities for investment and/or re-modelling, modest public realm) – Crosby, Formby, Maghull, Waterloo.
- Local Centres (convenience goods, small scale, retail, local catchment area) – Ainsdale, Birkdale, Churchtown, Old Roan, Netherton, Linacre Bridge.

The SWOT analysis below looks at issues facing all these different types of centre, but solutions will need to be tailored to the prospects of each centre.

<u>Strengths</u>

- Retail/leisure offer of Southport.
- Office Quarter and College campus sustain the Bootle offer.
- All suburban residential areas are served by District and Local centres, which help define their identity.
- Commitment of Southport Town Centre ratepayers to the future of the Town.
- Entrepreneurship strong in centres that have struggled (e.g. Maghull Emporium).

<u>Weaknesses</u>

- In South Sefton, social deprivation caps purchasing power and limits growth.
- For centres with a coastal location, the size of the natural catchment area is constrained by the sea.
- Declining residential population of Sefton.

<u>Opportunities</u>

- Investment strategies commissioned for Bootle and Crosby Centres (Southport to follow).
- Growing support from businesses and government for Town Centre Partnerships.
- Continuing interest in Sefton from the multiples.
- Opportunities to innovate in Town Centre enterprise e.g. pop-up shops, markets, events.
- The conditional use of business rates relief to secure social value e.g. local jobs.

Threats

- The superstore revolution, reducing the market share of small independent traders.
- Competition from the internet, especially for non-food and digital goods.
- Competition from out-of-town Centres including Liverpool One and the Trafford Centre.
- Failure of Government to reset rateable values for commercial premises.
- The slow recovery from the recession.

(Reference: Recommendations 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 12 to the report)

5.12 Christine Finnigan, Partnership and Local Taxation Officer and Angela Ellis, Customer and Transactional Services Support Manager, Sefton MBC.

Key Issues:

- Charities, Voluntary or not-for-profit organisations may be entitled to help and support with their Business Rates bill – charitable relief/discretionary relief may be applied for and this can reduce the bill by 80-100%.
- Collection rates are improving
- Three New Rate Reliefs:
  - Rateable Value – retail businesses with a rateable value of £50,000 or less are eligible for a new additional special discount worth £1000 which relates to the rate bills Sefton has approx. 150 businesses which fall under this category. Letter to be sent to all those businesses which are eligible.
  - Retail Relief: Empty properties – Re-occupancy – A shop/unit empty for more than 12 months and re-occupancy occurs, the new occupier receives 50% off rates for the first 2 years.
  - All empty properties are exempt from paying business rates for three months after they become vacant.
- Sefton has approx. 200 empty shops of which 150 benefit from retail relief.

(Reference: Recommendations 8&9 to the report)

5.13 Jane Gowing, Head of Planning Services

Key Issues:

Planning – town centres, changes of use, retail developments etc.
National Planning Policy framework - ''the purpose of the planning system is to contribute the achievement of sustainable development'. There are 3 dimensions of ''sustainable development'' running through planning;
Economic role – building strong economies by ensuring sufficient land of the right type in the right place at the right time to support growth and provision of infrastructure.
Social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities by providing a supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations, high quality built environments, accessible local services that support its health, social and cultural well being.
Environmental role – protecting or enhancing our natural, built and historic environment, prudent use of resources, minimise waste pollution and adapting to climate change etc.
'These 3 roles should not be taken in isolation because they are mutually dependent – e.g. economic growth can secure higher social and environmental standards and well designed buildings and places can improve the lives of people and communities.'
'Economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system.'

Major new (retail) developments – how do we assess (social) impacts?

Legislation and case law establish the various planning issues that can (and can't) be taken into account when making decisions on planning applications. These are wide and include issues like;

- Highways impacts
- Impacts on neighbours' amenity – e.g. through hours of operation, noise disturbance, loss of light etc.
- Economic impacts - £investment, jobs created, contribution to regeneration objectives etc.
- Ecology/environment issues – e.g. harm to habitats, species, mitigation etc
- Policies in the Development Plan – does the application comply?
- Design
- Retail impacts.

Issues that can't be taken into account:

- Competition – e.g. too many charity shops already
- Loss of value (house prices)
- Covenants
- Matters covered by other legislation – e.g. Building Regulations

How do we access retail impacts of new supermarkets?

