

Kidderminster Town Centre Meeting - 10th December Notes

Good evening ladies and gentlemen, my name is Russ Kelsall and I am here tonight as the spokesman for a number of traders located in Worcester Street, Prospect Hill and Coventry Street.

As a group we feel let down, frustrated and amazed in how the streets we are all located in have been neglected for the last 10 plus years.

For the last 5 years or so I have been involved with the town centre partnership to try to influence and support the town centre as much as possible, but for all the time I have spent in meetings nothing has been done to improve these streets !

In July this year I and two other retailers had a meeting with Marcus Hart and John Campion to discuss our concerns and to try to find out if the council had any plans for improvements to these streets in the near future - to say we all left feeling fobbed off would be an understatement !

In the last couple of months since then we have spent time being interviewed by the local press, radio and being part of email discussions with certain members of the council, trying to raise the plight of these streets but have we got anywhere - NO !

So recently we have been in discussion with a couple of members of the council who have been interested in listening to our issues, they have tried to help, hence why I am here tonight to appeal to all of you, the entire members of the Wyre Forest council for help / support and the weight of action and votes to get something done for these streets sooner rather than later -

In short we have issues with

The poor state of the christmas lights

Damaged saftery bollards and bicycle shelter which have been waiting for repair for well over a year

The lack of any flower tubs / hanging baskets in Worcester street

Lack of on street parking - and why did the on street parking that had been planned to be done within Worcester Street get cancelled ?

Increasing number of empty units

Business rates historically high, and are overdue to be recalculated - from the meetings we have had, the local council is unwilling to offer any form of help to small business's with regards to business rates when they could do so if they wanted !

Agenda Item No. 5

It appears as if Worcester Street and other areas have been, and continue to be purposely neglected - why ?

In the original plans that were shown for the town hall area to be revamped none of us can recall seeing anything showing all Vicar street and High street to be re-pathed - at what point were these areas included to be part of this phase ?

In the Express and Star on the 27th of November John Campion is quoted as saying that he hoped to make an announcement early in the new year as to when work may commence on the phase for improvements to Worcester street - for the business holders involved can you not give us an early christmas present and give us some good news as to when we can expect this to happen - or is just more mere words and you have no idea as to when work will start ?

Worcester street is currently used by lorries, delivery trucks, vans, cars, fire engines, bin wagons etc etc, if it safe for these vehicles to do so, and we have been told the road surface is more than adequate, why can't the street be opened up in the short term without the road surface being replaced, just get the signage and road markings put in place and get traffic moving along the street - this will cost a fraction of the reported one million.

With the vinyl art work that was recently installed on the old Woolworths store, can we ask who did this work ? was it a local business ? a local business would have been prepared to do it at subsidised rates so the same could have been done with more empty units

What is happening with Crown House ? why has it been possible to discuss a 5 year lease if the unit is due to be demolished ?

From a couple of recent opinion polls that have been carried out in the town centre it appears as if ***** - results to follow

So from what I have just explained here tonight, you can see there are a number of questions that need to be asked and answers sought - and most importantly there are business's within the town that need supporting, not ignoring - please, please hear us, and support us !