

Terms of Reference for the Future High Streets Forum December 2013

1. Aims:

- To provide joint business and government leadership to better enable our high streets and town centres to adapt and compete in the face of changing consumer and social trends.
- To advise the Government in the formation and delivery of policies to support high streets and town centres, in the short and longer term.

2. Objectives:

- Establish and help deliver a national workplan for the implementation of policies, including from the Portas Review, involving councils, business, third sector parties, Local Enterprise Partnerships and Government.
- Support Portas Pilots and Town Team Partners in developing and implementing their action plans, through oversight of local mentoring, online information and sharing of best practice.
- Support new and small businesses in starting up and competing. In particular to:
 - (i) support the roll out of pop up shops
 - (ii) support the markets industry and the Working Group on Retail Markets to expand the role of markets;
 - (iii) have regard to the costs and regulatory burden for small retailers
 - (iv) factor in the opportunities of digital trends.

3. Membership of the Forum:

- Membership of the Forum reflects individual expertise as well as seeking to achieve a balanced representation of high street and town centre interests. See Annex A for the list of members.

a) Chairs

- The forum is chaired by Brandon Lewis, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Communities and Local Government. A new co-Chair will be appointed shortly.
- The role of the chairs includes:
 - chair each meeting of the Forum;
 - appoint members of the Forum and task groups;
 - agree agendas, papers and meeting notes; and
 - invite speakers to attend relevant Forum meetings.

b) Forum Members

The role of Forum members includes:

- agree their practical contribution to the Forum, for example, chair a task group;
- attend and contribute to forum meetings (or send a representative as required); and
- speak as one voice when representing the Forum.

c) Department for Communities and Local Government:

The role of Departmental officials includes:

- provide a secretariat service for the Forum meetings;
- co-ordinate comments from officials and other Government Departments as required; and
- publish minutes from the Forum to give transparency and accountability.

4. Frequency of meetings:

- The Forum will meet approximately every three months, starting from the end of March up to April 2015. Views and decisions may also be sought between meetings by email if required.

5. Task and Finish Groups:

- The Forum will be supported by Task and Finish Groups to focus on key topics, agreed by the Forum. The Forum will agree the objectives, outcomes/outputs and key milestones for each Task and Finish Group.
- Each Task and Finish Group will:
 - have a chair and secretary appointed by Forum members;
 - be constituted of Forum members or of individuals appointed by Forum members;
 - agree deliverables with the Forum;
 - agree a timeline, including a completion date for the groups work; and
 - report their progress at Forum meetings as required.
- Findings of Task and Finish Groups will be considered by the Forum before they are published.