

**Report to** Norwich highways agency committee

**Item**

12 June 2014

**Report of** Head of city development services

**8**

**Subject** Experimental late night road closure of Cathedral Street, St Faiths Lane and Recorder Road between 11.00 p.m. and 6am. on Fridays and Saturdays

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## **Purpose**

This report seeks approval to introduce an experimental traffic regulation order which would close St Faiths Road, Cathedral Street and Recorder Road to motor vehicles not visiting an address on these roads between 11pm. and 6am on Friday and Saturdays.

## **Recommendations**

- 1) Approve the introduction of an experimental traffic regulation order that will operate between 11pm. and 6am. on Fridays and Saturdays and will have the effect of:
  - a) Preventing access to Cathedral Street, St Faiths Lane and Recorder Road from Prince of Wales Road by motor vehicles except those accessing residential or business properties on these roads;
  - b) Allowing private hire vehicles to wait in identified bus stop clearways on Castle Meadow and Bank Plain;
- 2) Delegate powers to the head of city development services to vary the order in consultation with the chair and vice-chair of the committee.
- 3) Note that a report to review the experimental order will be brought to a future meeting

## **Corporate and service priorities**

The report helps to meet the corporate priority a safe and clean city and the local neighbourhood services service plan priority to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.

## **Financial implications**

The cost of advertising the experimental traffic regulation order is estimated to be in the region of £400 which together with monitoring and review costs can be absorbed within existing budgets. Enforcement and signage costs will be met by Norfolk Constabulary.

Ward/s: Thorpe Hamlet

Cabinet member: Councillor Stonard – Environment and transport

## **Contact officers**

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Bob Cronk, head of local neighbourhood services 01603 212373

Superintendent Dave Marshall – Norfolk Constabulary

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**Background documents**

None

# Report

## Background

1. Norwich has a reputation as a city of culture. Its vibrant entertainment sector attracts people locally, regionally and beyond. The city evening offer includes theatres, restaurants, pubs, clubs and music venues that would rival the cultural infrastructure of many larger UK cities. Norwich as an evening destination has a real buzz and energy about it and makes an important contribution to the local economy.
2. Although the impact of a thriving night time economy is mainly positive the city, along with most other cities and towns across the UK, also experiences some negative effects. In particular whilst most people drink responsibly and go home safely there is excessive alcohol consumption by some people which can result in crime, anti-social behaviour and general disorder.
3. At the 26 March 2013 meeting, the city council's cabinet discussed a report proposing an action plan to help mitigate the negative impacts of the night time economy. As part of this was a recommendation to this committee to consider a proposal to help deal with negative impacts resulting from private hire vehicles parking in the side roads to Prince of Wales Road.

**Proposal: Subject to the approval of Norwich Joint Highways Agency Committee, to introduce an experimental late night road closure in Cathedral Street, St Faiths Lane and Recorder Road that will be in operation between 11.00 p.m. and 6.00 a.m. on Fridays and Saturdays**

4. On Friday and Saturday nights in particular, private hire vehicles park on Cathedral Street as well as St Faiths Lane and Recorder Road. Noise from people congregating to wait for booked vehicles together with the noise of radios and doors slamming, etc. causes considerable disturbance for local residents. The congregation of groups of people can lead to crime and disorder issues. From time to time the roads are also used as a circuit by 'boy racers'.
5. To ameliorate the problem and based on experience elsewhere it is proposed to close these roads to all traffic other than that generated by residents and any local businesses. This would displace the private hire vehicles reducing disturbance to residents and the likelihood of crime and disorder issues occurring.
6. The cost of a temporary closure in terms of providing barriers and providing staff would be significant and it is not something the council could contemplate in the present financial climate. Furthermore it may be difficult for civilian staff to operate. However, the police have confirmed that they would be prepared to both sign and enforce such a restriction (potentially also providing operational advantages to the police and being integrated into their normal policing of Prince of Wales Road).
7. The legal backing for the closure would need to be achieved via an experimental traffic order which can last up to 18 months before being made permanent. Such an order does not require consultation before being introduced; the period of the experiment being the consultation period. Any decision to make permanent would depend on the outcomes it achieves for local residents, thorough consideration of feedback about the experiment, review of operational experience more generally and being satisfied that it would be practical to continue the closure into the long term. It

should also be noted that an experimental order can be terminated at short notice and there are options to vary it; for example it might prove practical that a shorter period of closure would be effective.

8. With private hire vehicles not being able to park on these roads any more, as part of the experiment consideration it is also proposed to allow private hire vehicles on parts of Castle Meadow and Bank Plain during the 11:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. period (as usage of the street by buses is very low at such times).