Cheltenham's Night Time Economy Strategy 2003 to 2006

DRAFT

Version 7
Produced on 19th August 2003

'Plain English' logo when appropriate?

Contents

Foreword

3

This section will be completed when the document is finalised and will include:

- Details of approval and how it will be communicated:
    - ⇒ to staff
    - ⇒ public, if applicable,
    - ⇒ where it is accessible, i.e. website/receptions
- State that this is an aspirational document from which actions can be derived

1. Introduction

1.1 The Town

Until the late 18th century Cheltenham was a small market town which rose to prominence in the 19th century as a fashionable Regency resort. It was founded in this guise with an emphasis on culture, leisure and a high quality of life.

Over the years it has gained the reputation of being a 'festival town' of international repute, hosting Cricket, Competitive Arts, Folk, Jazz, Literature and Music and Fringe Festivals as well as the Gold Cup and Steeplechase race meetings. So successful is Cheltenham, that one day in five is a festival day.

Cheltenham also enjoys a vibrant and diverse restaurant culture with over 100 establishments in the town offering a variety of eating experiences. It also has an enviable selection of theatres, music venues and cinema.

The town has attracted major employers and together with its architectural heritage, educational facilities and quality environment it is an attractive place for people to live, work and play.

Cheltenham has a thriving local economy with a gross domestic product[1] (GDP) of 126% of the national average (based on 2000 figures from Gloucestershire Labour Market Information Unit). Its key sectors are financial and business services, accounting for almost 28% of GDP, manufacturing accounting for 18% of GDP and construction. The thriving bar and club scene prevalent in the town also contributes to the economy and means that full use is being made of Cheltenham's infrastructure for up to 18 hours a day.

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[1] Gross Domestic Product - Measurement of the value of all goods and services produced by the economy within its boundaries and is the nation's broadest gauge of economic health.

1.2 The Night Time Economy

Cheltenham's night time economy is not limited to clubs, pubs and bars. The 'Guide to Eating Out in Cheltenham' (published by Cheltenham Tourism, 2002) features over 100 restaurants, bistros, brasseries and cafes in the town. These provide a mix of fine dining, cafe society and international cuisine that has made Cheltenham a focal point for anyone in search of an eating experience. The restaurant scene covers every market segment from the sophisticated to the themed and caters for all age ranges.

The night time economy is set to expand still further with the redevelopment of the former Flowers Brewery site in the town centre. This is the location for a £40 million commercial leisure development which will provide approximately 20,700m² of leisure, retail, office and residential space. It will comprise an 11 screen cinema, a health and fitness club, a bowling alley and a casino. There are plans for approximately 7,000m² of retail space, plus bars and restaurants: pre-lets already include two new restaurants.

This development will add a further dimension to the night time economy; it will attract more residents and visitors to the town centre; increase the diversity of existing and potential user groups; affect existing traffic and pedestrian flows and increase competition for customers amongst businesses.

In the last decade Cheltenham has witnessed sustained growth in its number of bars and clubs; as a result, 'pubbing and clubbing' are currently the most visible elements of our night-time economy. At present, Cheltenham has the biggest night-life scene between Bristol and Birmingham with 87 bars and 15 night clubs within the town centre area. There are signs, however, that the exponential growth of recent years is beginning to slow down due to market saturation.

Increasing local, and national, media attention paid to anti-social behaviour has created the popular conception that the night time economy revolves around issues of excessive anti-social behaviour. Cheltenham does however

enjoy a diverse night life, but, whilst 'youth culture' has come to value the night time economy's opportunities to meet and interact in a relaxed and good-natured way, popular images that disorder dominates the night time economy far outweigh reality. The night time economy is more than a vehicle for youth culture and it has steadily become an integral part of both our town's, and the UK's, mainstream economy.

As part of our desire to better understand our night-time economy, the Council commissioned an independent report into the town's nightlife. The report, undertaken by the University of Gloucestershire[2] in 2001, concluded that Cheltenham effectively has two night-time economies. Before 10.30 p.m. Cheltenham enjoys a varied and 'cultured' night-life built around its enviable cafes, restaurants, theatres, performance venue and cinema. However, later the town centre's bars, pubs and clubs re-focus the night-time economy in a more extrovert fashion.

