



Leicester  
City Council

CABINET

5<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2005

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LEICESTER'S NIGHT-TIME ECONOMY

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## **REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING & REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Based on the investigation by the Leicester Night-time Economy Review Group  
A Sub-Group a sub-group of the Strategic Planning & Regeneration**

## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To present the conclusions and recommendations of the in-depth investigation carried by the Leicester Night-time Economy Review Group on behalf of Strategic Planning and Regeneration (SPAR) Scrutiny Committee into the night-time economy of Leicester.

## **2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 The Chair of the Strategic Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee ask that Cabinet along with any financial implications:

- i) Recognise the significance of the work undertaken by SPAR and the contribution it has made to New Ways of Working,
- ii) acknowledge the praise that the investigation has received by both partners and members of the public,
- iii) Adopt the recommendations set out in the Final Report (APPENDIX A) of Leicester's Night-time Economy Review Group, June 2005 (see page 6 of final report), and
- iv) Ask that the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Culture report back SPAR and then to Cabinet on how the recommendations set out in the report can be implemented along with any implications in doing so.
- v) Note the conclusions of the review undertaken into the investigation (APPENDIX B) and ask that the Service Director (Democratic Services) take account of the findings for future in-depth investigations and the proposed review of Scrutiny.
- vi) Note the discussion and conclusions of the SPAR committee meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2005 – APPENDIX C

## **3. SUMMARY**

### **Introduction**

- 3.1 In November 2004 the Strategic, Regeneration and Planning (SPAR) Scrutiny Committee agreed to investigate Leicester's City Centre night-time economy and set up the Leicester Night-time Economy Review Group under the terms of reference set out on *page 16* of the main report, Appendix A. The aim of the review was to investigate the diverse nature of Leicester's night-time economy and identify what the key agencies could do to facilitate its development.
- 3.2 Between November 2004 and January 2005 the review group requested written evidence from a range of stakeholders, including the public, and received a wide range of responses (*see page 20 of the main report for a summary of the evidence submitted*). A visit by the review group to a number of establishments operating in the night economy on Friday 25th February, and three public meetings on 3rd

March, 14th March and 13th April followed this. Over the period of the review the exercise attracted good level of publicity, much of this due to the introduction of the new licensing laws and the interest of residents who live in the city centre.

### **Main Findings**

- 3.3 The main conclusions and recommendations of the Review Group are set out on page 8 of the final report (Appendix A) and are based on a set of 'themes and Issues' that emerged (page 54) from the collection of evidence and the two public sessions that were held. These were:
- Diverse and Vibrant City Centre
  - Strategic Management
  - Partnership
  - Zero Tolerance
  - Social Environment
  - Promoting the City Centre
- 3.4 The investigation undertaken by the Review Group was intensive and well received by all those who contributed to it, including Council officers, agencies and the public. A range of views on the current problems and the future were considered within an environment that was frank and open. What emerged were a series of conclusions and recommendations that the Review Group feel represents the broad views of opinion on how the city's night economy could be improved.
- 3.5 A list of all the recommendations only is set out on page 6 of the report and reflect the actions that the Review Group see as being required by the Council and its key partners to facilitate the development of a more diverse and vibrant city centre economy and bring about the improvements all contributors wished to see. Furthermore, these are spread across the six theme areas covered above. There is one additional area to the themes and this is 'monitoring and evaluation'. This was added in recognition of the need for someone to take responsibility for making sure that the findings were acted upon.
- 3.6 Listed below are some of the issues Members may wish to consider as part of their deliberations on the report and its findings:
- i) The need for the Council, working with its partners, to develop an appropriate management structure for the city centre that will facilitate a more diverse and vibrant city centre,
  - ii) The importance of developing an appropriate strategic plan and vision for the city centre,
  - iii) That the role of both residents and licensees, as well as other stakeholders in the city centre, should be integral to any plans for developing and maintaining a diverse night economy,

- iv) The use of government policies in assisting to develop the night economy, particularly in the enforcement of low-level crime and disorder
- v) The importance of the social environment in facilitating a diverse and vibrant night economy,
- vi) The need to invest in promoting the night economy, and
- vii) The importance of monitoring the implementation of any actions that are eventually agreed by Cabinet.

