

## **LICENSING COMMITTEE**

**14 MARCH 2019**

### **A STRATEGY FOR THE NIGHT TIME ECONOMY**

#### **1.0    Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To update Members on the development of a Strategy for the Night Time Economy (NTE) improving the town's early evening and late evening economy.

#### **2.0    Background**

- 2.1 The Night Time Economy is a widely used but relatively ill-defined phrase. It is generally taken to encompass provision and facilities for leisure and entertainment in the evening and into the early morning – perhaps from 6pm to 4am inclusive. It includes, but not exclusively, retail shops, bars, pubs, clubs, restaurants, takeaways and fast food premises and the supporting infrastructure such as taxis and private hire vehicles, late night buses, and late night street cleaning. All late opening licensed premises would be part of the late night economy
- 2.2 Whilst the night time economy is important to Newark there is no single strategy that addresses the important factors that go to make a successful and safe night time economy. The Council's Licensing Policy is perhaps the most important but this is very clearly geared towards the four licensing objectives and does not take account wider cultural and economic issues.
- 2.3 In 2015 a report was presented to the Licensing Committee setting out some proposals for taking forward the development of a Night Time Economy Strategy.
- 2.4 Issues with the night time economy are not unique to Newark. Most cities and towns across the UK are experiencing some negative side effects of having a vibrant night life. Locally the Police have seen an increase in the numbers of incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour recorded during the late evening and early mornings mainly associated with the consumption of excess alcohol.
- 2.5 Through 2016/17 attempts were made to engage partners in the development of a strategy. However, with the exception of Newark Business Club the response to working with the district to develop a strategy was limited. There are a number of reasons for this. Firstly, the tools available for developing strategy for a town the size of Newark are limited. Many larger towns use the 'Purple Flag' scheme to assess the needs of the town centre and set an action plan. Unfortunately the purple flag scheme does not lend itself for use in smaller towns. Secondly, the district council and its partners did not have one Business Unit focused on the town centre which made it difficult to obtain the focus required from officers involved

#### **3.0    Proposals**

- 3.1 As Members will be aware the recent Business Unit restructure has resulted in the creation of the Town Centre Development Manager and this post will take the lead on creating a new vision and plan of improvements for Newark Town Centre.

- 3.2 The Council's Corporate Objectives have also been reviewed and set out below is one of the new objectives that has been agreed.

Objective 7: Enhance and Sustain Newark Town Centre

- 3.3 One of the key activities identified to deliver this objective is:

Improving the night time economy and overnight accommodation within the Town Centre (Years 1-4).

- 3.4 Whilst the key activity above does not specifically mention the development of a NTE Strategy it is evident that this will be a key driver in moving forward in the development of Newark's Night Time Economy. The activity is identified to take place from year one therefore it is proposed that the Town Centre Development Manager be invited to attend a future meeting of the Licensing Committee to outline the approach to be taken and to understand the role that Licensing plays in the night time economy.

#### **4.0 Comments of the Director – Growth & Regeneration**

- 4.1 The need to address night-time economy issues and opportunities, including the development of a NTE Strategy, will be a key strand of the wider Town Centre Regeneration aspirations that will now rest with the newly created Town Centre Business Unit. I fully support the suggestion that the Town Centre Development Manager attend a future meeting to report on how any NTE Strategy can be incorporated into wider Town Centre proposals. For awareness the post of Town Centre Development Manager is yet to be recruited to.

#### **5.0 RECOMMENDATION**

**That Members consider the update of the Night Time Economy Strategy for Newark and agree the approach set out that will see the Town Centre Development Manager taking a lead on this initiative.**

#### Background Papers

Nil

For further information please contact Alan Batty on 01636 655467

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