**Textiles Coalition Event 6th October 2017**

**Notes – Grouped by Theme**

VISION

What is our 2-3 year collective vision?

Strategy for a transformational solution

Get the right sort of initiatives

Lets do something about it - get a SWOT team together with the relevant stakeholders to work towards a collective long term plan with a clear vision

Need a vision/ slogan

None negotiables – legal compliance and sustainability/ requirements include skills

Define area of potential

“Leicester is the UK’s leading centre for fast fashion, manufacturing with excellence, confidence, and supporting inclusive growth”

Vision - need updated version of the poster ‘Leicester Clothes the World’

Recognise is a national issue, but we will rise to the challenge - demonstrate the confidence of Leicester

Yes there are a lot of other priorities but this is important, it’s about protecting vulnerable people. Doing the decent thing is the only way forward to be profitable

1. Potential vision: “Leading centre for Fast Fashion, inclusive centre for sustainable growth”
2. This is what we will do (several tactical initiatives), focused on the textiles industry, chaired by the Council

4P’s – Prevent, Prepare, Pursue, Protect

Look at Stoke on Trent ceramics industry (a brochure with a launch)

Position this into government

BRC can pull together ideas to government organisations, put their name behind it

MAKING IT HAPPEN/ NEXT STEPS

Culture eats strategy for breakfast

Paint vision (hearts and minds) for a Guiding Coalition (that all share)

Needs energy and to make a commitment

Cut into small chunks (top 5)

Celebrate the good stuff

Attack the bottom 5

“mutti-disciplinary swot team” to make a pointed attack

Set future review meeting

Shout loudly about successes – a beacon of something happening

Get approval for the Coalition

Establish Guild with a set of guiding principles

Better proactive enforcement

Need training centre

Open up Fast Forward to manufacturers, with the same recognition

Key interventions to improve the sector – skills hub, better accommodation, infrastructure , skills and technology

Sector deal – a framework for what could happen

Shouting about successes

CITY MAYOR:

Guiding Coalition – LCC can facilitate this and help to resource

Provide a better focus

Work across Leicester and Leicestershire

Needs to lead to action – a team to pool resources

Undertake review of today, with conclusions to take forward/with timescales

And future 1 hour review meeting

DRIVERS

Changes in manufacturing technology opens up local sourcing

Drivers- Short lead times/ fast fashion; 15-20% fall in sterling;

COMMITMENTS

ASOS £16m Leicester spend, vision is to treble this

“fashion with integrity”, with profit comes responsibility

ASOS ensure their manufacturers allow access to a union

ASOS sign up to UN principles on young women

ASOS want to make a commitment

Next would love to get back to Leicester, but need enforcement

TMAL

TMAL representing 280 factories

Manufacturers commitment to ethical sourcing

Ambition to pay living wage

NEXT STEPS

**Governance/ collaboration**

Polarisation between retailers and manufacturers

Mismatch of communication - need flow of this

Would like a similar meeting to be held with manufacturers so that there can be a candid dialogue - but with an amnesty where they are not compliant – working together

Need more education across the board, involving buyers and manufacturers

Need to educate buyers - perhaps a digital solution?

Retailers need contracts directly with factories, and to offer long term order commitments

Involve all retailers

**Compliance/ enforcement**

DAVID METCALF

Context is low resources/ low fines, which is not an incentive to comply

Theme – how can we use existing powers/ resources better

How easy is it to complain?

* Is ACAS the best body, how about CAB?
* Information sharing
* Proactive vs reactive effort using existing resources – employ a risk based approach
* I would support a geographical focus to emphasise effort on the ground
* LME report focuses on the supply chain

Q: how to get leverage? Solutions to this are being explored (policy solutions need to wait for consultation outcome)

* Joint liability? Naming the top of the supply chain
* Ability to embargo goods (HMRC can already do this)
* Ensure public procurement is good
* Extend licencing? But how can you go about doing this practically? There are 18k employment agencies
* GLAA pilot re: nail bars/ car washes, why not textiles?
* HMRC - non compliance with holiday pay a worse issue/ look at wage slips
* How are GLAA using their new police powers?
* Can enforcement agencies work together?

DARYL GLAA

Imperial Typewriter Building is key

Need clear collaboration with industry

Limited resources, so can’t pursue everything

Prevention is key

Need to get the information

Question: Do we have a good understanding of the issues?

Regulators – “we are learning” about range of issues across regulators

Retailers have nowhere to share intelligence

Failure of information exchange between bodies (GLAA arose out of Morecambe Bay disaster from this issue)

Need good sharing of intelligence not just information

Issue is not intelligence – it is organisations making this a priority

Sharing intelligence/ intelligence hub

Retaining confidentiality

Addressing collusive behaviour

Haven’t had a sustained intervention for 2-3 years

Pilot for textiles sector in Leicester

LMEwould endorse pilots

Need pilot to do physical piece of work

Joint enforcement pilot/ taskforce (getting agencies involved)

Take away the bad money – stop perpetrators

David Metcalf – “Goodwill in the room towards joint operations”

Deal with Imperial Typewriter Building - the emblem of non compliance - Buy It!

Question: Is Licensing a potential solution for the textiles industry?

Licencing is daunting and needs resourcing

Licencing works in food/ agriculture (with GLAA support)

Focus on prevention needed

Naming/ shaming would be a powerful tool

Draw on lessons from the past – focus on hotels/ catering 15 years ago

* Join up enforcement
* Need to swamp the area
* Need to change the culture (go into schools/ imams re workers rights/ exploitation
* Generational change: 1st gen – ready to exploit: 3rd gen – want to professionalise

What about a specific focus on Imperial Typewriter enforcement as a start?

Could buy the Imperial Typewriter building to send out a positive message

Encourage compliance rather than enforcement

Like food industry- have an ethical compliance accreditation (star rating)

Better training?

Is the police Operation Alien doing anything for the textiles industry? – ask

Create level playing field/ have same standards – to grow business in an ethical way

Don’t need enforcement if Fast Forward is working well

**Pricing/ costing**

Retailers not paying ethical prices

Change would be immediate in 6 months with the right prices

Fast Forward is very good

Need to change buyers thinking

Focus on pricing alone is simplistic

Issue is about paying fair prices

Need costing info to educate buyers and manufacturers

Need better understanding of costing

Transparency around quality of goods and costing (so can see the hours worked and amount paid, computerised systems to give transparency of the workforce rate of pay, hours worked). This must be a partnership with manufacturers and retailers working together.

Manufacturers need certainty over orders

**Skills**

Skills training hub needed in Leicester

Need training centre – for pattern cutters, and more technical skills

Need investment in skills (management skills in particular: machinist, pattern cutters, fabric laying and inspection)

Need to attract new entrants/ younger generation

Need to professionalise the sector

**Business support**

Focus on skills and business support

Need to focus on helping companies to scale up quickly – ASOS can’t do this quickly enough

Technology innovation – to move up the supply chain/ automation – will lead to reduced employment though

Focus on efficiency of manufacturers - are manufacturers adopting lean manufacturing techniques?