

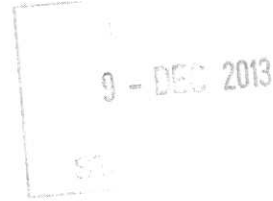


## Sarre & Company

CHARTERED SURVEYORS

4 December 2013

Deputy S G Luce  
Chairman  
Economical Affairs Scrutiny Panel  
Scrutiny Office  
Morier House  
Halkett Place  
St Helier  
Jersey



Dear Deputy Luce

**Re: Retail Policy Review**

Further to your circular letter of 29 November 2013, I have had an opportunity to give this matter some thought and set out below my comments accordingly.

The current difficulties being faced by the majority of retailers is twofold, firstly the continuing recession and secondly the increase in online shopping. These issues cannot be altered or affected at a local level. There are signs locally that the recession is coming to an end and I think Jersey's economy is beginning to improve, but I suspect the retail environment may take, well in to 2014, to show any form of effective improvement.

At a more local level, the general shift of the commercial emphasis and business community towards the Waterfront has had an effect on the historic retailing areas such as Beresford Street, Halkett Street and West Centre, as these areas do not benefit from as much lunchtime or weekday trade as they used to, which is a geographical change, once again very little can be done to alter this position.

I would applaud the work the Parish and the Town Centre Manager are undertaking to revitalise streets and in general terms, I think Jersey has not suffered anywhere near to the same extent as small provincial towns in the South West and South East of England.

So what can be done at a local level to potentially stimulate retailing? One thought would be to create a States run, centralised database of all retail outlets, upon which the retailers individually would have access to their own element of the site, to update the products they sell, any changes or special offers etc.

Cont.



Sometimes I believe it is just too easy to say "oh don't worry I will get it online" but actually if it was simple to find out where the product is sold in Jersey, it may encourage more local retailing. Naturally, there is a cost to this, but if it was a States monitored free service it may be worth exploring. Secondly, improving general transport links and access to the Centre of St Helier could be explored to encourage more parties, particularly on a Saturday, to undertake their shopping within the Central areas.

Turning to commercial rents, I would not recommend any form of involvement in trying to assist or control rents, and I am sure all similarly qualified professionals will agree, albeit a tough environment to do business in, the market should find its own level for rents and certainly over the last few years rents have materially reduced across the board and are settling at a more acceptable level.

I trust the above is of assistance.

Kind regards

Yours sincerely

**ALISTAIR M. SARRE B.Sc. MRICS**  
**DIRECTOR**