



CRIME AND DISORDER OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Subject Heading:

Romford's Night Time Economy

SLT Lead:

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Policy context:

Havering's vision is "making a greater London". Included in this is ensuring the safety of our residents. The Corporate Plan includes a specific commitment that the Council will work with partners to provide a high quality environment for residents, businesses and visitors. This includes working with the East Area Borough Command Unit to reduce crime and disorder; working with partners to further develop a plan to reduce the number of young people becoming involved in gang activity, and improving public access and safety through schemes such as the Romford town centre Public Space Protection Order (PSPO)

The Council also has a statutory duty under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to produce an annually refreshed Community Safety Plan. Addressing serious group violence and knife crime are key priorities within the Havering Community Safety Partnership Plan 2017/18 to 2019/20.

Financial summary:

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Some initiatives are funded via a grant from the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and by TFL's Local Implementation Plan (LIP) funding.

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

Communities making Havering	<input type="checkbox"/>
Places making Havering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Opportunities making Havering	<input type="checkbox"/>
Connections making Havering	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUMMARY

Romford Town centre is home to one of the biggest night time economies outside of central London. The entertainment sector attracts some 11,000 18 to 25 year olds on Friday and Saturday nights to visit big name venues and to experience its animated nightlife. The presence of a large night time economy has brought with it a set of challenges for Romford, particularly relating to crime and alcohol related disorder.

The purpose of this report is to:

- Provide an update on issues relating to the night time economy in Romford.
- Examine the effectiveness of the current services that support the nighttime economy and how they work together.
- Explain the role of partner agencies in providing a safe, well managed night time economy.
- Consider national and local best practice in relation to management of the night time economy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Crime and Disorder Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the contents of the report and that the Community Safety Team will continue to:

- Monitor and review effectiveness of existing projects and partnerships.
- Produce a problem profile for the night time economy.
- Continue to work with the Home Office as one of the Local Alcohol Action Area 2 (LAAA2) projects and to share best practice both locally and nationally.
- Work with the Portman Group to develop further the Safe Haven scheme within the night time economy.
- Continue to develop Safer Travel at Night schemes to support the Night Tsar's Women's Charter.
- Further develop a Drugs Awareness Package for licensees.

REPORT DETAIL

The night time economy brings many positive benefits to the borough, from job creation, spending in our local economy and provision of a diverse range of activities for local people, including restaurants, cinemas, bingo halls etc.

Romford's night time economy is however changing. The new ice rink (with an 800 capacity for ice hockey games) and the opening of three new restaurants in the Brewery in April (with a capacity of around 600) means that the night time economy is diversifying and growing, bringing with it both opportunities and new challenges around accessibility, keeping visitors safe, maintaining cleanliness regimes, and ensuring that its well-managed and offers a range of activities to suit residents and attract visitors to the borough. This report will look at some of the projects that are currently being delivered in the town centre to assist in achieving this.

Romford town centre currently welcomes some 11,000 visitors on a Friday and Saturday night. It is not surprising with the numbers of people visiting the town centre of a night, often consuming alcohol, that Romford town centre still remains a hotspot for crime within the borough. Temporal analysis shows that 31% of all offences recorded in the Romford Town ward during the period analysed were reported within the Romford Town Centre ring road, which is the hub of the night time economy. Peak hours of offending continue to be from 9pm to 4am on a Friday, Saturday and early hours of Sunday morning, thus targeted action and resources have been implemented at these times.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	No. change from 14 v 15	No. change from 15 v 16	No. change from 16 v 17	% change from 14 v 15	% change from 15 v 16	% change from 16 v 17
Havering	996	1097	1262	1293	101	165	31	10%	15%	2%
Romford Town Ward	310	336	353	351	26	17	-2	8%	5%	-1%

Non Domestic Violence with Injury accounts for 7% of Total Notifiable Offences for Havering. Figures show that in Havering, since 2014, a year-on-year increase in these offences has occurred. However, the increase has slowed down significantly in recent years, with 2016 to 2017 showing a 2% increase. Previous years saw increases of 15% (from 2015 to 2016) and 10% (from 2014 to 2015). A breakdown of figures shows that the Romford Town ward accounts for the highest proportion of these offences and ranks as the 8th highest ward for offences recorded in London. The Romford Town ward also holds a Non DA VWI rate of 20.2 per 1,000 population, which is significantly higher than the second highest rate in Havering of 7.8 per 1,000 population.

With the continuing growth of the Romford Town economy and population, it is likely that these will be drivers for a continued increase in the number of offences.

Similar to Havering as a whole, the Romford Town ward has also seen a year-on-year increase in the number of recorded offences, however performance has stabilised in recent years, similar to that of Havering as a whole. The period from 2014 to 2015 saw an 8% increase; 2015 to 2016 saw a 5% increase and 2016 to 2017 saw a slight reduction.

