

**REPORT TO: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – ECONOMY**  
**Date of Meeting: Scrutiny Committee Economy – 11 September 2014**  
**Report of: Assistant Director Economy**  
**Title: City Centre Night Time Economy**

**Is this a key decision?** No

**Is this an executive or council function?** No

**1. What is this report about?**

- 1.1 To give Members an update on the night-time economy and the approach being taken to:
- a) enhancing its attractiveness to all;
  - b) to improving perceptions of safety; and
  - c) to reducing incidents of drink related anti-social behaviour.
- 1.2 At present the lead on co-ordinating work on the night-time economy is taken by the Exeter Alcohol, Violence and Night-Time Economy Task Group (EAVNTE). EAVNTE membership is drawn from the City Council, Devon County Council, Police, taxi and private hire trade, NHS, late night food providers and licensed trade. EAVNTE is jointly chaired by the City Centre Manager and the Exeter Police Commander.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 Members note progress and achievements to date and comment on the plan of action for the coming twelve months.
- 2.2 Members identify any additional areas on which they would wish there to be a focus in the plan.

**3. Reasons for the recommendation**

- 3.1 The night-time economy represents an area of significant potential growth for Exeter, but an area in which growth will be stilted unless progress continues to be made on addressing issues of anti-social behaviour and late night drink related disorder.

**4. Resource implications**

**4.1 Financial Resources**

During the current year £5,000 for the Community Safety Partnership budget has been assigned to the work of the EAVNTE.

**4.2 Personnel**

In addition to chairmanship by the City Centre Manger, the work of EAVNTE is supported by officers from the licensing, environmental health and community safety teams.

**5. Section 151 officer comments**

- 5.1 There are no additional financial implications arising from this report.

**6. What are the legal aspects?**

- 6.1 None.

## 7. Deputy Monitoring officer comments

7.1 Nothing further to add to the report.

## 8. Report details

- 8.1 A multi-agency workshop on the Exeter night-time economy was held in July 2013 at Exeter Corn Exchange. The workshop drew together the City Council, County Council, Police, NHS, taxis and transport providers and representatives from late night food establishments, City Centre venues and the City Centre licensed trade.
- 8.2 The July 2013 workshop set a clear agenda for action on the night-time economy. A summary of issues arising from the 2013 workshop is set out in the attached Annex A.
- 8.3 Good progress continues to be made, with the following initiatives having been delivered during the last two years:
- a) H2O Water Project. This was one of the first initiatives delivered by EAVNTE. The self-service water-coolers were installed in a number of larger premises with a view to encouraging customers to drink more water whilst on a night out. The project was based on a pilot scheme that operated in Gloucester – resulting in a significant drop in public disorder incidents in a city nightclub. Initial costs were met by the suppliers and post-trial costs met by individual licensed establishments. Post a successful trial in Exeter, the scheme was rolled out across Devon, with funding from Safer Devon Partnership, Devon & Cornwall Police and Devon Drugs & Alcohol Action Team.
  - b) Extended evening retail opening hours. Scrutiny Members were briefed on progress with delivering extended evening trading at their last meeting. Retailer take-up of the initiative remains challenging, but the initiative remains a key element of the strategy for ensuring a better ‘connection’ between the day-time, evening and night-time economies and, in turn, in ensuring a greater number of people remain in the City Centre in the evening and at night.
  - c) Help Zone. A temporary Help Zone was run with the support of the City Council, the Police, Street Pastors, South West Ambulance service and Exeter Mint Methodist Church on the final Friday before Christmas (‘Builders Friday’) in 2013. The objectives of the Help Zone were to give people a central place to go in the City Centre if they ran into any problems, to allow paramedics to treat minor injuries on the spot (reducing the burden on A&E) and to allow police to deal with incidents and take statements without having to travel out of the City Centre.
  - d) Collaborative Marshalling. A gradual introduction of security staff from Club Rococo, Mosaic and The Golden Horn assisting in marshalling crowds away from Mary Arches Street post clubs in the area closing has now been introduced on Saturday nights. In due course, with the introduction of a new Taxi Rank to the front of Mosaic before the end of the year, security staff will act as Taxi Marshalls for the new rank. The main purpose of this initiative is to disperse revellers from the area and help reduce the risk of conflict flashpoints and intimidation.
- 8.4 Key actions currently identified for the coming 12-18 months are:
- a) **Introduction of Best Bar None scheme**. Best Bar None is a national award scheme supported by the Home Office and aimed at promoting responsible management and operation of licensed premises. It was piloted in Manchester in 2003 and found to improve standards in the night time economy, with premises now competing to participate. It has since been adopted by over 100 towns and cities across the UK and is now being taken up internationally.
  - b) **Securing Purple Flag accreditation for the City Centre**. Purple Flag is an accreditation scheme that recognises excellence in the management of town and city centres at night - entertainment areas that achieve the standard will benefit

