

Welsh Cross Party Group – Small Shops: What Services Voters Want Locally

Wednesday 9th July, 11:00 – 12:00 Microsoft Teams (Online)

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Name	Organisation	Minutes
Edward Woodall	ACS	EW
Daniel Askew	ACS	DA
Rosie Wiggins	ACS	RW
Vince Malone	Tenby Stores Retailer	VM
Russell George	MS for Montgomeryshire	RG
Ellis Smith	Support Staff for Russell George MS	ES
Gwyneth Millington	Postmaster and non-executive director for NFSP Wales	GM
Rhodri Thomas	National Pharmacy Association Wales Representative	RT
Neeraj Shah	Company Chemists' Association	NS
Jamie Williams	Support Staff for Dr Altaf Hussain MS	JW
Eluned Owen	John Griffiths MS office (Internship)	EO
Joanne Beale	Bira	JB
Michael Norman	Post Office	MN
Catrin Heath	MS Support Staff for Jeremy Miles	CH
Gwen Patterson	National Federation Retail Newsagents	GP
Philippa Jones	Support Staff for Luke Fletcher	PJ
Jim Winship	British Sandwich and Food to Go Association	JW
Elizabeth Jenkins	Support staff for John Griffiths MS	EJ
Ruth Buckley-Salmon	National Federation Sub-postmasters	RBS

1. Apologies

Mike Hedges MS
Mark Isherwood MS
Llyr Gruffydd MS
Samuel Kurtz MS
Luke Fletcher MS

Rhun ap Iorwerth MS

2. Welcome and Introductions

RG welcomed IRC Members and MSs to the CPG on Small Shops and outlined the agenda for the session.

3. Community Barometer Report 2025 Insights

RW outlined the results of ACS' Community Barometer Report 2025 providing insights on how people feel about the services that are local to them, the impact that they have on their communities, and which services are most needed in the future.

RW provided a ranking of the top three services under "most essential", "most desired" and "most positive impact" and provided context on why voters may have chosen these options.

RW further outlined the importance of convenience stores in the research as it relates to Welsh voters and how people use these types of businesses.

RW briefly presented on wider insights on what makes voters feel less safe in communities.

4. Business Representative Panel Reaction

RG asked the different panellists their reaction to the report and their insights on why people use their respective represented businesses.

NS and RT discussed how pharmacies have evolved over time to meet customer needs, the level of trust communities have in pharmacies, and the easing of burden on the NHS. The closing of pharmacies was also highlighted as a concern.

GM discussed the unique ways that post offices support people in communities through the diverse services they offer via access to cash, bill payments, currency exchange, and identity services applications. On support needed for post offices, GM highlighted the need for the business rates system to incentivise investment for postmasters due to issues in the rating system.

RG asked RW about progress of the report over the years and RW highlighted the consistency in response as the main takeaway whereby the main three businesses cited were convenience stores, post offices, and pharmacies were as most appreciated in different ways by voters.

5. Open Floor to MSs and IRC Members

VM praised the positive community impact of convenience stores and the different ways customers use his store. He further discussed his experience as a postmaster

including issues relating to retail crime and operational challenges of running his shop.

6. Closing Remarks

RG closed the session by thanking MSs and IRC members.