The report stated that some people travel long distances, from the likes of Hereford, Oxford and Worcester, and confirmed that at least 20,000 people visit the town every weekend. The report also identified three tiers to the town's night-time economy:

- The first tier is Cheltenham's night-club economy. The report estimated that this generated between £21 and £31 million for the economy.

- The second tier is the attendant takeaways, restaurants, pubs and taxi services. The report estimated that if these were included in the initial calculation the eventual figure might well double.

- Finally, the third tier which includes those retailers which provide clubbers with life-style accessories such as clothes, cosmetics and hair-cuts.

As these three tiers demonstrate, Cheltenham's night-time economy contributes significantly to the town's economy. It also creates jobs leading to increased spending power within the town.

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[2] Then Cheltenham & Gloucester College of Higher Education

The report suggested that another benefit of a bustling night time economy is that it attracts people into the town from a wide catchment area. This can result in increased demand for accommodation and even increased demand for places at the town's higher education establishments. The report explains that potential students often find a vibrant nightlife very attractive when deciding which universities to apply to. It also noted that there is evidence of young professionals being attracted to vibrant night spots bringing with them the opportunity of increasing the town's pool of skilled/professional people.

1.3 Issues arising from the night time economy

Whilst the night-time economy injects money into the local economy, it also introduces a number of issues that detract from its popular acceptance and wider 'use'. For example, the prevalent youth culture has introduced tensions within the community, and the dependence of the night-time economy on alcohol-fuelled activity has undoubtedly created disorder issues. However, none of these issues are insoluble, and in identifying them the council hopes to better regulate and manage them. The main issues arising from the night time economy are listed below.

Youth Culture

The perception of 'youth' has changed in step with changes in the night-time economy. Today the term refers to a period of much longer duration as the passage to 'adulthood', and full-time employment, is deferred with young people being encouraged to pursue higher education and further training.

Cheltenham is a student town with an above average proportion of young people. According to the 2001 census, 14% of Cheltenham's population were aged 15-24 compared to 12.26% nationally. This undoubtedly helps to fuel the town's night-time economy.

While the input of students is an important element of the night time economy there are few, if any, links with crime and anti-social behaviour. Mondays and Wednesdays, which are traditionally held to be more popular with students,

tend to be relatively trouble free. Indeed, the tendency is for students to stay on campus during Friday and Saturday nights when crime and anti-social behaviour peaks.

However, there are issues which arise from youth culture in general and require attention. Health issues due to underage or binge drinking are areas for concern as is substances abuse.

Disorder

Whilst it is recognised that there are a number of benefits to be derived from a thriving night-time economy, large numbers of people enjoying themselves in the streets often bring with them a fear of crime and violence and a general increase in anti-social behaviour. It can also lead to the real issue of alcohol and substances abuse. These issues can alienate large sections of the wider community and need to be addressed.

A common problem within the town centre at night is public urination. This is a national problem and not unique to Cheltenham. There is obviously a clear demand for toilet provision stemming from the consumption of alcohol. However, as many people only go to the toilet on leaving a premises demand can often exceed supply at closing time. The problem is further compounded as a result of public conveniences being abused and vandalised at night. This has led to their closure, and as a result, people often having to turn to shop doorways to relieve themselves. This is unacceptable and needs to be addressed.

Fixed closing times can also lead to people leaving pubs and clubs on mass, greatly amplifying noise and crowd troubles. As well as leading to policing issues this can present a particular nuisance to people living in the town centre. However, a distinction between anti-social and ribald or rowdy behaviour needs to be made as many of the problems associated with large numbers of people leaving licensed premises at night are not criminal in nature.

Crime

Although Cheltenham does not suffer from high crime levels; the town's crime statistics show a clear correlation between the incidents of violence and the night-time economy. Incidents of assault show a weekend peak most pronounced in the early hours of Sunday morning as Saturday night revellers prepare to go home (National Crime figures, 2001). The statistics also show a strong correlation between assaults and the location of clubs, popular takeaways and routes home. It is apparent that here the night-time economy contributes significantly. However, as the university report suggested, incidents of violence are almost always between clubbers, rarely involving members of the general public.

Cleansing issues

The night-time economy also contributes to cleansing issues. As well as public urination, the Council also has to contend with litter including fast food containers and packaging; the food products themselves; greasy deposits left by discarded or dropped food and advertising leaflets.

