

LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN	WARDS: All
REPORT TITLE Follow up report to the Themed Debate on Developing an Evening and Night Time Strategy for Camden	
REPORT OF Cabinet Member for New Homes, Jobs and Community Investment	
FOR SUBMISSION TO Council	DATE 29 January 2024
STRATEGIC CONTEXT The Council is committed to making Camden a place for everyone, where no one is left behind. We Make Camden sets out the Council's ambition that 'Camden's local economy should be strong, sustainable, and inclusive – everyone should have a secure livelihood to support them to live a prosperous life'. The Council is committed to "working to preserve a dynamic evening and night-time economy, recognising this as one of the things that makes Camden special. We will seek to balance the needs of visitors and businesses with those of local people who may be negatively impacted. In this, we will recognise the needs of the full range of employees and businesses that work at night." Camden is producing an Evening and Night-time strategy that protects and promotes our economic and cultural assets, supports liveability and wellbeing for those that live and work in or near night-time hotspots and aims to be a joining piece between existing strategies and service delivery that have a material impact on Camden between 6pm and 6am.	
SUMMARY OF REPORT The report provides an overview of the themed debate at the Full Council meeting on 20 th November 2023. This report summarises the views of speakers and subsequent debate within the Chamber. The report provides further details on the issues raised and sets out the next steps in completing the Evening & Night-Time Strategy. Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information No documents that require listing have been used in the preparation of this report. Contact Officer: Patrick Jones, Business Growth Manager, Inclusive Economy London Borough of Camden, 5 Pancras Square N1C 4AG	

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RECOMMENDATION

The Council is asked to note the report.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Burns', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

David Burns, Director of Economy, Regeneration and Investment

Date: 18th January 2024

1. Background

1.1. This report provides an update further to the themed debate at full Council on 20th November 2023 on developing an Evening and Night-Time Strategy for Camden. The report summarises the debate and provides an update on the development of the strategy, action plan and approach to implementation.

1.2. The Council was grateful to have seven speakers join the debate, with a range of strategic, professional and community experiences, talking about how best to manage the evening and night-time in Camden in a balanced way to ensure it is safe, inclusive and retains the vibrancy and cultural significance Camden is famed for:

- **Amy Lamé** – DJ, Broadcaster and the Mayor of London’s first Night Czar – discussed the importance of creating strategies to support and govern what happens in the evening and night-time,
- **Henry Conlon** – proprietor of the Dublin Castle pub and venue in Camden Town and member of Camden’s Evening and Night-Time Citizens’ Assembly – spoke about the experiences of a live music venue,
- **Kate Gemmell** – a member of Tenants and Residents Associations Camden Town (TRACT) – discussed the environmental issues created by licensed activity in Camden Town,
- **Tina Ramdeen** – Associate Director of Young People at the Roundhouse, a major venue in Chalk Farm – spoke about how young people can be supported to develop their talents and experience of live performance,
- **Sophie Asquith** – England Coordinator for the Music Venues Trust, engaging with grassroots music venues that are members of the Music Venues Alliance – discussed how grassroots venues can be supported and important policy tools like the Agent of Change principle,
- **Shaheda Rahman** – Community Safety Manager in Camden’s Community Safety Team and a member of the Women’s Safety Forum – talked about measures to make the evening and night-time safer for women, working with venues and creating safe spaces,
- **Francesca Di Fonza** – Camden resident and member of Camden’s Evening and Night-Time Citizens’ Assembly – spoke about the experience of participating in the assembly and how recommendations were formed.