Developments over 2,500 sq. M. need to be accompanied by a Retail Impact Assessment (RIA),
This includes various technical and other information such as: breakdown of floorspace and uses (comparison or convenience shopping); amount of existing and proposed trading (£); trade draw – where will customers come from and how many?; are existing premises over trading?; site assessment /sequential test– why here?; Policy analysis; new jobs created; **vitality and viability assessment** etc.
The RIA is prepared by specialist retail consultants with recommendation regarding the likely impacts of the development in the locality taking into account the issues set out above.

National Planning Policy Framework – Ensuring Vitality of Town Centres

Local Plans should recognise town centres as the heart of communities and policies should protect their vitality and viability.
Define a network and hierarchy of town centres – e.g. local centre, town centre etc.
Promote competitive town centres and provide customer choice and a diverse retail offer.
Allocate appropriate edge of centre sites for main town centre uses – if no sites are available.
Allocate sites in other accessible locations that are well connected to the town centre.
Sequential test- to planning applications for retail that are not in an existing centre.
Applicants and Local Authority should demonstrate flexibility on issues of store format and scale.
Where an application fails the sequential test or will have a **significant adverse impact** it should be refused. Need to be able to demonstrate that impact and harm in order to refuse.

Vacant uses; Use Classes Order

Various changes in the UCO mean that more uses than ever before can now change without the need for planning permission. The following sets out those uses ordinarily found within town centres and as such excludes industrial/office uses.

At present there are three types of permitted change:

a) Those not requiring prior-approval to the Council and not time-limited.
b) Those not requiring prior-approval to the Council but can only operate for a two-year period.
c) Those that require prior-approval to the Council and not time-limited.

a) No prior approval/not time-limited

From	To
A2 (professional and financial services) when premises have a display window at ground level	A1 (shop)
A3 (restaurants and cafes)	A1 or A2
A4 (drinking establishments)	A1 or A2 or A3
A5 (hot food takeaways)	A1 or A2 or A3
Casinos (sui generis)	D2 (assembly and leisure)

Note: A1 uses include but are not limited to shops, retail warehouses, hairdressers, funeral directors, travel and ticket agencies, post offices, pet shops, sandwich bars, domestic hire shops, internet cafes.

A2 uses include professional and financial services (other than health or medical services) such as banks, building societies, estate and employment agencies, betting shops.

b) <u>No prior approval/time-limited</u>

Since 30 May 2013:

Buildings with A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, D1 and D2 uses will be permitted to change use for a single period of up to two years to A1, A2, A3 and B1 uses.

c) <u>Prior approval/not time limited</u>

Since 6 April 2014:

A1 (under 150m. sq./A2 to C3 (Residential). This is not applicable within Conservation Areas (only Lord Street and Chapel Street benefit).

A1 to Bank/Building Society/Friendly Society/Credit Unions (mentioned explicitly to the exclusion of any other A2 use such as a bookmakers).

6.0 Key Opportunities – Business Improvement District (BID)

6.1.1 A BID is a flexible funding mechanism to manage a clearly defined retail, commercial or industrial area.

> *The Local Government Act 2003 allows local businesses and other stakeholders to form a partnership to improve their area: improvements which must be additional to services the Council already provides.*
>
> *The BID business plan is put to a ballot and must be agreed both by the Council and by the majority of business ratepayers (and a majority of the (Rateable Value) in the area).*
>
> *The Council, as billing authority, is then authorised to levy an additional rate on all balloted businesses (whether they supported the BID or not), and to pass the revenue onto the BID Company (BidCo).*
>
> *The BidCo is responsible for delivery of the business plan and is accountable to its ratepayers and to the Council. It is normally a not-for-profit limited company, and is governed by the Business Improvement District (England) Regulations 2004.*
>
> *Every BidCo is required to periodically re-ballot business ratepayers to renew consent to the levy and the business plan.*

6.1.2 BIDs are a tried and tested method of regenerating town centres, commercial districts and some tourism zones. There are currently 126 formal BIDs in the UK, of which 39 have been successfully renewed. Around 80% of ballots for a new BID return a "yes" vote. BIDs on Merseyside include City Centre BID and The Commercial District.