Renowned for its Regency heritage and parks and gardens, this littering threatens to devalue the town's reputation. The burden of dealing with this issue rests with Cheltenham Borough Council and its limited budgets. Various approaches will be required to ensure that cleansing issues are dealt with efficiently and methods to ensure participants of the night-time economy take greater responsibility for keeping the town centre clean and tidy will also need to be taken into consideration.

Stereotyping

The night-time economy is a very complicated enterprise and the tendency to stereotype it has prevented a more complete understanding. One finding of the university report of 2001 highlighted the fact that problems are often more likely to be perceived than to be real. As a result, stereotypes and myths need to be broken down and their underlying issues tackled.

Transport

This issue relates to the accessibility and safety of the night time economy and several challenges arise from it. Public transport services, in terms of availability of buses, and the location of taxi ranks are seen as areas for improvement and better disabled access for these services is also an important issue. The improved safety of public car parks and better street lighting for pedestrians are key challenges to help promote accessibility and the perception of security.

Due to set closing times and lack of available transport the night time economy can spawn large crowds of people. This, potentially, can contribute to public order issues and the safe, efficient dispersal of these crowds is often desirable.

Anti-social behaviour on the roads is seen as an important issue as this, too, can dissuade people from travelling into the town centre to participate in the night time economy.

 All of these main issues need to be examined and understood in order for them to be successfully overcome. The university report went a long way in helping us do just that, though there has also been a great deal we have had to learn ourselves.

Within the scope of these main issues more specific *challenges* can be identified and these are outlined in the following table:

Table showing main issues and associated challenges:

Main issues identified	Associated challenges
Youth Culture:	• Health • Underage drinking

	• Binge drinking • Substance abuse
Disorder:	• Behaviour • Noise • Public urination
Crime:	• Assaults • Vandalism • Substance abuse
Cleansing:	• Litter: ⇒ Food ⇒ Food packaging ⇒ Advertising leaflets
Stereotyping:	• Lack of understanding of issues • Perception of night time economy
Transport:	• Availability of bus services • Location of taxi ranks • Safe dispersal of crowds • Improved street lighting • Secure car parks • Disabled access to services • Road safety

1.4 Our Partners

In taking ownership of the night-time economy Cheltenham Borough Council's Cabinet agreed to create a Night-time Economy Working Group in September 2001 and, more recently, a community based strategic liaison group, formed after October 2002. These groups were to consider the tensions that have arisen from Cheltenham's popular nightlife and address the impacts that have come about as a result. The groups have consisted of a series of partners and stakeholders including:

• Police

• Magistrates Court

• Elected Members

• Pub and Club operators (Nightsafe[3]),

• University of Gloucestershire

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[3] A voluntary group comprising night club, pubs, takeaways and other similar businesses, working in partnership with the local authority, police and courts to promote a safe and secure environment for customers and staff and to deal with crime and disorder issues

- Council Officers

- Residents' Groups

- Business leaders

(A full list of partners' details can be found in appendix 1)

The groups have consulted with a broad cross section of interested parties in order to identify the issues, priorities and consider how best to affect positive changes to Cheltenham's night time economy.

Achievements

The partners involved in the night time economy community based strategic liaison and working groups have already implemented initiatives to the benefit of the night time economy. These have included:

- The implementation of staggered closing times for pubs, bars and clubs to reduce peak noise disturbance and facilitate effective policing

- The implementation of the 'Street Safe' initiative which involved a higher profile police presence in the town centre

- Changes to shift patterns for police officers to enable increased numbers of officers on the streets

- The initiation of multi-agency inspection of nightclubs

- Taxi and private hire stop and check points by the police and licensing enforcement

1.5 Consultation

A section on the consultation undertaken to arrive at this point will be inserted here. It will state that it encompassed both the layout and the content and will:

- explain the methods of consultation
- outline the groups and individuals approached for their views
- outline when consultation took place
- highlight where consultation results can be accessed

2. Background

2.1 The strategy

Traditionally the night-time economy has been managed in a piecemeal fashion, regulated by separate licensing regimes rather than by an efficient integrated system. This, though, is set to change with the introduction of the Licensing Act (2003) scheduled to come into effect in January 2005. The Act consolidates six existing licensing regimes under the power of the local authority, considerably cutting down on red tape and facilitating the promotion of a more integrated licensing strategy and vision.