The projects that have been delivered within the night time economy and have contributed to a stabilising effect are discussed below:

Safe and Sound Partnership

The Safe and Sound Night Time Economy (NTE) Partnership in Romford is a multi-agency partnership that was established to work together to promote a safe and vibrant night life in the town centre. The partnership is made up of the local licensees from large chain organisations, including Stonegate, Mitchell and Butler, The Deltic Group, JD Wetherspoon, Yates and McDonalds alongside independent organisations such as Kosho and the Leisure Sec and Regency security companies that provide their doormen. In addition, Street Pastors are invited to attend. The group is administered by the Community Safety and Development Team and is supported by other partners and services such as the Metropolitan Police Service, Trading Standards, Licensing and Streetscene.

The group attends bi-monthly meetings chaired by the licensees where they look to identify, investigate and address emerging issues within the town centre that are effecting the night time economy. This improves communication with the venues and promotes better working together between all partners involved in the night time economy.

The Safe and Sound Partnership operates a banning scheme whereby if individuals have been found to have been causing problems in the town centre they will receive a ban of up to two years from all premises which are part of the scheme. Photos are shared via Pubwatch Online. Pubwatch Online is a secure membership system which allows members to post pictures of banned individuals securely and also has other features such as online forums. It also allows texts to be sent to all premises should there be issues that need to be communicated to each other.

The Safe and Sound Partnership recently won the Pubwatch of the Year Award and has just been shortlisted as a finalist for the Outstanding Security Partnership UK OSPAs, the results of which will be announced in March.

Town Link Radio Scheme

The Town Link Radio Scheme is open to any organisation involved within Romford's night time economy. The scheme is used to protect victims, i.e. to locate vulnerable people and to communicate with concerned parties such as the

Police or Street Pastors, and to share information with each other. CCTV officers, the Police, door supervisors, Street Pastors, the Deeper Lounge and the Street Triage service are all on the system.

Scan Net

From 2012, licensing applications and/or reviews of on-license premises in Havering have included mandatory use of ScanNet/ClubScan (for nightclubs). This has been extended to bars/pubs. Conditions refer to entry during SIA door staff hours (9pm - close) where there will be no entry unless identification has been scanned. Customer identifications are scanned and photographs taken on entry, therefore significantly increasing the potential for identification and sanction. If an incident occurs within a premise, a list of all customers/images can be used to identify a suspect. If the incident occurs in the street, CCTV operators can attempt to locate the last premises exited by the offender. This has meant that we have seen a significant drop in young people using fake ID cards to get into premises. However recent months has seen that some fake ID cards are getting through the ID scanner, hence the need for licensees to be extra vigilant. These incidents have been reported to ScanNet.

Taxi Marshals

Marshals operate the rank in Romford town centre from 10.30pm to 3.30am on a Friday and Saturday night to organise passenger and taxi queues and provide assurance to people who are waiting for a taxi late at night. The marshals have a town link radios so are linked to the CCTV room and the rest of the night time economy. The taxi marshalls are funded through the Local Implementation Plan. On average, 130 people are assisted every weekend on their journeys home.

Moving forward, the Night Tsar is introducing a women's charter on safer travel at night. The Council awaits further information on this when MOPAC launches its revised violence against women and girls (VAWG) strategy in the spring.

Deeper Lounge

The Deeper Lounge has recently started back in the town centre and was created to provide a safe space, refreshments and help from 10pm to 3am on a Friday night. The scheme is run by volunteers from local churches. Vulnerable people (i.e. those who have had too much to drink or have become separated from friends) can be brought to the facility to sober up, or to ensure they can be picked up by a relative or returned home safely (using the marshalled taxi rank). The team operates from a large gazebo and is located outside Costa Coffee in South Street.

Street Pastors

A team of some 40 Pastors now works in Romford town centre every Friday night and some Saturday nights from 11pm through to 4 am. The Pastors work in teams of three and carry a town link radio with them at all times. The Pastors aim to help curb urban crime and anti-social behaviour by engaging with young people in

Romford. The Pastors are volunteers from local churches in Havering. They carry with them flip flops for those who have injured their feet, water and sweets and can administer basic first aid. They work closely with the Deeper Lounge and other services in the town centre and can be contacted via the town link radio should any venues require their assistance.

Street Triage

In 2013, MOPAC funding was used to introduce a street triage scheme in South Street. Originally the scheme was run by St John's Ambulance. A recent recommissioning of the service means that the scheme is now operated by Crusader Medical. Every Friday and Saturday night from 10pm to 4am, two medics and a security guard run the triage.

The aim is to reduce ambulance call-outs for alcohol-related injuries and illnesses. Approximately 10 persons per month are treated on site. Referrals come via door supervisors, self-referrals and street pastors. Most referrals are made after midnight. Previously these patients would have been called an ambulance or attended A&E. Injuries that cannot be treated on site are still referred to London Ambulance Service. The team have access to a medical room in Fiction and Cameo and also have the use of a vehicle to allow them quicker response times across the town centre.

