

## **Covent Garden Community Association**

### **Deputation Request to 28/2/24 Cabinet**

#### **Agenda Item 10 – Camden Evening & Night-time Economy Report**

David Kaner – I chair the CGCA’s Licensing Sub-Committee and have been involved with Licensing since 2005. Our area of interest includes parts in both Camden and Westminster. The part of our area in Camden contains **361 licensed premises**, or **21% of all the licensed premises** in Camden in an area that is only **1.5%** of the Borough.

#### **Strategy Development Process**

Many residents groups have expressed concern about this ENTE Strategy. They cover areas which have 65% of Camden’s ENTE and none of those groups have been involved. Residents have not been consulted since the pre-Assembly engagement 18 months ago.

The Mayor has guidance on developing an ENTE Strategy. This has a clear staged process (see **Slide 1** attached). It includes **5 different points** at which stakeholders can provide input, in sequence, into the process.

Camden have **not** followed this process (See **Slide 2** attached). The steps which include feedback from stakeholders have been omitted and as a result there have been only **2 opportunities** to give input.

1. At the start of the process 18 months ago.
2. Last week when this report was published.

The Strategy Vision statement starts with the words “Guided by our residents...” But it isn’t.

#### **Vision**

The Assembly’s recommendations are the primary resource in setting priorities for the Strategy. But then what has happened to the concept of balance between Residents and Businesses?

Please refer to **Slide 3** attached.

The Mayor’s Vision, the Strategic Context from We Make Camden and all 3 Vision Statements shared with the Assembly all include the concept of balance.

Does the Vision Statement in this Strategy include any sense of balance between the needs of businesses and residents? No, it doesn’t.

It says “*we will make Camden a welcoming, safe and inclusive place to spend time in the evening and night-time*”. If the Council intends “spending time” to encompass sleeping in the evening and night time and “welcoming” to include being able to sleep then perhaps it could be stretched to imply balance, but being explicit about it would be much easier.

If it is approved then the Council could ignore any impact that its decisions have on residents who live anywhere near the ENTE. The excuse will be “It is in-line with the Vision”.

The lack of the concept of balance in the Vision is a major concern for residents. It was a concern 18 months ago when the engagement started (see P288) and it is still one today.

#### **Impact on Residents**

The Strategy states that the Citizens’ Assembly said that:

*The night-time economy impacts on residents' health: noise, lack of sleep and a clean environment.*

We agree. It is one of the main complaints of residents about the impact of the ENTE and seen on P288. What does the Strategy propose to do about it?

There are a couple of other actions in the list (P225) could seem to help a bit.

1. A Licensing Charter that has low expectations and no teeth
2. A review of the management of ENTE hotspots that is not a priority and doesn't promise that any action will result.

A Licensing Charter can help bring up the standards of some individual premises, but doesn't address the biggest impact on residents which is what happens in between them. This is why the Review of the management of the ENTE hotspots needs to be a priority, which it isn't currently. Please require this to be changed.

This ENTE Strategy seems designed to support intensification of the ENTE. P216 of the Papers lists the risks in adopting the Strategy. One of the identified risks is:

*Insufficient public engagement about possible contentious licensing or intensification of evening & night-time hotspots could lead to reputational damage.*

None of the actions listed on P225 seem likely to intensify the ENTE hotspots. But the Strategy is linked to a Licensing Policy proposal which, if accepted, would intensify the ENTE all over Camden. If the Strategy has an absence of balance then changing Licensing Policy to destroy the balance that currently exists becomes much easier. This will not just lead to reputational damage; it will have a real impact on the health and well-being of residents as well as increasing crime and public nuisance.

Is damaging the lives of residents is a price the Council is willing to pay to achieve what the Citizens' Assembly said it wanted to see for Camden as a whole?

The Assembly wanted places for young people to meet, activities that are not focussed on alcohol, that cost less and are operated by local businesses that are diverse, grassroots venues, in an area that feels safe. This all sounds positive.