With regards to the broader night-time economy, the Act will:

- Consolidate alcohol, public entertainment, cinema, theatres, late night refreshment and night café licensing regimes in a single integrated scheme administered by the Council.
- Promotes four licensing objectives:
    - prevention of crime and disorder
    - public safety
    - prevention of public nuisance
    - protection of children

- Encourages flexible opening hours in the hope that this will limit disorder at closing times.
- Provides local authorities with a flexible range of powers against problem establishments.
- Gives local residents a statutory right to make representation to the licensing authority regarding any application or renewal of a license.

The integrated vision that supports the new licensing regime complements the Council's desire to exercise better leadership in the night-time economy.

This strategy is an aspirational document that has been produced in response to the issues raised above and as a result of the work of the Night Time Economy Working and community based strategic liaison Groups.

The work of these groups culminated in a report to Cabinet on the 24 July 2002. Having identified both problems and solutions these were referred to the Social and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee for it to progress.

At the Overview and Scrutiny meeting held on 3 October 2002, the report was again considered and actions suggested, the most notable being to establish a community based strategic liaison group to build on the success of the Working Group. Similar in make-up to the Working Group, the community based strategic liaison group has expanded upon its membership base and included representatives from local business and residents' associations. However, the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee clearly stipulated that this group should be an *action* group rather than a *discussion* group.

Through these groups' consultations it has become clear that a robust, sustainable vision is required in order for us to move forward and make Cheltenham a safe and attractive town centre with a diverse night-time economy accessible to all people.

3. The vision

3.1 Our Vision

**"We want a safe and attractive town centre that has
a diverse night time economy, accessible to all"**

This vision proposes to achieve a diverse night time economy within which more people feel they have more choice and feel more able to take advantage of the choices on offer. It is concerned with achieving a better balance between the town's post 10.30pm night time economy (pubs and night clubs) and the earlier night time economy (art and culture venues and the restaurant and café culture). It will address those issues arising from the post 10.30pm culture and ensure it does not adversely affect the vibrancy of the earlier night time economy to create a more accessible town centre. It also aspires to protect the quality of life of those who live in and around the town centre.

Cheltenham's night time economy, as already stated in section 1.2, is healthy and vibrant. This strategy aims to improve on what we have already and attempt to meet the issues and challenges that arise from it.

This vision has been arrived at by the community based strategic liaison group (see section 1.4 'Our Partners') and, as such, reflects its concerns and aspirations over the current state of Cheltenham's night time economy and where they believe its sustainable future lies. It also reflects certain priorities of Cheltenham's community as a whole through the work undertaken as part of the Community Plan (see section 3.2).

It is a far reaching, fundamental vision and should be considered as a long-term undertaking; consequently the strategy and vision will be reviewed, initially, after a three year period. This will enable a robust assessment of its vision and will coincide with the reviews of Cheltenham's Community Plan and Cheltenham Borough Council's Corporate Business Plan.

It is anticipated that by the first review of the strategy (2006), advances will have been made towards:

- a more diverse clientele participating in the night time economy
- a more diverse night time economy in terms of activities on offer
- increased promotion of Cheltenham's restaurants
- increasing the accessibility of the night time economy for people with disabilities
- having had a positive impact on the lives of local residents
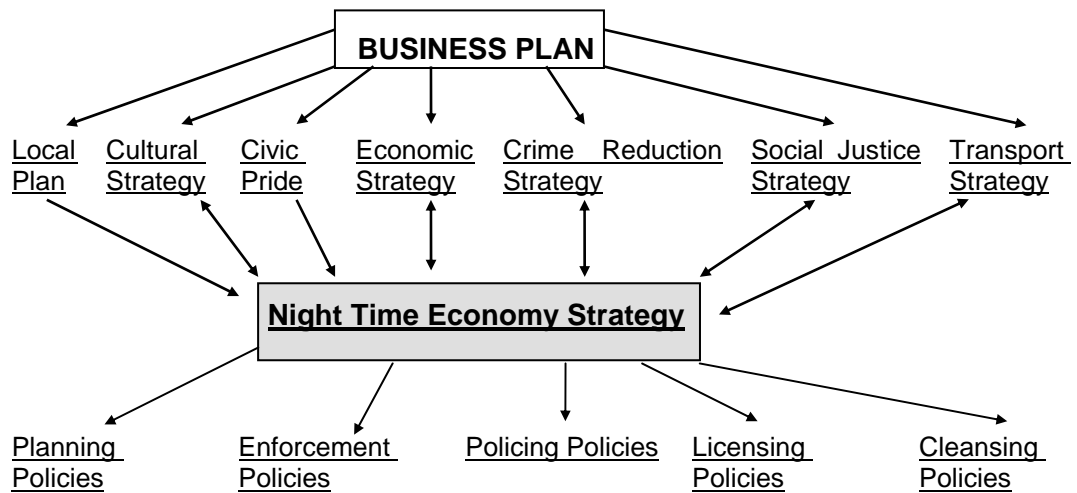
Nevertheless, the strategy should demonstrate enough flexibility to ensure it can adapt to changing priorities and evolve over time. It will therefore be reviewed annually to determine the levels of success of its more specific components; it's 'Priorities' (see section 3.3, 'The Priorities for the night time economy').