2. Summary of the Full Council Debate

2.1. The debate was introduced by Councillor Danny Beales, Cabinet Member for New Homes, Jobs and Community Investment.

- 2.2. Councillor Beales introduced the report and spoke about the scale, value and complexity of Camden's evening and night-time economy (ENTE), noting that it had been measured as the 6th largest ENTE in the UK with a turnover approaching £1bn. The Council was told that the ENTE financially benefited Camden residents and businesses, that the night workforce totalled 113,700 jobs and that it played a significant cultural role in life and part of what makes Camden a special place to visit or call home and contains 7% of London's key cultural venues. The evening and night-time in Camden is not just about the pubs and clubs in Camden Town or Covent Garden, it is also about the porter or nurse on a night-shift at UCLH, the Transport for London (TfL) staff keeping the night tube and buses moving, to those working in our the outstanding venues and theatres such as Koko or the Roundhouse.
- 2.3. Councillor Beales went on to say that for all that is great about Camden, the evening and night-time is under increasing stress, losing 40% of LGBTQ+ venues since 2006, grassroots music venues and hospitality generally struggling with the cost of doing business and staffing shortages. It was acknowledged that management of the ENTE needed to improve and that everyone should feel safe on a night out in Camden, but that often women do not. We need our places and public realm to be inclusive for all and working conditions to be better and, in extreme cases, elements of the evening economy could cause disruption to neighbours if not managed properly. Councillor Beales argued that Council policies were not flexible enough and standards needed to be higher. To tackle these issues and understand the trade-offs we have carried out online and in-person consultation and set up a vibrant and mixed citizens' assembly. The headline recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly report were summarised and Councillor Beales looked forward to an Evening and Night-Time Strategy that helped the ENTE survive, thrive and innovate in the years ahead.
- 2.4. Amy Lamé was pleased to see the significant progress made by Camden in developing an Evening and Night-Time Strategy and, through the Citizens' Assembly, said that it was impressive to hear voices of so many residents, workers, businesses and visitors through the process. Amy Lamé said that both she and the Mayor of London are committed to working in partnership with boroughs to ensure that London thrives as vibrant and sustainable 24 hour city. The Mayor has promoted initiatives to extend opening hours, pilot innovative uses of empty spaces and make high streets safer and more welcoming. The Greater London Authority published guidance to help boroughs create holistic, local and inclusive evening and night-time strategies and engagement to gain local insight is an important step in that process. Amy believed that Camden was leading the way with the first evening and night-time citizens' assembly in London and the UK. Amy felt that the assembly recommendations were both practical and inspiring and confirmed that she and Mayor of London would be supportive as the strategy was developed.
- 2.5. Henry Conlon, speaking for pubs and venues, welcomed the production of an evening and night-time strategy for Camden and believed it was daring and pioneering of the Council to try and strike a balance between the concerns of residents and the business community. The citizens' assembly (which Henry

was a part of) was an open approach, taking 50 people from around the community and listening to them. It was an opportunity to connect and listen to each others views. Camden is a vibrant borough and the support given to venues like the Dublin Castle helps keep it that way. It is a working community that works late into the night. He confirmed that next year will be the 50th year of the Dublin Castle.

- 2.6. Kate Gemmell explained the purpose of the work of TRACT, to monitor, review and put forward residents' collective views on the most contentious licensing applications. Kate felt that there was too much variation in decisions taken depending on which licensing committee panel was sitting. Kate's view was that Camden Town is at a tipping point and in an appalling state in terms of controlling the impact of the ENTE on the local community. Each morning rubbish has not been collected on time and the streets are covered in urine, vomit and drug paraphernalia. Kate felt that policies were being inconsistently applied, citing the example of the Forge on Delancy Street receiving an extension to its license despite complaints from residents and other statutory bodies. Expressed a view that the recommendations in the Involve report of the Citizen's Assembly are naïve and that it needs more strategic objectives. Kate emphasised that Camden Council does not have enough resources to manage public realm and licensing as it is, let alone if the ENT grows.
- 2.7. Tina Ramdeen explained the Roundhouse's approach to diversifying audiences as a journey rather than a product. The Roundhouse is a renowned venue, but it also supports around 8,000 young people a year across two dedicated sites for youth work; Roundhouse Studios – 20 state of the art studios and youth club for 11-25 year olds – and the second space is Roundhouse Works – a new workspace for creative freelancers and entrepreneurs to access sustainable careers in the creative industries. Both facilities are part of the Roundhouse's offer to enable young people to perform on the main stages in the venue and develop their own audiences. These new artists are drawing diverse and younger audiences from the local community. Tina set out how the Roundhouse were committed to the local community and that they prioritised Camden residents in their outreach work in schools, community centres and professional development programmes. Tina said that the Roundhouse saw these new audiences behaving differently, coming to support the artists for their work rather than simply as consumers on a night out. The Roundhouse's independence means they can create employment and meaningful progression opportunities for local young people and freelance opportunities within the venue.
- 2.8. Sophie Asquith works for the Music Venue Trust who are advocates for Grassroots Music Venues (GMVs) and advise government on cultural sector and music industry needs. The associated membership group (the Music Venues Alliance) has 28 member venues in Camden – ranging from a capacity of 40 people to 3,300. Sophie spoke about the Agent of Change Principle, which entered the national planning policy framework in 2018, a recommendation that establishes an approach to managing urban development in close proximity to cultural venues and licensed venues whose output is noise making. The Agent of Change principle states that it is the