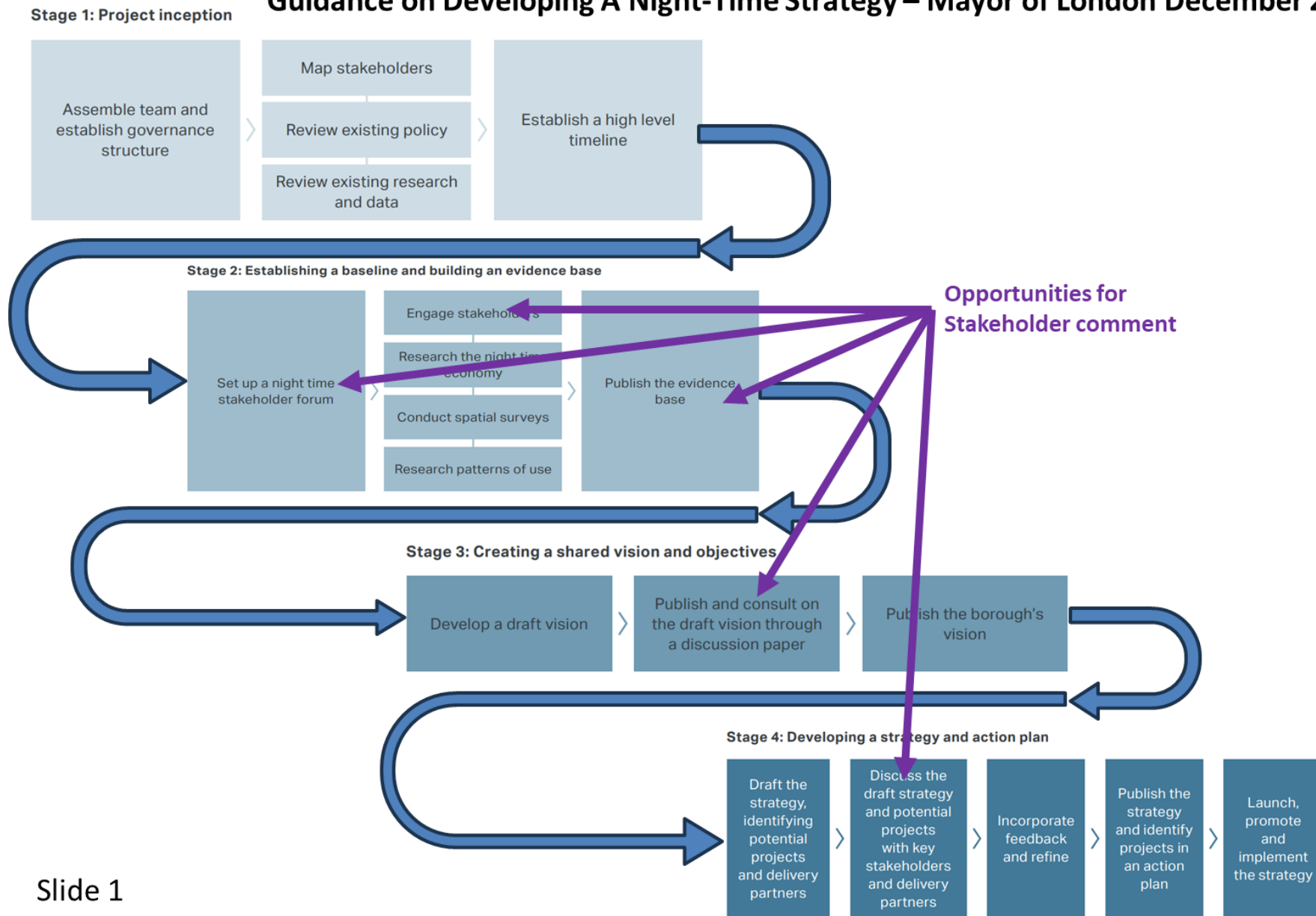
This is not what will happen. The Licensing Policy proposals, which in the absence of balance could be justified by this Policy, would have done the opposite. They would lock in the existing alcohol focussed nature of the ENTE hotspots.

There are some good ideas in the Strategy, they just don't go far enough and they do not address the root causes of problems in the Evening and Night Time Economy. As residents we want to "make Camden a welcoming, safe and inclusive place to spend time in the evening and night-time", for us and for others. However the Strategy before you is not how to go about it.

