The Future of British High Streets and Town Centres: Working in Partnership to Revitalise Essential Social Infrastructure

A Public Policy Exchange Symposium

Wednesday 13th June 2018
10:15am – 4:30pm

Central London

Public Policy Exchange holds regular interactive seminars which provide an invaluable interface for policy discussion, debate and networking. These special events offer local practitioners, civil servants and other stakeholders not only an insight into current policy thinking, but also the opportunity to feed into future development across all areas of public policy.
Overview

The British high street is one of our nation’s most characteristic urban features, and acts as a common public asset for all residents. However, for a number of years, the sustainability, vibrancy and prosperity of high streets nationwide have been in jeopardy. Approximately 14 outlets per day closed in the first half of 2017 (Local Data Company), whilst footfall on UK high streets decreased by 4.6% over the last year (British Retail Consortium). The retail workforce has also contracted to 3 million from approximately 3.2 million in 2008, with the BRC predicting a further reduction of 900,000 by 2025. Whilst the determinants of this trend are manifold, online shopping has unquestionably challenged high street retailers in transforming traditional consumer habits. On average, Britons spend £4,611 per person per year online, more than any other nation (The UK Cards Association, 2017).

In response, the Government announced a series of measures aimed at assisting businesses and underpinning their future success. In April 2017, the Chancellor’s business rate revaluation delivered “the biggest ever cut in business rates”, with a £6.7bn 5 year package. Nearly three quarters of businesses saw no change or a fall in bills, whilst 600,000 businesses were exempted from business rates altogether. In addition, business rates will be linked to RPI rather than CPI from 2020, saving businesses approximately £370 million. In January 2018, Public Health England released, Healthy High Streets, publishing a series of recommendations on promoting and improving the health of residents and wider communities through good place making in urban settings.

However, challenges remain in safeguarding high streets as economic, social, civic and cultural infrastructure. In an environment of economic uncertainty, and with wage growth lagging behind inflation, the average household has just £197 per week in discretionary income, putting significant pressure on consumer spending. Moreover, despite government measures, 56,000 businesses face steep tax rises from April 2018, with analysis from CVS indicating over 30,000 small shops will face rises of between 10% and 14.99%.

This symposium will therefore provide local authorities, landlords, retailers, planning authorities, directors of public health, retailers and business groups, with a timely and invaluable opportunity to assess future challenges and priorities for British high streets, and share best practice in delivering inclusive, shared and locally responsive growth.

“Healthy high streets can be considered an asset that promotes and improves the health of local residents and the wider local community. They feature good quality design and furniture, providing accessible, safe communal spaces that can be used to create healthier, safer and more cohesive local communities.”


Why Attend?

- Identify prioritises for revitalising high streets and town centres and increasing footfall
- Formulate strategies for using planning and licensing policies to influence the retail offer and protect local ownership
- Determine how retailers are delivering creative and innovative customer experiences in store, enhancing social and cultural interactions and exchange
- Examine the impact of Business Rate Revaluation on the viability and profitability of local businesses
- Explore methods of driving a connected digital high street, with online and offline retail services working together for mutual benefit
- Assess how high streets can impact both upon health, both directly and through psychosocial pathways
- Analyse the importance of inclusive regeneration design, improving high street and town centre accessibility for marginalised and underrepresented groups
- Discuss how to achieve effective partnership between local authority, residents, traders and BIDs
- Share best practice in involving community groups and residents in the planning and implementation of high street interventions

Who Should Attend?

- Local Authorities
- Business Investment Districts
- Economic Strategists
- Entrepreneurs
- Town Teams
- Local Authority Planners
- Local Government Planning Committees
- Town Centre Managers
- Local and National Businesses
- Banking, Property and Retail Sectors
- Retailers, Landlords and Investors
- Property Sector Trade Organisations
- Economic Development Officers
- Local Authority Policymakers in Environmental Services
- Directors of Economy and Environment
- Environmental Health/ Enforcement Officers
- National Trade Associations
- Councillors and KeyTown Centre Stakeholders
- Tourism Managers
- Property Management Officers

Accommodation

Through our partnership with HotelMap, we are able to offer our delegates heavily discounted hotel rates at a wide range of London hotels. To view hotel availability and rates and to book online, visit www.HotelMap.com/MSNUZ/
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Programme

09:30  Registration and Morning Refreshments
10:15  Chair’s Welcome and Introduction
10:30  Morning Panel: Revitalising British High Streets and Town Centres: Assessing Challenges and Identifying Future Priorities
• The Death of the High Street?: Analysing the national picture
• Assessing Business Rate Revaluation: Measuring the impact of recent reforms
• Delivering a Connected Digital High Street: Exploring possibilities for interconnectedness and mutualism between online and offline services
• High Streets and Public Health: Investigating good place making in an urban setting
• Building Effective Partnerships: The role for local authorities, residents, traders and BIDs

11:15  Morning Refreshments
11:30  Open Floor Discussion and Debate with Panel One
12:30  Networking Lunch
13:30  Afternoon Panel: Recognising High Streets as a Public Assets: Championing Diversity, Vibrancy and Accessibility within Local Civic Infrastructure
• Improving the Diversity of the Local Offer: Using planning and licensing policies effectively
• Measuring Need and Demand: Utilising data to understand footfall and adapt accordingly
• Delivering Creative and Innovative Customer Experiences: Enhancing social and cultural interaction
• Ensuring Inclusivity in Regeneration Design: Improving accessibility for marginalised and underrepresented group
• Sharing Best Practice: Involving community groups and residents in the planning and implementation of high street interventions

14:15  Afternoon Refreshments
14:30  Open Floor Discussion and Debate with Panel Two
15:30  Chair’s Summary and Closing Comments
15:40  Networking Reception
16:30  Close

* Please note that the programme is subject to change without notice *

Event Details

Date:  Wednesday 13th June 2018
Time:  10:15am – 4:30pm
Venue:  Central London

Forthcoming Events

Ensuring the Resiliency and Value of Public Libraries: Working in Partnership to Maximise Opportunities and Meet Local Needs
5th June 2018

Realising our Vision for Adoption in the UK: Working in Partnership to Deliver Excellent Services Nationwide
6th June 2018

Raising the Standards of Care Homes: Tackling Vulnerability and Addressing Priorities for Reform
7th June 2018

The Future of Social Housing: Engaging with the National Vision and Delivering Flexible Solutions to Meet Local Need
12th June 2018

Reducing the Prevalence of Domestic Violence and Abuse: Improving Identification, Combating Perpetrators and Facilitating Rehabilitation
12th June 2018

Improving Attendance and Behaviour in Schools: Supporting all Pupils to Achieve their Full Potential
13th June 2018

The Future of Primary Care: Overcoming Challenges and Delivering Better Outcomes for Patients
14th June 2018

Taking Action against Hate Crime: Preventing Hate Crime, Prosecuting Perpetrators and Supporting Victims
14th June 2018

Improving Public Health Services for Children Aged 0-5: Strengthening Prevention and Early Intervention to Give Every Child the Best Start in Life
19th June 2018

Tackling Serious and Organised Crime: Reducing the Risk, Threat and Harm
20th June 2018

Ensuring HM Prisons Function as Safe and Purposeful Centres of Reform: Tackling Violence, Reducing Reoffending
21st June 2018

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