responsibility of the developer to mitigate the impact of sound disturbance for new residents and neighbours as they are the agent of change. Sophie said that when local authorities adopt this in local planning policy it can be part of a best practice approach that offers venues a future-proofed and a resilient position within the local authority. There is great need for this, in 2022 the Music Venues Trust emergency response service saw a 187% increase in casework and a third of these cases were related to noise complaints where more stringent consideration in planning would have prevented these issues and reduced environmental health callouts. A reduction in licensable hours inhibits the venue's ability to trade viably, cuts off the talent pipeline and often results in a closure. Sophie said that 35% of UKs grassroots music venues have closed in the last 20 years and currently losing venues at a rate of one-per-week. Sophie believed that by working to truly understand and implement the agent of change principle from planning through to building control, we can support grassroots venues to continue to be cultural and economic drivers on our high streets.

- 2.9. Shaheda Rahman said that promoting women's safety in the evening and night-time economy is a priority for the Council and for the local Community Safety Partnership Board. Shaheda explained how the Women's Safety Working group designs and implements a series of measures to tackle violence against women and girls in licensed venues. An active communications strategy focusses campaigns on safety and creates opportunities to work with licensed venues to understand insight from women, young people and other lived experience. This work is done in partnership with the local licensing team of the Metropolitan Police. Initiatives include; Pubwatch partnerships, data gathering, advice and guidance sessions with the Police and working towards full adoption of the 'Ask for Angela' scheme by writing to licensed premises. Shaheda said that the Camden Town area is prioritised due to its high concentration of venues and this is where the first Camden Safety Hub has been established for vulnerable female patrons, staff and visitors to access. The Council will be looking at Safety Hubs in other areas, such as the South of the borough particularly Tottenham Court Road and Holborn for targeted engagement. Shaheda confirmed that future engagement will expand to restaurants and other night-time uses, not just bars and clubs. Also, by listening to feedback, the Council will be locating a mobile safety hub on Parkway in December and increasing opening hours of the existing safety hub.
- 2.10. Francesca Di Fonzo introduced herself as a resident, health and wellbeing consultant and a former performing artist who had performed in venues mentioned in the session. Francesca was one of the 50 people selected to participate in the Citizens' Assembly and she thanked Council for their efforts in outreach and engagement. Francesca really appreciated the process of how the assembly heard multiple opinions and created a space for a productive debate. Despite not being an expert on the subject matter, Francesca found the process helped her to learn much about a range of issues and experiences in the evening and night-time economy – such as the needs of night workers and a strong focus on disability and access. Francesca hoped that the final strategy will help those reading it understand the issues

too. Living in the borough, Francesca did see the downsides of the evening and night-time economy, but had a refreshed appreciation of the benefits and would like to stay involved.

