

Cheltenham Borough Council

Social & Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee :

3rd October 2002

Dealing with the effects of the Night Time Economy

Report of the Assistant Director - Built Environment

1. Summary and recommendation

- 1.1 On the 24th of July 2002 Cabinet considered a report entitled "Crime & Disorder - alcohol related activities".
- 1.2 The report identified a range of solutions recommended by a working group of partners and stakeholders which included the police, magistrates court, elected members, pub and club operators, the university of Gloucestershire and council officers.
- 1.3 Cabinet agreed with the majority of the recommendations which were put to them.
- 1.4 **I therefore recommend that:**
 - 1.4.1 **the Council's Social & Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee adopt the range of initiatives set out in 3.3 (1) - (7) below.**

2. Introduction

- 2.1 The positive and negative effects of the night time economy have been widely debated and publicised.
- 2.2 The Council sees itself as being pivotal in bringing together lasting and meaningful solutions to these issues which in some instances have had a significant effect on the local communities.
- 2.3 The Council is also well aware that to bring about lasting change, a fully committed stakeholder group needs to be given the responsibility for driving forward a range of comprehensive community based initiatives.

3. Background

3.1 The working group referred to above was originally established in 2001 to look at the implications of the night time economy.

3.2 It carried out some extremely valuable work culminating in the report which was discussed by Cabinet on the 24th of July.

3.3 The following measures listed (1) to (7) are the proposals that the Social & Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee are invited to adopt immediately :

(1) Endorse officers to implement the range of improvement measures which were identified in the original report to Cabinet on the 24th of July.

The measures that it is felt can be introduced immediately are:

- Embark on a programme of community education aimed at reducing the perception of drunkenness, rowdiness and disorder in the town centre.
- Assess the existing locations of all CCTV installations to verify they are correctly positioned and amend these locations if necessary.
- Install four no. “safe havens” linked to the existing CCTV system.
- Evaluate the results of the trial staggered terminal house policy and recommend appropriate further action.
- Increase the use of drug screening machine.
- Raise public entertainment licence fees to cover the cost of employing an additional enforcement officer from 01.04.03.
- Investigate the concept of “recycling more glass”, by encouraging a specialist company to co-ordinate the collection of used bottles from the town’s licensed premises.
- Use Section 17 of the Crime & Disorder Act more rigorously from a planning and licensing perspective.
- Lobby central government to ensure that the “Alcohol & Entertainment Bill is listed for enactment as soon as possible and that sufficient time is allocated to enable its swift passage through parliament.
- Establish joint working arrangements with the wider community including the Cheltenham Business Partnership to continually assess the effects of the night time economy.
- Encourage “Night Safe” membership to become compulsory for all night clubs and town centre pubs.

- Explore the potential to generate funds from new and existing clubs and pubs which can then be used to off-set some of the costs currently borne by the police and other public services incurred as a result of the night time economy.
 - Assist the town's resident student population in raising awareness of night time safety issues.
- (2) Implement other measures listed below which require additional financial, or other resource and/or third party support :
- Provision of town centre pissoirs.
 - Implement improved and/or changed policing activity.
 - Introduce high profile policing nights.
 - Provide extra CCTV provision where considered appropriate.
 - Consider the increased use of the high profile mobile CCTV system.
 - Promote the use of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders to target persistent trouble makers.
 - Increase levels of enforcement activity.
 - Introduce a range of issues to tackle under age drinking.
 - Introduce a marketing campaign to highlight the problems associated with binge drinking.
 - Introduce a "think safe/drink safe" campaign.
 - Ensure adequate resources are provided to enforce the existing bye-law which prevents drinking on the street within the town.
 - Introduce a code of practice to prevent the sale of cheap alcoholic drinks.
- (3) Agree to the establishment of a community based group to consider and address the broad effects of the night time economy.
- (4) Confirm that the partners involved in this group include :
- the police.
 - residents' associations.
 - magistrates court
 - 'Nightsafe'.
 - Chair and Vice Chair of Social & Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
 - Assistant Directors of Built Environment and Public Protection, plus Community Safety Co-ordinator.
- (5) Agree that the police are given every assistance by the council to ease late night anti-social behavioural problems.

- (6) Note the fact that officers are already considering how to improve both planning and licensing decisions to reflect the tensions caused by the night time economy.
- (7) Agree to report to Cabinet in April 2003 a draft strategy which will tackle a range of existing and new issues identified as a result of the work of the community based group.

4. Implications

- 4.1 **Financial** The items listed in paragraph 3(2) of the report would require additional financial resources which would have to be bid for as part of the 2003/04 budget process.
- 4.2 **Legal** There are a number of legal consequences which could arise from the individual measures proposed and the legal section would expect to be consulted at an early stage before the measures are implemented.
- 4.3 **Personnel**
- 4.4 **Equal opportunities, social justice and anti-poverty**
- 4.5 **Environmental**
- 4.6 **Health and safety** From the information provided in the report it would appear that the measures are unlikely to have any detrimental impact on our staff

Background papers Cabinet report dated 24th July 2002 "Crime & Disorder - alcohol related activities".

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