6.1.3 Tourism BIDS (TBIDs) are new and actively being promoted by Visit England who have established an "Early Adopters" group to help develop and share best practice. Sefton and its Southport BID are invited members of that group.

6.1.4 Sefton has had previous experience of BIDs. About 120 businesses in Chapel Street, Southport were balloted in 2006 and 2007, but on both occasions declined by the narrowest of margins to become a BID. This is believed to be mainly due to the opposition of the Arcadia Group which had a national policy of not joining BIDs. However, Arcadia's presence in the town centre has since reduced and the climate has changed considerably in the High Street, with much greater interest in collaboration.

6.1.5 Southport has a strong core group of retailers, attraction operators and other town centre and seafront businesses, who have worked with each other and alongside the Council in Southport Partnership, Southport Tourism Business Network, and most recently in Southport Town Team.

6.1.6 This core business group had demonstrated a real willingness to take a leadership role. The business group established a Development Group and have submitted their manifesto.

6.1.7 The BID is projected to raise a total of £2.4 million over 5 years; this includes the levy and voluntary contributions along with other revenue streams.

6.1.8 The ballot papers for the BID were sent out on 27 February 2014, the deadline for return being 27 March 2014 and the successful result was announced on 28 March 2014.

6.1.9 Southport BID was launched on 1 June 2014. This is a fantastic opportunity for Southport, "The Classic Resort", to re-establish itself by undertaking some key initiatives grouped together in two main priorities: Promoting and Improving. In considering the two main initiatives, the Working Group agreed that the following should be considered.

6.2 Research: Key Drivers – Town Centre Change – A Struggling Economy

6.2.1 UK consumers are struggling in the aftermath of one of the deepest and most prolonged recessions in recent history. Higher taxes, heavier indebtedness and tighter lending conditions will keep town centre spending more muted than in the previous two decades.

6.2.2 With consumers expected to suffer for the foreseeable future we can assume town centre footfall will continue to fall, or at least remain depressed. The pressure on retailers and other town centre businesses is unlikely to improve in the short-term. They will need to adjust to the fact that most customers will not only have less disposable income, but may also exhibit different behaviour – a thrifty and price conscious outlook.

6.3 Research: Key Drivers – Town Centre Change – Ageing Society

6.3.1 We live in an ageing society and in some areas Southport in particular, over half the residents are 60 years of age or over.

6.3.2 An ageing consumer base will increase the requirement in town centres for facilities such as good access, health services, and public conveniences. This may lead to a growing demand for safer and cleaner environments for socialising and leisure activities.

6.4 Research: Key Drivers – Town Centre Change – Changing Consumers

6.4.1 The economy, demographic change and technology will shape the behaviour of future consumers.

6.4.2 Future consumers are likely to be characterised by 5 key drivers: service, expectation of choice, technology use, the pursuit of value and the desire for experiences.

6.4.3 It is likely that town centres will be impacted to some degree by the 5 key future consumer trends:

- An ageing population: will lead to specific demands for particular services and facilities, as well as an attractive and safe environment in which to shop and socialise.
- Ever increasing demand for choice: will place town centre operators under pressure to break from traditional business models to satisfy the demand for convenience.
- The continuing rise of e-commerce: may take trade from traditional retailers, yet mobile technology will be so embedded in people's lives that town centre operators could embrace and exploit it for their own benefit.
- The demand for value is here to stay: there will be an increasing demand for good value but with high quality goods and services.
- Leisure time will continue to be very important, more than ever before. If Town Centres are to survive the Leisure element of the Town Centre offer should be exploited accordingly: people's expectations are ever higher, in a world where innumerable options compete for their attention. If town centres are to compete they will need to offer people a viable alternative where they can shop, eat, work and play in a unique cultural, social, and exciting environment.