3.2 How does the strategy fit into Cheltenham's wider agenda?

The night time economy strategy is not a stand-alone document within the council, as previously outlined it can be traced back through the Business Plan to the Community plan. However, it also links to other strategic documents as illustrated in the following diagram:

'Vision'

COMMUNITY PLAN

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                          ┌─────────────────────┐
                          │   BUSINESS PLAN     │
                          └─────────────────────┘

Local    Cultural   Civic    Economic   Crime   Reduction   Social Justice   Transport
Plan     Strategy   Pride    Strategy   Strategy             Strategy         Strategy

                    ┌──────────────────────────────────────┐
                    │   Night Time Economy Strategy         │
                    └──────────────────────────────────────┘

    Planning        Enforcement      Policing Policies    Licensing      Cleansing
    Policies        Policies                              Policies       Policies
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'Operations'

Further details of how the night time economy strategy relates to these documents can be found in appendix 4.

3.3   How will the vision be achieved?

The Key Aims of the night time economy strategy

For the more general vision of the night time economy strategy to be achieved, more specific, actionable 'Key Aims' have been arrived at by the Working group and are considered fundamental if the vision is to be successful. The key aims are listed below:

1. To co-ordinate planning and licensing operations to more effectively manage licensed premises and businesses
2. To provide improved facilities for users of the town centre at night; including toilets and transport
3. To encourage a more diverse night time economy that will appeal to a wider audience

4. To create a safer and cleaner environment in which people feel more able to enjoy the town centre at night

5. To respect and enhance the quality of local residents' lives.

These key aims will be reviewed, initially after three years (as previously stated in section 3.1) in order that they reflect the issues facing Cheltenham's community at that time.

If these key aims are to have a positive impact towards achieving the vision they must successfully address the current challenges (see section 1.3 'Issues arising from the night time economy') facing Cheltenham's night time economy. Certain key aims affect more than one and they are listed in the table, below, against them:

Key Aims	Challenges addressed by Key Aims
1. To co-ordinate planning and licensing operations to more effectively manage licensed premises and businesses	• Behaviour, assaults and vandalism • Noise

2. To provide improved facilities for users of the town centre at night; including toilets and transport	• Public urination
	• Litter:
	  ⇒ Food
	  ⇒ Food packaging
	  ⇒ Advertising leaflets
	• Transport
	  ⇒ Availability of bus services
	  ⇒ Location of taxi ranks
	  ⇒ Safe dispersal of crowds

3. To encourage a more diverse night time economy that will appeal to a wider audience	• Perception of night time economy • Lack of understanding of issues • Access for disabled

4. To create a safer and cleaner environment in which people feel more able to enjoy the town centre at night	• Behaviour, assaults and vandalism
	• Binge drinking
	• Underage drinking
	• Substance abuse
	• Litter:
	  ⇒ Food
	  ⇒ Food packaging
	  ⇒ Advertising leaflets
	• Improved street lighting
	• Safe dispersal of crowds
	• Secure car parks
	• Road safety

5. To respect and enhance the quality of local residents' lives	• Litter:
	    ⇒ Food
	    ⇒ Food packaging
	    ⇒ Advertising leaflets
	• Behaviour, assaults and vandalism
	• Noise
	• Public urination

The Priorities for the night time economy

In order for the vision and key aims to be achieved, specific components of the night time economy have been identified by the Night Time Economy community based strategic liaison group as 'priorities'. Priorities are necessary to help focus our actions and, as a consequence our resources (see section 4), on what is seen as requiring most immediate attention. They reflect the key aims and, as such, will help address the issues identified against them in the section above and earlier in section 1.3.

