

Suggestions from Councillors on the R&D Panel

In advance of the meeting, Cllrs Spikings and Bambridge had a brief walk around town. Although markings on High Street and Norfolk Street, none in the Vancouver Centre. There wasn't much adherence, people not social distancing, not keeping to one side.

- Until the full impact of the COVID 19 virus are known, it is not easy to know how we can help
- Four further businesses not re-opening – Monsoon, QD, Francis Jones, Peacocks
- We need to find out what people want and facilitate their ideas
- We don't use the High Street much. LB lives in town but uses only half a dozen shops; CM shops mostly out of town DIY/Sainsburys; VS buys clothes elsewhere; JL socialises
- Is on-line going to take over? If so, what about older shoppers.
- Do young people shop in town or just socialise?
- DAWN type research required to find out more about residents: age, health, education etc
- Consumers need to lead the way
- Not just a creative HUB but skills HUBs?
- Link further with CWA – possible problems fitting into curriculum
- Expand opportunities for people developing APPs, YouTube, films, recordings – use shops
- Speaking to retailers they need PR – who is open, times etc.
- “We are open in KL”
- Use shops for activities: climbing walls, table tennis centre etc. Selfridges have skate park
- Removing barriers ie business rates, rents to help new businesses establish
- Release capital to purchase Debenhams. Indoor market/crafts/food?
- Do Allied trades need help? How could this help the High Street?
- Just residential will affect other businesses
- Financial help for businesses? Incentives?
- Expand Tuesday Market to bring people into town centre for shopping – knock on effect?
- Retailers would not wish for more cycling if pavements jeopardised

- Parking incentives? John Lewis offer discount on parking when purchases made. Could be discount offers on parking tickets
- Pop ups in empty shops. Insurance and Business Rates would have to be waived. Tell the Government this.
- Events – more? Cost implications plus information from retailers whether events uplift their trade
- Better technology. We set up fibre so all can participate using cashless etc.
- Public realm improvements : one way, car park spaces wider, distancing imperative