

Submission 7 - Melanie Maya Davies - Rivoli Jewellers

Dear Sirs

With reference to the ongoing Retail Review, we are writing to highlight some of the key issues that are affecting the retail environment for our businesses, Rivoli Jewellers and Swarovski Jersey.

Accessibility and Parking

Pedestrianisation of central St Helier is not working. The town centre needs to be opened up for more on street parking and access.

Parking in St Helier needs to be free for short stays i.e. shopping.

We are aware that there is available parking in St Helier but the perception from shoppers is that St Helier is inaccessible and expensive for parking. The majority of shoppers do not want to park in Pier Road, the Waterfront or get public transport. These options are often muted as solutions to the accessibility issue however they are not working.

Footfall

The footfall counters on King Street do not seem to reflect the decline in footfall we are seeing in store. If these counters are to be used as an accurate measure of what is happening on the high street more thought needs to be given to how it is done.

Employment

Attracting young people to work in retail is an issue, with competition from the finance industry for highly paid customer service roles fierce. Allowing retailers to employ people who have been in the island for less than five years would help improve the quality of staffing in store.

GST on imports

GST needs to be charged on imports under £240 to help create a level playing field for local and online retailers. Jersey retailers collect VAT for UK Customs. This can be done vice versa and some websites are already charging GST instead of VAT.

Postage

The government needs to help to provide an easier route for sending goods back to the UK to avoid goods which are to be returned to Jersey being stopped by Customs for VAT so that a timely service can be offered. We also need to look at the costs being charged to local businesses for postage services.

We send repairs and goods back to the UK on a daily basis. Jersey Post no longer offering an insured postal service for jewellery and watches. An insured parcel containing jewellery or watches to the UK with FedEx/UPS is minimum £25.00 each way, this is not a viable option for a £50 repair for example and customers are certainly not willing to swallow the cost.

Vibrant St Helier

The cut in budgets for entertainment and the promotion of St Helier at Christmas time is short sighted. The funding should be increased to offer more entertainment in the town centre during peak periods and holidays. Quality performers, buskers, small carousels for children, street food, bunting, Christmas lights and parades should all be regular fixtures - We need to make a trip to town a fun day out! Many high street retailers are already contributing to this. Rivoli spends thousands every year maintaining our popular revolving

clock, installing additional Christmas lighting and floral displays on the building as well as contributing to Floral St Helier for the flower displays up and down King and Queen Street.

Empty Shops

The current rise in empty shops should be embraced and taken advantage of to bring people in to St Helier whether it is by big brands or local Genuine Jersey sellers. "Millennials and Gen Z are always on the hunt for the best new thing. Since pop-up shops are only open temporarily and carry a scarce amount of supply, it generates excitement and urgency to be one of the first people in line. Once you announce your location, people will rush to be there. "<http://blog.anthembranding.com/blog/why-millennials-and-gen-z-consumers-love-pop-up-stores>

In summary, competition from online is not going to stop however by providing excellent customer service, choice and an attractive, accessible town centre, people will continue to come and enjoy shopping locally.

Yours faithfully

Melanie Mayer Davies
Director