**Notes of Virtual (Zoom) meeting of MCS Planning, Campaigns and Policy Sub Group – Monday May 4 replacing meeting scheduled for Monday April 20)**

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| **Agenda Item No** |  | **Actions** |
| **1** | **Attendees:** Dai Gwynne (DG),) Pam Wilsher (PW), Erik Bichard (EB), Sebastian Dembski (SB), David Massey (DM) . Jean Grant (JG) and Adrian Swift (AS) attempted to join the meeting but were unable to**Apologies:** Gavin Davenport, Andrew Evans |  |
| **2** | **Single item Agenda: MCS Response to the LCR Town Centres Commission**EB referred to the agenda with the following headings:* Review of the Task
* Sources of Information and Inspiration
* The need for more information
* Principles statement
* Delegation and Programme of work

A number of emails from individual members of the Council had also been received on the subject of High Streets/Town Centres including:David MasseyTrevor Skempton, Lucy AntalAdrian SwiftGavin DavenportThese are also attached for information |  |
| **2i** | **Review of the Task** The Commissioners have been asked to answer the following questions:* *How do town centres support a sense of place and belonging in Liverpool City Region?*
* *How can policy decisions on the environment, planning, and infrastructure best support our town centres?*
* *How can town centres operate as a hub for business and civil society in the longer term?*
* *How can town centres manage change to play a role in the future?*

It was agreed that we should suggest three further questions should be considered:* *What purpose do Town Centres/High Streets serve in their communities?*
* *What uses, other than retail, could serve those purposes?*
* *What are the transport issues that need to be considered?*

In addition to making representations to the LCR Town Centres Commission it was agreed that MCS had a wider role to play in contributing to the debate on the future of town centres. This is a hot topic for most Civic Societies in the light of emerging from the Corona pandemic and PW mentioned that Civic Voice were hosting a webinar on this topic on Wed May 6 at 12.30. Details from Civic Voice have been circulated.DM stressed that our resource is in our wide-ranging membership, both individuals and affiliated societies many of whom had deep knowledge of individual locations. This was an opportunity for us to engage our membership in a big waySD asked what our output might be and EB suggested that this could initially be a short report representing the collective view of MCS and its members. SD made the point that if this was to be a major campaign it was worth putting significant effort in | PW to attend Civic Voice webinar |
| **2ii** | **Sources of Information and Inspiration**DG proposed an Ideas competition which could be sent out to our members and wider interests.DM suggested we do a mailing to our members to ask them for ideas and views on Town CentresWe should aim to produce a list of inspirational town centres and High Streets from the UK and overseas. Some early suggestions are:Treorchy, Rhondda ValleyProvidence Rhode IslandWaltham ForestGhent town centreHolt, NorfolkAshford, High StreetCarmel, CAIdeas discussed also included:* Revival of the Mechanics Institute - a mid to late Victorian concept for workers to improve themselves
* Palio community festivals
 | PW added these post meeting |
| **2iii** | **The need for more information**The LCR Town Centres Commission are focusing on the following:* Liverpool City Centre
* Widnes Town Centre
* Runcorn Town Centre
* Halton Lea Town Centre
* Huyton Town Centre
* Kirkby Town Centre
* Prescot Town Centre
* Southport Town Centre
* Bootle Town Centre
* St Helens Town Centre
* Earlestown Town Centre
* Birkenhead Town Centre
* Liscard (Wallasey) Town Centre
* Heswall Town Centre
* Moreton Town Centre
* New Brighton Town Centre
* West Kirby Town Centre

MCS is broadly happy with the list although you could make the argument that other centres such as Crosby and suburban High Streets in Liverpool such as Old Swan, Wavertree, Woolton might be included. However, whilst there might be individual circumstances and opportunities, the principles will remain the same.DM mentioned Alex Corina’s attempt to revive Garston High Street a few years back |  |
| **2iv** | **Principles Statement**It was agreed that we should produce a Principles statement: Principles of Ensuring the sustainability of the Region’s town centres | EB to draft based on discussion and input from MCS Council to date |
| **2v** | **Delegation and Programme of work**It was agreed that the MCS work should be divided up and the following areas of interest were noted to produce input to our work:EB – Principles statement/social value/alternative uses DM- TransportSD – Regional retail conceptsPW – liaison with wider membership/e-news |  |
| **3** | **Date of next Meeting****Tuesday May 26 @ 6pm)** |  |