6.5 Research: Town Centre Futures: Responding to Change – Ageing Population

6.5.1 Maximising access, whether parking or public transport.

6.5.2 Creating safe and attractive environments for shopping.

6.5.3 Ensuring the provision of important facilities such as toilets and mobility.

6.5.4 Fostering community spirit through local cultural and social events.

6.5.5 Bringing important public and private services (such as health) on to the high street.

6.5.6. A greater focus on good service, often on a face-to-face basis, will no doubt be attractive to older consumers.

6.5.7 Greater opportunities for informal leisure and socialising.

6.6 Research: Town Centre Futures: Responding to Change – Economic Uncertainty

6.6.1 Supporting local businesses (e.g. through favourable rents and lease terms).
(Reference paragraph 5.12 to the report: Witness Statement – Christine Finnigan)

6.6.2 Supporting "pop up" businesses and short-term/seasonal enterprises.
(Reference recommendation 4 to the report)

6.6.3 Setting up town centre business and entrepreneurship mentorship schemes.
(Reference recommendation 4 to the report)

6.6.4 Providing town centre based re-training opportunities.

6.6.5 Achieving a favourable balance between budget, mass, and premium retailers.

6.6.6 Avoid the clustering of value retailers, bookmakers, bars, and fast-food outlets.
(Reference paragraph 5.13 to the report: Witness Statement – Jane Gowing)

6.6.7 Supporting and fostering local markets, community and participation.

6.7 Research: Town Centre Futures: Responding to Change – Consumer Change

6.7.1 Get to know your people and strike an appropriate balance between the 5 consumer drivers of value, service, experience, choice and technology.

6.8 Research: Key Findings - Demography

6.8.1 The population of the UK is projected to increase by 4.9 million between 2010 and 2020. This is based on an annual average growth rate of 0.8%, a higher rate of growth than that experienced over the past four decades.
We also live in an ageing society, a trend set to continue with the median age of the population expected to rise from 39.7 in 2010 to 42.2 by 2035.

6.8.2 Some population projections refer to the following:-

- In 5 years time there will be half a million fewer teenagers and young adults.
- In 10 years time there will be 3 million more people aged 70 and above.
- The proportion of middle aged people will fall.
- In some areas, over half the residents will be 60 or over.
- By 2017 people over 60 will make up close to 24% of the population (in some areas more).

6.9 Research: Key findings - Impact on Towns and Centres

6.9.1 Although we can only speculate about the impact of demographic change, we can draw a number of logical conclusions.

6.9.2 First, the growth in the number of older people in society will have an obvious impact on pension provision and health costs. Considering the elderly have the lowest incomes of any adult age group (although some have significant asset, holdings), it is possible that the growing size of this group may depress overall consumer spending.

6.9.3 It might also be assumed that certain businesses will benefit from the ageing population such as those providing health services, mobility products or organised holidays. However, it would be wrong to assume the elderly for the future will behave like those of yesteryear. Indeed, any of the post-war 'baby boomer' generation who are now reaching retirement are both technologically savvy, fashion conscious, and driven by a very different moral code, than their parents. We should assume they will want many of the same products and services as younger customers.
(Reference recommendation 2 to the report)

6.9.3 An ageing consumer base is likely to increase the requirement in town centres for certain facilities such as good access, health services and public conveniences. It is also likely to lead to a growing demand for safer and cleaner local environments for socialising and leisure activities, with a focus on facilities such as cafes and community centres.

6.9.4 The expected decrease in the proportion of young consumers will also have an impact, for instance, it may be speculated that this may lead to less demand for particular services, such as bars, which appeal to this group.
Yet, it is the increase in the proportion of people of working age that is perhaps of greatest significance who are value led, a trend which is unlikely to diminish in the face of economic constraints and burgeoning choice, both on- and off-line. It is fair to assume that this age group in particular will continue to drive the trend towards highly convenient, value led retail and leisure for the foreseeable future.

6.10 Research: Key Findings - Future technology

6.10.1 If there is one thing that can be predicted with some certainly is that multi-channel consumption is here to stay.

6.11 Research: Key Finding - E-commerce

6.11.1 The UK online retail sector is the largest and most mature in Europe, having experienced significant growth over the last decade. The growth in e-commerce has far outpaced store-based trading, and a continuation of this pattern in the next few years should be expected. Between 2011 and 2015, the proportion of all retail spending accounted for by the internet is expected to increase by 8.9% to 12.1% albeit at a slower rate of growth than has been experienced in the past.