- 2.11. Members made statements, asked a range of questions and thanked speakers for their contributions. Councillor Jonathan Simpson, Chair of Licensing Committee, restated that the evening and night-time sector was vastly important to the local economy. Councillor Simpson couldn't imagine the borough without acts like Madness or Amy Winehouse who came through Camden's grassroots music scene and feels Camden would be less diverse without them. However, Councillor Simpson said that the sector is under threat; 46 pubs have been lost in London over the last 6 months. Most recently, there are threats to the continued operation of the Harrison Pub in Bloomsbury which is one of the finest folk venues in the Capital. Councillor Simpson attended every session of the Citizens' Assembly as an observer and was really pleased with its vibrancy and interested in the ideas he heard, particularly how many ideas were not alcohol led and opened the questions by asking how do we do more to protect venues at risk?
- 2.12. On the topic of protecting venues and helping them grow, Amy Lamé said that Programmes such as the Mayor's Cultural Spaces at Risk programme highlights venues that need protection and instigates action to save them. Sophie Asquith described grassroots music venues as the research and development engines for emerging cultural talent, but because these venues are inherently loss making on this activity (0.2% profitability) they rely on food and drink sales to cross subsidise. Business rates relief – both national reliefs and local schemes – can help ease the cost of doing business making venues more viable as well as supporting the shift to not-for-profit governance structures. Henry Conlon said that they always look to support local acts, but they are taking financial risks to do so and often the only audience members are family and friends.
- 2.13. On the topic of finding balance between residents and business needs and the use of licensing policy, Amy Lamé responded by stating that it is important to recognise that whilst it is right to be concerned about the disruption of those that sleep at night, but we also needs to understand the needs of the 1.4m night workforce who sleep in the day – standards and behaviours should apply 24 hours a day and it is important to plan for a safe and vibrant night-time that still supports liveability and wellbeing. Councillor Cotton asked about the capacity for Camden Town to have more licensed venues and suggested that no more should be issued until infrastructure like the tube station, or the operational management, has the capacity to deal with more people. Members discussed whether the Council should continue with cumulative impact area policies. Amy Lamé suggested that the current policy wasn't curtailing the environmental and safety issues in Camden Town and maybe a different approach was required.
- 2.14. On the topic of women's safety, Councillor De Ayala Parker said that 125 women have been killed since Sarah Everard was murdered by a service Metropolitan Police Officer and schemes like 'Ask for Angela' still put the onus

on women to try and stay safe with tactics like searching for keys, pretending to make phone calls and repeatedly looking over shoulders. The Councillor asked how we put the onus back on to the perpetrators to change their behaviour? Amy Lamé was quite clear that there is a lot of behaviour change required by men and they need to become allies. Members asked how venues could find out about the women's safety schemes being promoted and was told that we are putting posters in venues and at community venues. Councillor Bautista requested a report on the usage data for the safety hubs.

- 2.15. On turning the tide on the closure of LGBTQ+ venues, Amy Lamé responded that planning the night-time is turning the tide for LGBTQ+ venues and she was proud of Camden's approach to the Black Cap – a venue that is expected to re-open having been designated an Asset of Community Value and that it showed real fortitude from the Council.
- 2.16. Councillor Beales summed up the debate saying, the status quo is not working in the way aspects of our evening and night-time is currently managed and our Strategy has to be delivered in partnership between businesses and residents and be data led in developing interventions. The Council's policies on Assets of Community Value and upholding the Agent of Change principle have yielded results – like the Black Cap – but our licensing policies need reviewing to be more flexible in approach and rigorous in setting and holding licensees to high standards. The strategy must address the safety and ease of getting to and from a night out or a night shift and ensure that those who work at night have the same good work standards as those working during the day. He concluded by saying that the Council cannot lose sight of the creativity that bringing people together to solve problems delivers and that the Council will set up a 'residents panel' for the night-time and that a licensing charter will govern good outcomes from licensed premises.

3. Next steps

- 3.1. The final Strategy will be considered for approval by Cabinet on 28 February 2024. The draft Statement of Licensing Policy and the Licensing Charter will be further considered by the Licensing Committee, before an approved draft is issued for statutory consultation in early spring 2024.

4. Remaining engagement

- 4.1. Extensive consultation and engagement has been conducted in developing the strategy. There will be appropriate engagement strategies in the design and delivery of actions.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. When making their decisions Cabinet Members must take into account the Council's equality duties. In summary, these legal obligations require the Council, when exercising its functions, to have 'due regard' to the need to: eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act; to advance equality of opportunity between people

who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not; and foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not (which involves tackling prejudice and promoting understanding). Under the Duty the relevant protected characteristics are: Age, Disability, Gender reassignment, Pregnancy and maternity, Race, Religion, Sex, Sexual orientation. In respect of the first aim, the protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership is also relevant.

6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. The implementation of the Strategy will involve a number of one-off and ongoing costs – its financial implications will be considered in the report to Cabinet on 28 February.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. There are no environmental implications arising from this report, they will be addressed in the Evening and Night-Time Strategy and comments provided during its approval process through Cabinet.

REPORT ENDS