Going forward, Romford has been identified as one of three areas in the country that the Portman Group will be working with on developing safe zones within Romford's night time economy. This is the perfect opportunity to work with some of the venues and the voluntary organisations to develop a safe haven hub within the town centre.

Drugs Itemiser

The drugs itemiser is frequently used in licensed premises as a town centre health check. The itemiser is not used as an enforcement tool but as an educational tool, informing licensees where they may be having a drugs problem in their premises. Premises are swabbed by the Community Safety and Development team and are analysed through the itemiser which identifies what drugs have been used in those areas. Licensees are then given advice on how to target harden their premises.

Drugs Dogs

As part of a recent night of action, the Community Safety and Development Team funded the use of detection dogs for the evening. The dogs were trained in the detection of drugs, explosives, guns and pyrotechnics. The dogs were used outside the station and then again later in the evening, working with door supervisors and licensees in their premises. Feedback from licensees, door staff and the police was extremely positive about their use. The team was extremely professional and successful, with 22 people stopped and searched as a result of indications by the dogs. The dogs, in terms of media coverage, promote a zero tolerance stance towards the use and distribution of drugs in the town centre.

Going forward, we anticipate that the detection dogs will be brought in several times a year.

Counter Terrorism Workshops

A number of counter terrorism workshops have taken place over the last year with licensees to raise awareness around counter terrorism issues. Project Argus is an interactive counter-terrorism table top exercise designed to put businesses in the midst of a simulated terrorist attack as a multi-media experience. The aim of Argus is to promote awareness of the terrorist threat and help make the businesses more resilient as a community. Around 70 licensees have attended the workshop. Alongside this, Project Griffin aims to encourage members of the community to work in partnership with the police to deter and detect terrorist activity and crime.

Going forward, an emergency evacuation exercise involving the night time economy will be taking place later in the year. The aim of the exercise will be to look at how the emergency services and the pubs and clubs communicate with each other in the event of such an incident.

The Borough wide Pubwatch scheme this year also invited all licensees from across the borough to a workshop focused on gangs and acid attacks. The Police's Trident team and Spark2Life delivered presentations at the event. Through the Safe and Sound Partnership, all pubs and clubs have been given guidance on what they should do in the event of an acid attack and have been advised to have to hand equipment such as goggles, gloves, scissors that can cut through clothes and large bottles of water that can be converted into a shower. The key message that has been delivered is that you will need to keep a constant flow of water on the victim of an acid attack for at least 20 minutes to dilute the acid. Going forward, we will arrange a Project Diffuse event, which is a live simulation exercise based on an acid attack within a club.

Public Space Protection Order

The London Borough of Havering introduced its first designated drinking area to Romford Town Centre on 21st May 2004. The scheme was introduced to prevent glass related incidents in the town centre. The designated drinking area covered the area within the ring road.

The Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) came into effect in November 2017 and replaces the Designated Drinking Area; covers a wider area (including the Queen's Hospital site) and includes two conditions:

1. Not to consume alcohol within the Alcohol Control Area (save on licensed premises); and
2. Not to be in possession of an open container of alcohol within the Alcohol Control Area (save on licensed premises).

LAAA2 – Local Alcohol Action Area 2

In January 2017, Romford submitted an application to work with the Home Office as part of its second round of Local Alcohol Action Areas. Romford was one of 33 areas across the country selected to be part of this initiative. It offered areas opportunities to share learning with others and access expert advice to identify the most effective means of addressing alcohol-related harms. It also enabled areas to strengthen partnership working. This work is still ongoing.

Going forward, Romford is changing. More residential dwellings are coming into the town centre and we are attracting once again named large chains such as TGI Fridays and Prezzo. The recently opened Sapphire Ice and Leisure will also increase the numbers of young people coming into the town centre. Going forward, there are definite challenges around managing the town centre however working closely in partnership with the licensing industry and the voluntary sector continues to allow proactivity in tackling issues within the night time economy.

We are committed to sharing best practice and being identified as an LAAA2 area, working with the Portman Group and being visited by the Night Tsar clearly shows our interest in not only sharing our best practice but also in having opportunities to learn from peers new ways to reduce both crime and the fear of crime within Romford's night time economy.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Some initiatives are funded via a grant from the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and by TFL's Local Implementation Plan (LIP) funding. The expectation is that these will be managed within existing budget allocations, and that any deviation from this would be raised and addressed through the appropriate channels at that time. The budget and use of the MOPAC grant are routinely managed, monitored and reported upon through the council's existing protocols.

Legal implications and risks:

The work delivered in the town centre is in line with the Crime & Disorder Act 1998, Police and Justice Act 2006 and The Crime and Disorder Regulations 2011. The Council and other statutory partners including Health have a responsibility under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to address crime and disorder within the borough.

Human Resources implications and risks:

There are no direct HR implications arising from this report.

Equalities implications and risks:

There are no equalities implications or risks arising from this report. Projects developed within the town centre will be subject to an equality impact assessment as appropriate.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None