

Motion to: Council

25 January 2022

Subject: Drink spiking

Proposer: Councillor Jones

Seconder: Councillor Stutely

“In recent months there has been concern in this city about rising reports of spiking incidents, largely targeting women. We have seen the nationwide ‘Girls Night In’ campaign gaining traction, with Norwich based protests taking place on 26th October. Worryingly, in this same evening, 5 people were spiked by injection. To the 8 November, 49 reports have been received by Norfolk Police – 34 drink spiking and 15 by injection. In response, the Police have engaged extensively with licensees, working with venues on new and extended measures to help keep our young and vulnerable people safe in the city’s late-night economy.

Council **RESOLVES** to:

- 1) Welcome the introduction of more routine searches including the use of detector devices; initiatives such as dedicated welfare officers; safe zones for people that are vulnerable or become unwell; caps for open drink containers, sign-in systems, and improved staff training will all contribute to a safer environment.
- 2) Thank Norfolk Constabulary for continuing to expand their excellent work in this area and increasing resources for further engagement with venues and additional plain clothed patrols in spiking hot spots.
- 3) Call on the Government to increase police funding for the purpose of tackling this character and type of offending which includes spiking in drinks and by injection, sexual assaults in night-time venues and all forms of harassment and discrimination
- 4) Continue working closely with Norfolk Police, Licensees (directly and through business groups such as the Licensing Forum), to support the introduction of new measures that will improve safety in the city’s late-night economy
- 5) Continue to support the work of volunteer organisations such as SOS Bus and Street Presence pastors
- 6) Work closely with partners, including Norwich BID, to raise awareness among all late-night license holders and encourage the widespread adoption of new measures

- 7) Work with relevant partners to incorporate strategies that tackle these new forms of offending behaviour including the potential to develop a night-time safety charter that seeks to eliminate spiking in drinks and by injection, sexual assaults, all forms of harassment and discrimination in our city, and to ensure all visitors and staff get home safely and promote the charter across the city.
- 8) Continue to enforce all four licensing objectives wherever there is confirmed evidence of breaches.

Motion to: Council

25 January 2022

Subject: Honouring the River Wensum and increasing protection of its biodiversity

Proposer: Councillor Galvin

Seconder: Councillor Price

The River Wensum is a rare and special chalk stream river, nationally important and listed as SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) and SAC (Special Area of Conservation): the highest nature designations possible in the UK. With a total of over 100 species of plants, a rich invertebrate fauna and a relatively natural corridor, it is 'probably the best whole river of its type in nature conservation terms' (Natural England SSSI Citation 1993).

Globally, chalk streams are rarer than rainforest. All of the habitats within the SSSI are intrinsically linked. The cold chalk filtered water provides a rare habitat for a rich aquatic world. Rare and vulnerable species include the Desmoulin's whorl snail, white-clawed crayfish, brook lamprey, and bullhead. Sadly, the white-clawed crayfish, classed as under severe threat from invasive populations, now looks like it has been driven out of the river entirely, very recently, by crayfish plague carried by non-native crayfish.

The river supports an incredible list of species from chub, pike and eel to kingfisher and little grebe; from sedge warblers to barn owls. Communities of plants include water lilies and the nationally scarce water dropwort. Invertebrates including molluscs, water beetles and mayflies abound.

This amazing river flows through our city; protecting us from flooding, providing a natural corridor, cooling our air; a living link with our natural and cultural heritage. Yet the Wensum is particularly under threat from abstraction and urbanisation; pollution from agriculture and industry; and invasive species. It suffers from a lack of understanding; we take it for granted. Development of use of the river is welcomed, but the importance of its biodiversity must, especially in view of increased threats, be recognised, protected and enhanced. It is important to pursue a 'whole river' approach to this living part of our cityscape, recognising and linking up and downstream.

Norwich City Council has led the development of the River Wensum Strategy working with the Broads Authority, Norfolk County Council, the Environment Agency and the Wensum River Parkway Partnership, as the River Wensum Strategy Partnership (RWSP). After consultation, the strategy was launched in June 2018 and an updated Delivery Plan was brought to Cabinet in December 2021. This Strategy

focuses on the stretch of the River Wensum corridor from the city council boundary at Hellesdon in the west to Whitlingham Country Park in the east. Other work led by external organisations and groups is ongoing for the area upstream of Hellesdon Mill.

In addition to and working alongside the important actions within the River Wensum Strategy, council **RESOLVES** to:

1. In recognition of its natural and cultural significance and to celebrate and share its importance, investigate whether it is possible to confer any statuses or nominate the river for awards or honours such as freedom of the city in order to actively increase public awareness of its value;
2. Develop its planning policies further to protect biodiversity, mitigate flooding and enhance a wildlife-friendly river frontage;
3. Write to Anglian Water asking for evidence of what is being done to prevent unacceptable levels of human waste in the water from sewage overspill;
4. Work in partnership to:
 - a) develop and deliver a strategy for signage and other interpretation of the river to increase understanding of its importance, and safe and equal access to its amenity;
 - b) ensure that any forthcoming biodiversity plan for the city links with and enhances the river and riparian environments;
 - c) work with an extended set of partners including the Norfolk Rivers Trust and River Wensum Strategy Partnership to make biodiversity a high priority and cross cutting theme of the River Wensum Strategy and seek funding for this;
 - d) check the policies in the River Wensum strategy and actions and projects in the Delivery Plan for their biodiversity implications, including mitigating against invasive species and the effect of bankside works; and
 - e) develop a process for community and other groups along the river to bring forward ideas for the strategy and action plan, including finding sources of funding to carry out this work, and publicise this process.

Motion to: Council

25 January 2022

Subject: 'Robin Hood' tax on oil and gas firms

Proposer: Councillor Wright

Seconder: Councillor Ackroyd

Council **RESOLVES** to

- 1) note the excessive profits being made by oil and gas companies, including the boss of BP describing the company as a “cash machine” after soaring oil and gas prices boosted its profits to £2.4 billion in the third quarter of 2021 alone and that since 2015 the Conservatives have scrapped zero carbon standards for new homes, and failed to insulate the millions of energy efficient homes.
- 2) support calls for a “Robin Hood” tax – a one-off levy on the super-profits of oil and gas firms to raise money to support the thousands of families in Norwich that are facing soaring energy costs which includes:
 - a) A proposed one-off levy to raise an estimated £5 billion from companies that are making record profits from soaring energy prices. This would be used to support vulnerable families facing a 50% increase to their energy bills.
 - b) This “one-off” tax could fund a substantial package of emergency support to help over 17 million people with their heating bills.
 - c) This package of support would include doubling and extending the Warm Home Discount, doubling the Winter Fuel Allowance
 - d) A new ten-year home insulation scheme: This would be spent on reducing people’s energy bills in the long-term through an emergency home insulation programme to upgrade poorly insulated UK homes - including through fully funded grants for those in fuel poverty and on low incomes. This would cost an estimated £500 million in the next year.
- 3) recognises any such one-off tax should be followed by a widespread review to ensure energy companies pay their fair share and ensure that residents of Norwich are not left in fuel poverty as a consequence of excessive profits.
- 4) ask group leaders to write to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, calling for a one-off tax on excessive profits made by oil and gas companies in order to help vulnerable people, especially those in Norwich, with heating bills and upgrade poorly insulated homes.