6.11.2 The internet is increasingly used for bargain hunting and discount dealing, a trend expected to continue for the foreseeable future. Research has revealed online customer's increasing tendency to browse between competitors' websites and also on social forums. This suggests that customers are becoming even more savvy and are spending time researching best value.
It is also thought that internet users are increasingly using Cashback, Social Shopping and Voucher sites to hunt for a good deal.

6.12 Research: Key Findings - M-Commerce

6.12.1 UK consumers are pioneers of M-commerce, with visits to retail websites using smartphones increasing dramatically in recent years. There are 48.5 million mobile subscribers in the UK, and smartphone usage is increasing rapidly, with estimates of as many as 20 million users in 2011. At present the M-commerce audience is young: 63% of mobile email users are aged 18-24. However, it is reasonable to expect the median age will increase as older consumers begin to adopt smart phone technology. Associated with the rise in M-commerce is the growth in social networking. Smartphone technology allows for real-time and location specific networking, where the sharing of comments, opinions, information, and images, with a wide audience, is now the norm for many people.
Emerging statistics can help us think about what the future may hold for M-commerce:
73% of connected smart phone users use their phone while shopping
45% of mobile users in the UK aged 16 and above use a smartphone
69% of smartphone users regularly surf the internet
71% of smartphone users search to find information about goods and services after seeing an advert
M-commerce accounted for just 2% of E-commerce in 2011, but this is expected to rise to 7% by 2016.

6.12.2 It is expected that M-commerce will grow rapidly and we can expect it to become an increasingly important means for consumers to research and buy goods and services, engage with companies, and each other.

6.13 Research: Key Findings: Technological Innovation

6.13.1 Technological innovation is changing the way we behave, particularly in terms of how we communicate, and buy goods and services. This is likely to have far-reaching consequences for the way we shop and use town centres.

Perhaps the greatest threat for traditional retail, and not just town centres, is the trend for using the Internet to search for the best deals – people increasingly find it a more effective and less costly place to buy what they need.

Logically, we might expect to see traditional town centres suffer, given the impact online shopping has had on categories such as books, music, and electronics.

Smartphone technology offers consumers the ability to access information at speed and on the go, research and purchase goods anywhere, and communicate instantaneously. While E-commerce itself might understandably worry town centre operators, M-commerce offers opportunities for innovation on the high street. As such, engagement with this technology may afford an important means to boost the vitality of our town centres.

6.14 Research: Key Findings - Future consumers

6.14.1 The economy, demographic change and technology will shape the behaviour of future consumers. Combined with existing drivers such as the demand for convenience, experience and choice, a composite picture can be painted of the UK consumer in 2020 and could be characterised by 5 key drivers:-

- Getting Older – "Focus on good service and leisure in nice, safe, local places".
- Expect Choice – "Want to be able to shop and live on own terms. Businesses must meet our needs – anywhere and anytime".
- Use technology – "Technology is part of life, used for information, shopping, socialising and deal hunting".
- Driven by Value – "New outlook, less credit, high costs, depressed income".
- Want experiences – "Leisure is important. Individuals want places that offer unique retail, cultural, social experiences".

6.14.2 The impact of future consumer trends and groups on town centres will vary from town to town dependent on the exact make up of the local population. For example, the existence of value driven Family Value and Hard Pressed groups may ensure some businesses struggle to cope with the low consumer spending that this entails, while businesses in town centres with a high volume of Retiring in Style or Juggling Parents may experience the opposite situation.

However, it is arguable that all town centres will be impacted to some degree by the 5 key future consumer trends:

An ageing population: will lead to specific demands for particular services and facilities, as well as an attractive and safe environment in which to shop and socialise.

Ever increasing demand for choice: will place town centre operators under pressure to break from traditional business models to satisfy the demand for convenience.

The continuing rise of e-commerce: may take trade from traditional retailers, yet mobile technology will be so embedded in people's lives that town centre operators could embrace and exploit it for their own benefit.

The demand for value is here to stay: there will be an increasing demand for good value but high quality goods and services.

Leisure time will continue to be important: people's expectations are ever higher, in a world where innumerable options compete for their attention. If town centres are to compete, they will need to offer people a viable alternative where they can shop, eat, work, and play in a unique cultural, social, and exciting environment.

