

**ALCOHOL, VIOLENCE AND THE NIGHT TIME ECONOMY:
PROGRESS REPORT**

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: SP3 SAFE CITY

**CORPORATE PRIORITIES: CIO1: Delivering Customer Focused Services,
CIO4: Improving Partnership Working to Deliver 'One City'.**

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members with ongoing progress in relation to this years policy review: Alcohol, Violence and the Night time Economy

2. Background

- 2.1 An initial scoping document providing several options for detailed focus was presented to the Committee on 6th July 2010. A further report was presented at the 14th September 2010 meeting which added structure to the review and further focus on the subject area
- 2.2 The title of the review was agreed as Alcohol, Violence and the Night time Economy. It was agreed that a task and finish group would be set up to investigate Licensing and enforcement of the city's Licensing Policy.

3. Progress update

City Centre Visit

- 3.1 On Saturday 11th December 2010 Members met with Sergeant Bruce Clifford and Sergeant Mick Hall at Gillbridge Police Station. The visit began at 10:45pm and Members initially observed the CCTV in operation. Members then accompanied the police on foot around the City Centre visiting the main drinking areas.
- 3.2 A summary of the evidence gathered from the visit is included as Appendix A of this report and the main issues identified from the visit are highlighted below:
- Extending the Licensing hours beyond 3:00am have caused issues with regard to the policing of the night-time economy. Due to shift patterns a number of police officers finish their shift at 3:00am leaving a smaller number to deal with problems after this time. Options have been explored with regard to changing shift patterns however, none have

been viable. It was considered that if all premises were to close by 3:00am this would significantly improve the policing of the night time economy.

- Minimum Pricing could contribute towards a safer night time economy and it was believed by the Officers that the majority of premises would welcome the introduction of this. Concerns have been raised in the past regarding the price that Supermarkets sell alcohol for as a number of people in the City Centre will drink in the home or with friends prior to entering the City Centre.
- Police maintain positive relationships with licensees and door staff regularly communicating throughout the evening. The Committee observed the police speaking to the Manager from a new premises. It was acknowledged that many premises are happy to fully engage with the police and take on board suggestions to make their premises safer. Liquid was highlighted as a particularly good example with a pro active approach displayed by the management at the premises. There are however premises where the approach is not as positive with regard to safe drinking.

3.3 It was agreed that a maximum of three members would attend each visit and further visits will be arranged for February 2011

Task and Finish Group

3.4 The second meeting of the task and finish group was held on the 15th November 2010. Members met with Sarah Howson and Bill Sproats, Licensing Co-ordinators from Northumbria Police. Tom Terrett, Trading Standards and Licensing Manager was also in attendance.

3.5 Information was provided to the group about key police operations including Operations Barracuda , Calculate and Jaws.

3.6 The next meeting of the task and finish group will take place in January where the group will consider the views of a Licensee .

4 Recommendation

4.1 Members are requested to note the report as evidence for the policy review and those members who were in attendance are invited to share their views.

5. Background Papers

Contact Officer: - Claire Harrison, Acting Scrutiny Officer
0191 561 1232
Claire.harrison1@sunderland.gov.

Appendix 1

Key observations from City Centre visit.

- The clientele was more diverse than an average night perhaps due to Christmas Parties.
- At the time of the visit, the Park Lane area was particularly busy.
- Digital media was displayed at Park Lane on a Digi van highlighting key safety messages.
- The type of music can have an effect on the incidents of violence at a premises. This may be due to the clientele the music attracts. Those premises that attract younger clientele are thought to experience the most problems.
- As many people are entering the town already drunk it is important that they are not served more drink. It was noted by the police that it can be difficult in a cramped pub for a server to establish if someone is drunk or not. Members entered a premises to observe the environment, The point of entry was highlighted as key in this instance as door staff would be more easily able to identify a drunk customer.
- Members met Street Pastors on the visit. These are considered successful in contributing to a safer environment.
- Take-aways near to premises with later opening hours have also experienced problems with violent incidents with one premises employing door staff at the advice of the police.
- Members observed taxi marshalls at key locations in the City Centre.
- Cheap promotions contribute to levels of crime. Reference was made to a premises selling shots of vodka for 40p. The premises was able to afford this by charging an entry fee.
- It was observed that with the later opening hours people are coming out later and drinking prior to entering the pubs.
- Nights that are considered to be busier are at the beginning and end of the month and Bank Holidays. If there are football matches this can also have an impact on the levels of crime and specific reference was made to "Derby Day".