### **Consultation on the Draft Report**

- 3.7 The draft report was circulated to all those who had contributed to the review, either through providing evidence or attending one of the three public sessions, to ensure that the report reflected the views or opinions they gave and to gauge support for the conclusions and recommendations reached by the Review Group.
- 3.8 The conclusions and recommendations were very well received with very few adverse comments being given, all of which have now been captured within the final report.
- 3.9 For example, the need to reflect the importance of public transport in the accessibility of the city centre and the funding challenges regarding any expansion to the current system; reference to the licensing and planning functions working more closely together amended to reflect the differences in the two functions, while maintaining the wish to see them compliment each other; under the section Zero Tolerance the sentiments regarding a more ‘aggressive’ enforcement policy was qualified with the words ‘but proportionate’, and reference to how the new powers presented by the government could be utilised inserted in the recommendation; reference has been included to the centres 24hr car parks for use in the evening, and the un-welcoming nature of many; the deep concerns of residents regarding the effects of the night economy on their lives acknowledged as a concern of the review group; reference to the a city centre that more reflected the city’s diversity e.g. ethnic minorities, the <sup>1</sup>LGBT community, etc; and the reference to the government publication ‘How to Manage Town Centres’ that set out four principles for effective management of town and city centres, which included the preparation of a strategy and the development of effective partnerships, was added. Its production was alluded to in the investigation.

## **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Members should note that the conclusions and recommendations from the investigation raise a number of financial issues regarding their implementation. Recommendation 2.1 iv, requires the Corporate

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<sup>1</sup> Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) community

Director of Regeneration and Culture, as the Corporate Director with lead responsibility for the City Centre, to report back to SPAR, and then to Cabinet, on how the recommendations set out in the report can be implemented along with any financial and other implications in doing so. In so reporting the Corporate Director will need to work with the Council's partners in determining these implications.

- 4.2 *Graham Aitken*, Interim Head of Finance, Regeneration and Culture, Ext. 7390.

## **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Under Part 2, Article 6 of the Council's Constitution, the role of Scrutiny Committees is (among others) to "...as appropriate, make reports and/or recommendations to the full Council, Cabinet or to any committee in connection with the discharge of its functions" and to "consider any matter affecting the area or its inhabitants".
- 5.2 In May 2004 the Council resolved that Scrutiny Committees should experiment with new ways of working. It was further resolved by the Council in July 2004 that certain committees would consider the benefits of working together jointly. A report went to Council in March this year detailing the results of such methods, with a further report is expected in September 2005.
- 5.3 The investigation outlined in this report could be seen as a contribution to these experiments. Members are however minded that future investigations of a similar scope to that covered in this report, should be carried out within the context of the role of Scrutiny Committees as set out in 5.1 above. There will also need to be an agreed rationale for the role of any third parties invited to contribute to any future investigations.
- 5.4 In endorsing this report, regard will need to be given to the need to consider the conclusions of the investigation and its implications in relation to existing and proposed Council policies and initiatives.
- 5.5 The Council will consider the conclusions of the investigation in the light of guidance on good practice on management of the night-time economy produced by central government, such as the good practice guide "Good Practice in Managing the Evening and Late Night Economy: A Literature Review from an Environmental Perspective", produced by the ODPM in 2004.
- 5.6 It is a matter of law that a committee that exercises delegated functions cannot delegate such function to any other person or body.
- 5.7 Any information that is supplied to the Council as part of the investigation may be subject to the provisions of the Data Protection and the Freedom of Information Acts.

5.8 *John McIvor*, Team Leader (Property), Ext. 7035. Legal Advisor to Strategic Planning & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee.

## 6. **BACKGROUND PAPERS – LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

Implications Of The Night-time Economy Of Leicester, Strategic Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee, 15<sup>th</sup> September 2004

Leicester's City Centre Night-time Economy, SPAR, 10<sup>th</sup> November 2005

## 7. **CONSULTATION**

As detailed in the report "Final Report of Leicester's Night-Time Economy Review Group, June 2005"

## 8. **AUTHOR**

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