



Licensing Committee

16:30 to 18:10

01 December 2022

Present: Councillors Stutely (chair), Catt, Davis, Grahame, Kidman, Peek and Price

Apologies: Councillors Ackroyd, Brociek-Coulton, Fulton-McAlister (E), Huntley, Sands (S) and Schmierer

1. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Public Questions/Petitions

There were no public questions or petitions.

3. Appointment of vice-chair

Following a vote it was **RESOLVED** to appoint Councillor Fulton-McAlister (E) as vice-chair for the ensuing civic year.

4. Minutes

RESOLVED to approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2022.

5. Consideration of cumulative impact assessment

The public protection (licensing) team leader presented the report.

The chair welcomed Ed Brown, Chief Inspector Community Safety, Local Policing Delivery Unit. The Chief Inspector delivered a presentation on policing the night time economy. He explained the public order deployment model used to cover the area of the night time economy (NTE). Every week from Thursday to Saturday there was an increased police presence in the NTE to prevent and deter crime. The police took a preventative approach and engaged with licenced premises in the area and voluntary sector providers.

He referred to crime statistics for the area and noted that rates had been rising. He commented that because the police were on the scene it prevented a lot of incidents

from escalating. Conversely rates for the reporting of anti-social behaviour within the NTE area had reduced. The Chief Inspector observed that there was a greater scrutiny of recording standards expected of police officers. There was a correlation between the later opening of venues and an increase in alcohol related incidents with 30% of crime reported in the last hours of trading.

The Chief Inspector referred to the Night Safety Board and Night Safety Charter funded through the home office's safer street funds. The scheme aimed to identify ways to make licensed premises safer and worked with premises to improve conditions.

Members thanked the Chief Inspector for his presentation. A member considered that if there had been a consistent increase in crimes in the NTE area then a cumulative Impact Policy (CIP) should be explored. The chair was interested to know how Norwich's figures compared to comparable council areas. In response to member questions the Chief Inspector advised that there would be an enhanced policing presence in the lead up to Christmas.

The chair referred to the increase in the number of spiking reports and asked if the concentration of venues within the NTE area added to this. The Chief Inspector considered media coverage had encouraged people to come forward with the knowledge that their concerns would be taken seriously and that there had been a national increase in reporting rates for drink spiking. He referred to the development of safe spaces, which were areas within venues that were set aside for welfare.

Members discussed if a Cumulative Impact Policy was needed in the area of the NTE. In response to member concerns regarding the uplift in crime figures the Chief Inspector commented that it was difficult to know if figures had increased as a result of a saturation of premises or other factors. He emphasised that it was a relatively small increase in figures. The chair referred to the report in the agenda and noted that the police had been asked in summer if they considered a CIP necessary and had responded no. He asked the Chief Inspector if this was still the case and he confirmed it was.

In response to a member question the Chief Inspector noted that sexual offences were often under reported and the police were keen to encourage reporting and worked with venues to target enforcement. In response to a member comment regarding the council and police having a duty of care to introduce a CIP the Chief Inspector considered that the evidential basis for one did not exist. He referred to the Night Safety Charter as a means of working collaboratively with venues, the third sector and other partners.

The Chief Inspector noted that footfall within the NTE area had fallen compared to five or six years ago. The lack of taxi provision in the area to get people home at night was an issue and the late night trade was looking at a night bus as an option to mitigate this.

Members discussed what data they considered necessary to determine if a CIP was needed. They requested comparison of crime figures for the NTE at Price of Wales Road to other areas such as NR2 and NR3, comparison data for comparable council areas, the concentration of venues in NTE and comparison data before the previous policy was introduced to the situation now.

The public protection (licensing) team leader noted that if members voted to scope a CIP that this would likely have to be externally resourced.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) Request the Public Protection (licensing) Team Leader begin work on a cumulative impact assessment, (this would require a scoping and project planning exercise); and
- (2) Ask the Public Protection (licensing) Team Leader for a progress update at the next meeting of licensing committee.

6. Regulatory subcommittee minutes

RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the regulatory subcommittee meetings held on 9 March 2020, 8 June 2020, 14 September (am) 2020, 14 September (pm) 2020, 12 October 2020, 8 February 2021, 9 May 2022, 13 June 2022, 8 August 2022, 12 September 2022 and 10 October 2022.

CHAIR