These priorities will be assessed on a yearly basis to adjudge whether they are still of a high priority. If they are seen as not, they will be replaced by others. The current priorities are detailed below:

Transport

Improve the quality, accessibility, availability and information about bus services. Seek investment in measures to improve security in town centre public car parks. Identify opportunities to improve the quality of street lighting. Ensure that Civic Pride and other enhancement proposals for the highway network contribute to the objectives of the NTE Strategy. Work with Crime and Disorder Partnership to address illegal cruising and anti-social behaviour on roads and car parks in the town centre.

(Affecting Key Aim/s: 2, 3 and 4)

Disabled access

Improve access to the night time economy in the town centre for people with disabilities.

Improve disabled access to bus and taxi services; investigate feasibility of enforcement of disabled parking bays in evenings.
(Affecting Key Aim: 3)

Crime
Reduce crime levels during the night time economy and raise public awareness of crime prevention measures.
(Affecting Key Aim/s: 1, 3 and 4)

Cleansing
Maintain or improve the current state of cleanliness in the face of increasing diversity and use of the night time economy.
(Affecting Key Aim: 4)

Regeneration
Improve the periphery of the town centre to increase safety and reduce the potential for crime.
(Affecting Key Aim/s: 2, 3 and 4)

These priorities will spawn individual actions which will be identified in a separate 'solutions matrix'.

4 Resources

The resources required to achieve the aspirations of this strategy include both financial and staffing matters. Those specific to the actions/solutions identified by cabinet on 24th July 2002 are detailed in a separate document.

Presently no resources are dedicated to implementing this strategy. It is seen as a corporate project involving all relevant service areas of the council, other agencies and key stakeholders. The various services of the council will identify the human and financial resources required to implement this strategy each year as part of the annual budget round.

All projects and relevant actions resulting from this strategy will be subject to compliance with corporate procedures in respect of risk and project management. They will also be considered within the council's wider corporate objectives relating to Comprehensive Performance Assessment and Best Value.

5 Monitoring and reviews

This section will be completed in the final document and will contain details of:

- The review process of this document
- What will be reviewed, how and when:
    - ⇒ Vision every three years? The timing of this document and this time scale will result in the strategy being reviewed after the reviews of both the Community and Business Plans
    - ⇒ Key Aims annually?
    - ⇒ Priorities annually?
    - ⇒ Action Plans annually?

- How achievements will be communicated to:
  ⇒ Members
  ⇒ Staff
  ⇒ Partners
  ⇒ Public

- What steps may be taken if priorities are not attained:
  ⇒ How will failures be highlighted
  ⇒ How will 'lessons learned' be fed back into the strategy?
  ⇒ Include a schematic showing, visually, how the document will 'work'

Appendix 1

Full contact details of key partners

Appendix 2

Details of consultation

(e.g. questionnaires, data and minutes availability)

Appendix 3

Details of relevant legislation/guidance

The evolution of the document

Details concerning the document from start to finish

Appendix 4

Expanded details of how the strategy fits into Cheltenham's wider agenda?

The Community Plan

Through recent legislation, the government has required councils to work in partnership with others to produce a community plan. As a result of this, all the key organisations and partnerships in the borough have come together and formed the Cheltenham Strategic Partnership (CSP) and worked together to produce a community plan. It is not one organisation's plan; it belongs to the community as a whole.

The community plan is the result of extensive consultation with residents, organisations, businesses, community partnerships, voluntary sector agencies and community groups. Through this consultation, the CSP has been able to identify the needs and wants of the town's citizens and set out a vision how the town can develop and improve over the next 20 years.

The vision for Cheltenham in the year 2020 is for it to be a vibrant, safe and sustainable town where residents, workers and visitors enjoy the benefits of social, environmental and economic well-being.