from an improved night time environment and a reputation that offers 'a better night out' to visitors. Many locations around the UK and Ireland are already involved. Purple Flag aims to raise standards and improve the quality of our towns and cities by incorporating all aspects of evening & night-time economy management into a comprehensive framework for local partnerships to aspire to. Just as a Blue Flag is an indicator of a good beach, Purple Flag is the indicator of where to go for a good night out.

- c) **Review of the City Council's licensing policy** – with the potential for the policy to underpin the strengthening of evening and night-time café culture in the City Centre.
- d) **Consultation with the public, trade and other stakeholders to consider whether to remove the policy of taxi restriction in a managed way**, and on the potential for enhancing the quality controls for taxis to improve standards further and prevent any potential negative impact from de-restriction.
- e) **Home Visits to be conducted by Neighbourhood Police Officers** to follow-up on under age patrons being identified by licensed premises.
- f) **Seek to develop school alcohol education and awareness sessions** - to promote awareness of the effects of alcohol.
- g) Building on the success of the pre-Christmas trial, **to launch a Saturday night Help Zone on a long-term trial basis.**
- h) Licensed premises to look to provide **safe areas for patrons needing immediate assistance until Street Pastors can attend and assist.**
- i) To **review the City Centre night-time policing model**, with a view to ensuring police presence is more visible across a wider area of the City Centre;
- j) To look to the **potential of expanding the Taxi Marshall scheme to Friday nights and Bank Holidays;**
- k) To **examine means of rapid sharing of photographs of individuals causing trouble between licensed premises.**

## 9. How does report contribute to the council's corporate plan?

- 9.1 Progress on the key forward actions set out above will help deliver the Council's purposes of 'help me run a successful business', 'provide great things for me to see, do and visit', 'improve the environment and my neighbourhood', 'keep my city safe and looking good', 'provide me with the information I need' and 'maintain the assets of our city'.

## 10. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

### 10.1 Risks relate to:

- a) *Reduction of funding available from the Safer Devon Partnership and the Police and Crime Commissioner in 2015/16.* Statistical analysis of the success of initiatives launched by EAVNTE, with evidence of their contribution to delivering reductions in levels of anti social behaviour and drink related disorder will be undertaken, with a view to underpinning the case for on-going funding.
- b) *Licensed premises falling away from the partnership approach to the night-time economy developed during the last twelve months.* This risk can be ameliorated by continuing the regular 'partnership' meetings involving licensees, police and council officers.

## 11. What is the impact of the decision on equality and diversity; health and wellbeing; safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults, community safety and the environment?

- 11.1 Progress on the areas identified in paragraph 8.4 above will make a positive contribution in all areas.

**12. Are there any other options?**

12.1 None identified.

**John Harvey, City Centre Manager**

**Richard Ball, Assistant Director Economy**

**Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)**

***Background papers used in compiling this report:-***

None

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