6.15 Research: Key Findings - The Portas Review

6.15.1 Understandably, there are growing calls from business, the public sector, town centre managers, and ordinary people, for society to get to grips with the problems facing town centres. Questions about what has happened, why, and what we want from our town centres going forward have become increasingly vocal.

6.15.2 Yet the most important question is the how. How can businesses, communities, landlords and local councils pull together to address decline and deliver vibrant and engaging town centres fit for the twenty-first century?

Mary Portas's recommendations aimed to kick-start the beating heart of our communities. She recognised community life as a prerequisite for economic vitality and vice versa, and described future town centres as diverse multifunctional centres for shopping, socialising, living and working – the ultimate destination for experiences unavailable anywhere else.

Portas's comprehensive list of recommendations focus on the following five themes:

1. Town centres must be run like businesses
2. The conditions to help businesses flourish must be fostered
3. The problem of competition must be addressed
4. Landlords' roles and responsibilities must be better defined
5. The local community must feel encouraged to participate in their town centre's future.

6.15.3 The recommendations were purposefully broad in scope and high level. While some challenged the thinking of the local community, town centre managers and local councils, others could only be readily implemented by central Government. The report rightly acknowledged that there was no such thing as a generic town centre, and ‘a one size fits all’ approach would simply not work.

6.15.3 The review’s recommendation of the creation of Town Teams, with the specific remit to deliver the change required to improve their places, is highly important. It will be their responsibility to develop unique plans tailored to the needs of their towns.

6.15.4 What is the right strategy for my town centre?
The Portas Review encourages town centre mangers, as the enablers of change, to collaborate with local people, businesses, and landlords, to implement strategies to create vibrant sustainable places which meet the long-term needs of the community at large. This is a laudable objective with the potential to arrest decline and place town centres firmly at the heart of our communities once again.

6.15.5 The challenge of limited budgets and the weight of expectation that they ‘have to do the right thing’ will no doubt place Town Teams under significant pressure to select well conceived and impactful strategies, which in turn deliver positive change.
Arguably, the key to selecting the right strategies is for Town Teams to understand the needs of their community, in detail. Consequently, they must get to know their places and the people who use them.

7. Conclusions

Prepare place-based investment and marketing strategies for the principal town centres (Southport, Bootle, Crosby)

These strategies to cover (as a minimum):

- development of local leadership, with appropriate governance arrangements to involve all stakeholders (Business Improvement District as the most advanced level of engagement)
  (Reference paragraph 6.0 to the report)
- preparation of a vision and a strategy for getting there
  (Reference recommendation 1 and 7 to the report)
- product development, in terms of consolidating and re-modelling the central business district, matching the supply and demand for premises and attracting fresh investment (public and private) where the centre has a unique advantage
- quality environments, with attention to access by bus and cycle as well as car, parking, safety, lighting, signposting and additional street cleaning/maintenance
  (Reference recommendation 2 and 3 to the report)

- business development, such as promotion of pop-up shops/incubators, business mentoring, training and apprenticeships, digital inclusion, a commitment to a "Sefton Welcome"
  (Reference recommendation 4 to the report)
- place marketing, so the offer is placed before potential customers and clearly distinguished in a crowded marketplace
- co-ordinated use of Council leverage, so its landholdings, head leases, investments, Local Plan, development control policies, business support, employment services and rates relief policies all point in the same direction for each centre.
  (Reference recommendation 1 to the report)

Consider "triage" so stronger centres are bolstered to grow and invest and weaker centres (or the very weakest) are helped to adjust gracefully as traditional customers switch to the internet, edge-of-town centres or alternative centres.

Each area should be encouraged to develop a Neighbourhood Plan to include a Town Centre Strategy for the associated Town serving that area. Town Centre Strategies will need to address the impacts and pressures Town Centres will experience such as a struggling economy, changing consumers, economic uncertainty, future technology, E-commerce, M-commerce, Technological Innovation and the future consumers as identified throughout the review.

8. Monitoring Of Recommendations

Members of the Working Group stressed the importance of a robust monitoring and evaluation mechanism following the conclusions of the review and observations and comments from Cabinet.

The Working Group agreed that:

- Each recommendation agreed by the relevant Cabinet Member should have an action/implementation plan completed by the identified officer, including timescales and milestones for completion.
- The action/implementation plan could be the substance for the six-monthly Overview and Scrutiny Committee monitoring and evaluation report.
- The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Environmental Services) should receive a six monthly monitoring report, setting out progress made against each of the recommendations.