What our communities want is:
1. an attractive and safe town
2. a thriving economy
3. a decent standard of living
4. to live life to the full
5. safe and accessible travel and transport
6. a healthy environment

The community plan is about improving the quality of life for the town's residents, workers and visitors. It will do this by setting out clear priorities for

action and promoting more co-operation and joined up working between all the organisations and partnerships in the borough on the issues that matter most to our citizens. The CSP has identified five key priorities to be addressed over the next five years. These are based on the results of consultation but also reflect national priorities:

1. Reducing levels of crime and disorder
2. Protecting and enhancing the environmental quality of the town
3. Providing more affordable housing
4. Improving sustainable travel and transport options
5. Addressing inequalities and developing a sense of community cohesion

These are the issues that matter most to local residents, and are issues in which the council plays a lead role.

In line with the scope of this document, the Night Time Economy Strategy and the corresponding actions that will be undertaken will positively contribute towards attaining the Community Plan's vision. It will address three of the plan's 'wants', as specified by our communities, numbers 1, 2 and 4: plus three of the key priorities, as identified by the CSP; 1, 2 and 5, above.

The Council's Corporate Business Plan

The Business Plan sets out how Cheltenham Borough Council will contribute to the delivery of the wider aspirations of the Community Plan. Its starting points are the Community Plan's five priorities and also further priorities identified by the council. 'Our New Business Plan: A plan for Cheltenham Borough Council 2003-2006', through its core purposes, states that the council aims:

1. to provide leadership to our community
2. to provide high quality services to the people who live, work or visit Cheltenham
3. to aspire to deliver a high quality of life for the people of Cheltenham

The 'Business Plan' also identifies seven corporate 'priorities':

1. we want to increase the provision of affordable housing, both for low cost home ownership, but particularly in the social rented sector, and work towards a balanced housing market
2. we want to re-dress the imbalances in our communities and build strong healthy geographical communities and communities of interest
3. we want to secure sustainable reductions in crime and disorder in our communities
4. we want to achieve sustainable improvements to the public realm, protect and enhance Cheltenham's natural environment and ensure the organisation becomes more sustainable
5. we want to reduce reliance on the private car and increase the proportion of trips made by public transport, cycling and walking
6. we want to enhance the town's reputation as a national and international cultural centre and provide opportunities to broaden and enrich sport, play and cultural experiences
7. we want to be an excellent authority with high standards of service

The implementation of the night time economy strategy will help to attain the third of Cheltenham Borough Council's 'Core Purposes', as listed above, by improving the environment and increasing the diversity of the night time economy. The night time economy strategy will also help to deliver priorities 3, 4 and 6, above.

The Business Plan expects measurable achievements within its current three year period towards its core purposes and priorities and the night time economy strategy will help to realise this.

Cheltenham Borough Local Plan

The Local Plan is a statutory document intended to perform four overarching functions:

- to develop the policies and proposals of the Structure Plan
- to provide a detailed basis for development control
- to provide a basis for co-ordinating development and other use of land
- to bring local and detailed planning issues before the public

The plan was adopted by the Council in 1997 and is currently being reviewed (First Deposit October 2002). The emerging plan sets out a land use and development strategy for the Borough and contains a framework of policies for controlling development. Some of these are pertinent to the night time economy strategy's vision and key aims, in particular policy 95A:

POLICY RC 95A: RESTAURANTS, NIGHT CLUBS AND LICENSED PREMISES

The Borough Council will only permit the establishment or extension of a restaurant, night club or licensed premises where it:

(a) **has good access to public transport and taxis at closing time; and**

(b) **is unlikely, individually or cumulatively, to cause harm to the character and amenity of residential areas; and**

(c) **accords with policies GP 3(B), GP 3C, RT 84, RT 86 and RT 91 (note).**

Note

GP 3(B) (impact of development), GP 3C (security and crime prevention), RT 84 (non-A1 uses in primary shopping frontages), RT 86 (non-retail uses in local shopping centres), and RT 91 (amusement arcades, and food and drink).

Applications for planning permission must be determined 'on their merits', having regard to all considerations which are relevant. These considerations include the policies of the development plan. Decisions must be made in accordance with the development plan policies unless other material considerations justify the granting of planning permission.

In seeking planning permission for development a developer may put forward proposals to address any issues arising. If the Council grants permission, it may be subject to conditions and/or to the completion of a section 106 Planning Obligation.

However, the Council may consider that the potential impact of a proposal, individually or cumulatively, is such that it cannot not be addressed satisfactorily and that planning permission should not therefore be granted.

The above policy directly affects how CBC can influence the night time economy from a planning point of view.

