

REPORT TO EVENTS AND TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT REPORT



Report Reference E-20-02
Meeting Date 16th November 2020
Agenda Item 7
Prepared by Town Centre and Marketing Officer

1.0 THE KNUTSFORD VOUCHER

There are now 52 businesses signed up to accept the Knutsford Voucher. Window stickers will be delivered to all the essential shops still open and non-essential ones as soon as is possible. Full redemption guidance will be issued all shops too. The website should be ready to accept orders by Friday 13th November.

A low-key social media campaign has begun with further promotion planned once the vouchers and website are ready. There is also a small promotion in the window at 60 King Street. A full list of the shops signed up will be published on the council website.

2.0 FLASH FASHION KNUTSFORD

This event scheduled for 7th November and the free parking day has been cancelled and will probably take place in the spring.

3.0 BUSINESS FOCUS GROUP

This has been re-scheduled for 25th November and the Town Centre and Marketing Officer is inviting a wider group of people due to lack of response from the initial group.

4.0 FREE PARKING DAYS

The free parking days will go ahead on 5th, 12th, and 19th December unless Lockdown is extended. This means there are 2 additional days that can be used in 2021.

5.0 TOWN CENTRE BARRIERS

The Town Centre and Marketing Officer has been working closely with Jo Wise and Gary Mallin of Cheshire East Council. The preferred option of planters is being considered by CEC. Planters were given approval by The Eye Society if a reflective red or bright strip was placed on the rim.

CEC is currently sourcing costs for taller planters. In the meantime, the TCMO has stressed how dangerous the barriers are becoming as we move closer to winter. High winds caused the barriers to fall numerous times weekend 31st October/1st November and they are often falling even in more clement weather. CEC are sourcing 'Toblerones' (option 3 in the report circulated to members 9th October) as a temporary alternative to barriers and do not see a return to 'normal' (no barriers or

rumble strips) as a viable option in the current second Lockdown or immediate future. From the discussions held, the TCMO does not feel that CEC will ultimately approve planters due to logistical reasons (taking delivery of the planters and installing the rim before moving to the highway and planting commences) and that once Toblerones are in place they will likely remain.

6.0 TOWN CENTRE VACANCY RATES

The vacancy rate for Knutsford is currently 8.58% (this includes those under offer and the pending closure of Jaeger).

If those which are under offer or have had an active planning proposal are removed the vacancy rate would be just under 7%. These premises are 60 King Street (formerly La Belle Epoque), 41 Princess Street (formerly Santander), 105 King Street (formerly Whittaker & Biggs) and 50 King Street (formerly Corks Out)

The TCMO was given a tour of Marshall's House by the new owners. Their vision for the building is for it to become an event space, wedding venue, community space and hub for home workers or businesses meetings.