

# ***Information/Discussion Paper***

## **Social and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 11 July 2005**

**Cabinet – 19 July 2005**

### **Annual progress report - implementation of the Night Time Economy Strategy**

#### **Report of the Chairman of the Night Time Economy Group**

This note contains the information to keep Members informed of matters relating to the work of the Committee, but where no decisions from Members are needed

#### **1. Why has this come to scrutiny?**

##### **1.1** On 6 July 2004 Cabinet:

- approved the night time economy strategy;
- endorsed the position of the night time economy community group as the vehicle for keeping delivery of the strategy under review, under the auspices of the Social and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- required an annual progress report on the implementation of the strategy.

##### **1.2** This paper updates the Social and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee/Cabinet in accordance with the requirements of Cabinet.

#### **2. Summary of the Issue**

##### **2.1** The night time economy strategic liaison group has met on four occasions since the strategy was approved by Cabinet.

##### **2.2** A modified version of the strategy's action plan is attached to this paper and is annotated with progress against the various identified actions.

#### **3. Summary of evidence/information**

##### **3.1** The strategy sets out a three year plan of actions based around the five following key themes:

- To co-ordinate planning and licensing operations to more effectively manage licensed premises and businesses

- To provide improved facilities for all users of the town centre at night, including toilets and transport
- To encourage a more diverse night time economy that will appeal to a wider audience
- To create a safer and cleaner environment in which people feel more able to enjoy the town centre at night
- To respect and enhance the quality of local residents' lives.

**3.2** Members will note that continued and sustained progress is being maintained against the detailed actions. Notable achievements during the year include:

2b. Extension of late night bus service funded by the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) and Nightsafe.

2g. Enhancement of key public spaces together with improvements to lighting and street furniture.

4a. Improvements to street cleaning and litter control.

4f-h. Refinements to and better use of CCTV resources.

4j. Wider use of anti-social behaviour orders and targeting of persistent and prolific offenders.

4u. Improved on-street drinking controls.

**3.3** To balance the achievements, there are other areas in which slower progress is being made, viz:

1a. Proposed changes to the emerging Local Plan failed to meet with the approval of the Planning Inspector. A suggested revision to this key policy objective will be considered by Council on 25 July 2005.

1k. The proposals to introduce a code of practice on drinks promotions has been thwarted by anti-competition laws. This is, however, mitigated by the quality standards approach under the council's licensing policy statement, together with the introduction of a national voluntary code.

3b – e. The demise of the Clarion and removal of the Public Relations Manager's post has impacted upon the council's capability to progress the identified promotional work. The promotion of non-alcoholic venues for 14-18 year olds is proving difficult to deliver. Nightsafe are, however, to contact MAD to discuss how this initiative might be developed further

4p-t. Slow progress is being made, primarily due to capacity and funding issues, although this is mitigated by aspects of the licensing policy statement.

5c. Compulsory membership of Nightsafe is prohibited. However, this is again mitigated by the provisions of the licensing policy statement. In addition, the amalgamation of Nightsafe with the Cheltenham Innkeepers' Association is imminent, thus providing a wider and more diverse membership base.

**3.4** The strategy has proved to be an extremely useful document in informing the council's licensing policy statement. Indeed, in this respect the night time economy

strategic liaison group considered and co-ordinated the consultation responses to the licensing policy statement.

- 3.5** The strategy has received national recognition, resulting in the Assistant Director Public Protection being asked to give evidence to the ODPM Housing, Planning, Local Government and the Regions Committee on The Evening Economy and the Urban Renaissance. Regional recognition has also been achieved with a commended place in the Association of Town Centre Management (ATCM) awards for the West Midlands region.
- 3.6** The involvement of Nightsafe and the manner of its engagement in delivering the objectives of the strategy is worthy of particular note. At 2b on the action plan, members will see that it has made a financial contribution towards establishing the late night 'bus service, negotiations are taking place regarding a positive contribution from Nightsafe members in removing litter from the streets (4b) and at 2f there are moves towards the provision of marshals at taxi ranks, albeit that this latter initiative is at a very early stage of development.
- 3.7** The group has also fed back to the member group considering the policy relating to s106 monies. It was the view that where planning applications are agreed that have an impact on the night time economy, the council's s106 policy should give priority to the safety and security issues within the current guidance.

#### **4. Next Steps**

- 4.1** The night time economy strategic liaison group has reviewed the action plan and key aims and recommends that these stay the same and be considered as part of the next annual review process.
- 4.2** In reviewing progress over the past twelve months, the group has given some thought to its future direction and purpose. During the initial formative period, the group has been largely driven by the Council's agenda with regard to development of both the Night Time Economy Strategy and the new Licensing agenda. The emphasis has been very much on operational delivery, which has, of necessity, involved a high level of officer input into the meetings. With the completion of the Licensing Policy Statement and major progress towards delivering the operational objectives of the NTE strategy, it is felt that a change of emphasis is now appropriate.
- 4.3** While there is an ongoing need to monitor and review both the NTE strategy and the Licensing policy statement, the group feel that the quarterly meetings provide a valuable forum for major issues of concern that arise from the night time economy. It is proposed that the group should become a formal consultee in the strategy development of the Council and partners, and should be consulted in relation to local plan and development issues in the town.
- 4.4** The partners have also recognised that they have a responsibility to table issues of concern to their own organisations for discussion
- 4.5** With the Committee's consent it is, therefore, proposed to
- (i) Widen the remit of the liaison group to matters of concern to the partners of the group thereby encouraging stakeholders to table agenda items for discussion.

- (ii) Recommend to cabinet that the night time economy liaison group become a recognised consultee of the council in all matters that may affect its partners

The objective of this proposal is to provide greater inclusivity for stakeholders in shaping the future direction of the strategy and supporting policy.

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<b>Background Papers</b>	Night Time Economy Strategy
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