(Reference recommendation 14 to the report)

9. Recommendations – Town Centres

1. That the Director of Built Environment be requested to review the Town Centre Strategies in order that there is a co-ordinated and systematic approach to Town Centre Development that links into other strategies across the Council.

2. That the Director of Street Scene be requested to produce individual cleansing programmes for each commercial centre across the Borough, recognising that one size doesn't always fit all.

3. That the Director of Built Environment, as part of any future Parking Review, be requested to investigate the possibility of undertaking a more focused and robust approach to a cost/benefit analysis. The Parking Review has now been completed.

4. That the Director of Built Environment be requested to investigate the work that has been undertaken by Maghull Community Enterprise in designing and opening a Pop-up Shop known as "The Emporium" with a view to designing a Sefton Model for Pop-up Shops in order that other Town Centres across the Borough could adopt a similar approach.

5. That the Director of Built Environment, as resources allow, assign appropriate Officers to the Town Teams across the Borough in order that those Officers may offer support and guidance in promoting and improving Town Centres, assets and tourist attractions associated with individual Town Centres across the Borough as a possible income generator.

6. That the Director of Built Environment (Regeneration) in consultation with the Director of Corporate Services (Neighbourhoods) be requested to engage with local businesses, the Community, Voluntary and Faith sectors to encourage the development of the Bourough's Town Centres with a view to evidencing engagement with those groups to develop a proposed work programme that is effective and inclusive.

7. That an Officer and Member Working Group be established consisting of Officers from Built Environment (Regeneration) and Corporate Services (Neighbourhoods) and Members along with any other relevant Officers to take the task of Town Centre Development forward.

8. That the Director of Built Environment be requested to draft clear criteria to support Community Social Enterprise that reduce bureaucracy and create a greater understanding and empathy towards local business to include a consideration of rate rebates for social enterprises equivalent to registered charities when additional social value and support for community development can be clearly demonstrated.

9. That through the investment strategies for Bootle, Crosby and Southport, the Director of Built Environment be requested to contact the Town Centres and suggest that they conduct a mapping exercise of landlords in each of their Town Centres, using the Cabinet Member for Regenertaion and Tourism Capital Fund.

10. That the Director of Corporate Services be requested to investigate the possibility of landlords using the empty rate relief regime provided this leads to enterprise development, job creation and longer term economic and social value.

11. That the Director of Corporate Services be requested to ensure that Charity Shops continue to be inspected prior to awarding relief and reviewed from time to time to ensure that relief criteria are met, with any abuse reported being investigated and appropriate action taken accordingly.

12. That the Director of Built Environment be requested to investigate the possibility of using the lampposts outside the Bootle Strand Shopping Centre as advertising space and a possible income generator and if this proves to be successful, adopt a similar principle, wherever possible, throughout the Borough.

13. That the Working Group welcomes that the Director of Built Environment intends to consult and seek local community representation in relation to any proposal to draft an investment strategy that impacts on that local community.

14. That, in the spirit of the One Council vision, all Directors and Heads of Service be requested to consider how their individual Departments actions impact on Town Centre development and how the development or decline then impacts on local residents and citizens.

15. That the Working Group seeks reassurance from the Council that the regeneration of the Borough's Town Centres should not be delayed or blocked due to any unnecessary internal procedures within the Council by adopting local protocols that seek to support local community activities in a positive and supportive way.

16. That investment and operational planning be more closely aligned through the Director of Built Environment.

17. That the Director of Built Environment, as resources allow, be requested to submit a quarterly progress report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Environmental Services) detailing the proactive work being done to promote and create vibrant Town Centres across the Borough.

18. That the Director of Built Environment, as resources allow, be requested to submit a six monthly performance monitoring report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Environmental Services), setting out progress made against each recommendation of this Final Report.

10. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND THANKS

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- All Key Witnesses
- Mark Long, Head of Economy and Tourism and Lead Officer to the Review

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Councillor Patrick McKinley (Lead Member)

Councillor Denise Dutton

Councillor Lynn Gatherer

Councillor Paulette Lappin

Councillor Peter Maguire

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