Cultural Strategy

The Cultural Strategy's vision is:

"To offer every one in Cheltenham access to the best possible cultural opportunities, enhancing the town's reputation and environment, providing a better quality of life for all"

This document will contribute to the above vision by increasing the diversity of cultural experience open to every one in Cheltenham and, as a consequence, enhance the town's reputation.

The night time economy strategy will also contribute to an enhanced environment through its work towards providing improved facilities in the town centre.

Through its work towards improving the enforcement and policing of the night time economy the strategy will contribute to a "better quality of life for all" by making people feel safer and therefore more able to take advantage of opportunities to enjoy the night time economy.

Social Justice Strategy

The Social Justice Strategy's vision is to:

"…develop the capacity of people in Cheltenham and provide the necessary support to enable them to play a full part in the social, economic and political life of the town and to help people take advantage of opportunities that may not be available to them without support and preparation."

The night time economy strategy will help this strategy achieve its objectives by working towards providing a safer night time economy where more people feel more able to participate in the social life of the town.

Civic Pride

The overriding aim of this initiative is to:

"make people feel good about the places in which they live, work and relax"

The Council is pursuing the Civic Pride initiative, aimed at providing funding to enhance the town's public open spaces, particularly those set within an urban street environment.
The town has many such locations; areas which, at present, are nothing more than poor quality open spaces, dominated by cars, and where the pedestrian feels alienated.

The Civic Pride initiative is intended to change this position over a number of years, by bringing such places and spaces back into the ownership of people, rather than the automobile.

The initiative will also support the Council in the promotion of its night time economy key aims (see section 3.3). It is generally accepted that in order to reduce street crime and antisocial behaviour, urban spaces need to be welcoming, adequately lit, and well used. When people start to feel safe as they move through urban environments, perceptions also begin to change. When perceptions change, cultures change. Once these areas are handed back to the majority of the population, crime & the fear of crime will be substantially reduced.

Economic Strategy

The vision of this strategy is:

"To enable a thriving, prosperous and sustainable local economy, that provides high quality and accessible goods and services, supports enjoyable, fairly paid jobs and retains a high quality of life, both for visitors and local residents"

The night time economy strategy will contribute towards achieving this vision by improving the accessibility of the night time economy to all through its work regarding enforcement and policing. This will also be addressed by increasing its diversity, encouraging more people in to the town centre at night and improving the economy.

"Quality of life" covers all aspects of life, social, economic, cultural and environmental. The strategy will improve the social, cultural and environmental aspects by increasing the diversity of social and cultural venues on offer. Also, by providing improved facilities and co-ordinated operations pollution will be reduced and impact positively on the environmental aspects of "quality of life".

Crime Reduction Strategy

There are seven overall strategic objectives relevant to this document and the night time economy strategy will assist in targets being met for the following objectives:

- To reduce the number of reported violent crimes, disorder and incidents of antisocial behaviour in the Cheltenham borough district
- To reduce the perception of crime in the Cheltenham borough area

Transport Strategy

Accessibility plays a major part in the economic well-being of the town centre both by day and by night. The high number of trips into the town centre puts pressure on the available road space making it necessary to manage the highway effectively in order to protect the quality of the environment for everyone. This requires a strategy which is sufficiently flexible to meet the transport needs of the day time and address the issues which are specific to the Night Time Economy.

The town centre transport strategy is based upon the Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan (2000/01-2005/06) with additional detail in the Cheltenham Transport Plan. With regard to the Night Time Economy the main transport objectives are to:

- contribute to a strong day and evening economy
- manage road space more effectively to reduce congestion and pollution
- minimise the impact of traffic on public spaces
- make pedestrian movement safer and simpler
- create a town centre which better serves the needs of disabled people and people with impaired mobility
- make public transport, including taxi services, more convenient, attractive and accessible
- provide better quality car parking provision and information

As many of these objectives support other strategies the implementation of transport schemes is likely to be most effective if they are delivered within the holistic framework of the NTE Strategy. In this way the town centre's transport strategy can provide the basis for an economically vibrant town centre which is accessible to all and where people can enjoy themselves in a safe environment.

These documents can all be accessed in full via Cheltenham Borough Council's website www.cheltenham.gov.uk

Appendix 5

Equal Opportunities

This appendix will give details as to the various formats that this document is available in.