



Our discussions covered a wide range of topics and views both in the shorter term as we emerge from lockdown and in the longer term in how we can move forward and thrive in the new normal – building back better! Here are our notes for your records:

- **Strategic leadership**
 - Strong leadership relies on excellent relationships and communication.
 - If COVID-19 has taught us anything it is that communication is paramount, and how we communicate has never been so important.
 - That personal touch is so important, and really marks out a great organisation.
 - Agility is key to respond to current situation, understanding financial resilience and capacity and redirecting resources to emerge as a better organisations well positioned to continue providing goods and services that customers need.
 - Maintaining relationships with key stakeholders, customers, employees and suppliers is paramount needs and concerns.
 - Leadership to trust and empower employees and create a flexible and agile workplace.
 - Is the reality that we are going to see repeated lockdowns over the next few years? If so, we should be looking to how we can build our new working environment, better than before.
 - Learnings and challenges for business continuity planning and risk management. Does a Disaster Recovery plan it serves it's purpose?
 - Virtual Boards effective but can't be the only way, need ability to understand discussion and engagement through behaviour.
- **Community and society**
 - What positive / negative benefits could an economy based on more home / agile working have on wider community, social groups etc.?
 - Social inequality is a big risk. Increased poverty is apparent on demand for public services.
 - Sustainability and critical mass needed to influence policy and make a significant change.
 - Consumer appetite to spending will have impact on economy and good/services required.
- **Collaboration**
 - The constant theme in how both public and private sector businesses are working to continue supply chains and services, adapting to the new needs of customers, trusting employees, and engaging more than ever before.
 - Business leaders working proactively with clients, customers and service providers to understand new/changed priorities and their 'new normal' and want to help the development to gain success delivery model for all.
 - GMCVO submission to the DCMS Select Committee is [attached](#).
- **Environmental Impact**
 - Less travelling, reduced carbon foot print.
 - Transport, utilities, waste, physical space.
 - Challenge on return to office as concerns for travelling on public transport.
- **Infrastructure and the new normal work place**
 - Rethinking use of physical space.
 - Smaller premises required (more hub's than traditional offices).
 - Office becomes more of a meeting point and place for catch up.
 - Side effect lot of vacant buildings (fall in value of office buildings) and less footfall in Town Centres – impact on the High Street – how can the downside be managed.



- **Adapting to develop a trusted, flexible, and agile workforce**
 - Recruitment – including the need for new skill sets. Need to think about onboarding new employees and helping them to understand the culture and values of the organisation.
 - Recruitment and skills set to consider – managing a team remotely and tech skills even more important going forward – Instant Messaging.
 - Performance management – trust, how to measure effectiveness of individuals and teams, Training and Development – identify what skills are now needed and determine how to upskill where needed.
 - Different ways to remain engaged with staff and encourage socialising– office space as drop in cafes, virtual brew meetings on Teams/Zoom, Rave with Dave, quizzes etc
 - Staff surveys now and as we emerge from lockdown to engage and seek feedback.
- **Managing flexible working**
 - Consideration of how teams link up when members working different hours (someone working later hours emailing and colleague late evening when that colleague may have early working hours). Will be more attractive when recruiting.
 - Implement a working from home policy.
 - How can these potential difficulties for some working from home be managed? Some staff may not have a suitable space at home to work from home long term. Domestic abuse has been in the headlines with shocking increases – leaving home for the office maybe vital for them.
 - Differences in how people can cope with remote working if office working drops off through choice linked to factors such as age, economic position, home life.
 - Does a business decision to enforce home working adversely impact certain groups such as those that can't easily work from home or would prefer not to? Can it favourably impact certain groups (e.g. those with a disability, those with young children). Where does that put the business re equality legislation?
 - Mental health and wellbeing – might be less of a problem when gyms, pubs, restaurants etc are open, but won't go away.
 - Less time on travel, less stressful for people, more time with family, improved work life balance
 - How ensure people actually 'switch off' if not by the clock at 5 or 6, to stop home working actually having a detrimental affect if people think they always have to be available.
 - Meeting legal / regulatory HR requirements so don't end up in legal battles.
 - All of the above on contract terms.
- **Technological changes**
 - Effective use of IT systems, remote access, meetings.
 - Instant Messaging key for teams to continue productively.
 - Changing IT team skills and support requirements for the business.
 - Managing cyber risk.
- **Business Continuity**
 - Are Disaster Recovery Planning and Risk Management serving their purpose in organisations?
 - For most at least some staff are furloughed.
 - Construction stopped, recruitment market halted, manufacturing pipelines dripping and planned work on projects rescheduled, for now.
 - Businesses being in a position to deal with increased demand for goods and services.
 - Insufficient PPE and prices increasing.
 - Move away from 'Just in Time' stock systems to holding more stock than previously – cash investment in building stocks, increased warehouse space to hold such stocks



- **Business resilience – Being able to deal with the new demands as we come out of lockdown**
 - Finding the opportunities arising from lockdown and the new normal and driving them forward.
 - Businesses being in a position to deal with increased demand for goods and services.
 - People's reluctance to get back to 'normal' fear of mixing with people – consideration of how this can be managed.
 - Remote working does not need to be all or nothing in the 'new normal' – two meetings digitally and third meeting face to face for example
 - How can small businesses cope with the change, particularly where there is a need for investment in tech – likely to lead to more mergers?
 - How measure business performance? KPIs that aren't just about financial performance.
 - Impact on cash flow.
 - Change in business types – new businesses starting up / thriving based on remote service delivery, decline in more traditional businesses, responding to competition, managing stock holding etc.
 - Continue to be the more caring and kind society that has now emerged - both on a personal and business level.