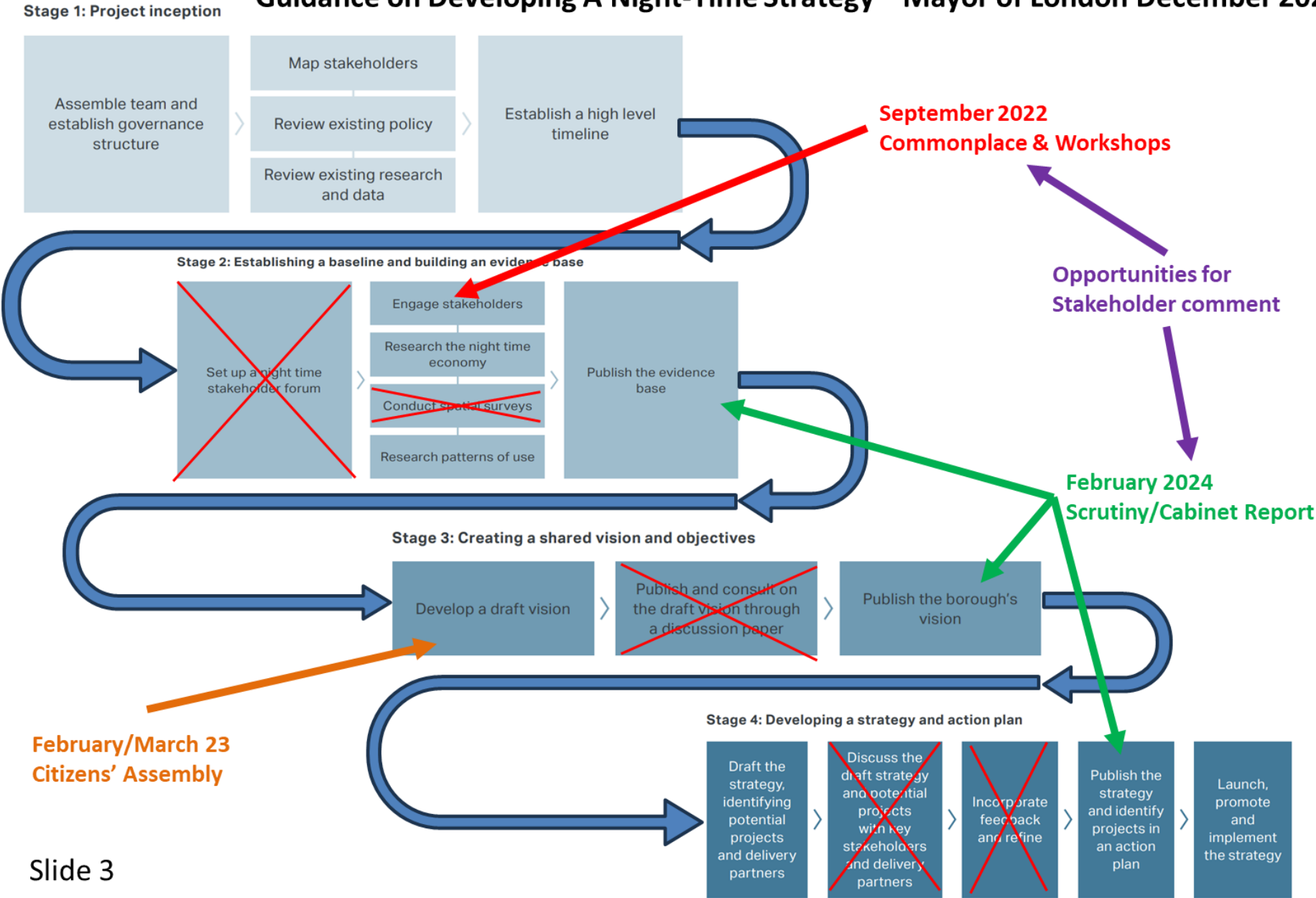
Please delay approving this Strategy to allow for consultation on the Vision statement, and on the detail of the Strategy with all the Stakeholders, including residents groups. This would be in line with the Mayor's guidance on the process, and should have happened already.

This Strategy is intended to be in place for 5 years. Surely getting it right for the people of Camden is more important than getting it done fast.

# Guidance on Developing A Night-Time Strategy – Mayor of London December 2020



# Guidance on Developing A Night-Time Strategy – Mayor of London December 2020



## What has happened to the idea of **balance**?

### From good night to great night – A Vision for London as a 24 Hour City – Mayor of London 2017

Likewise, **a balance must be struck** between work, rest and play for London's eight million residents. No matter what time we go to bed, we all need good sleep. Nothing we do must compromise that basic right.

### Camden Evening and Night-Time Economy Report – Strategic Context (*Committee Bundle P209*)

We will **seek to balance** the needs of visitors and businesses with those of local people who may be negatively impacted

### Camden's Evening and Night-Time Citizens' Assembly Report 2023 – Draft Vision Statements (*Committee Bundle P262*)

Our vision for the evening and night-time is one where the people, places and spaces that give Camden its unique and vibrant night-time character can be creative, rebellious and can flourish. People of all ages and backgrounds feel welcomed, safe and that they belong and **the wellbeing of those who live or work in Camden is protected.**

Our vision for the evening and night-time economy is one that celebrates creativity, embraces diverse spaces, and places, and welcomes people of all ages and backgrounds. We strive to **enhance the quality of life for everyone** by providing a safe and vibrant atmosphere that showcases the character and heritage of our community

We are Camden, and we will work together to enable a night-time experience that has something for everyone, continues to lead iconic cultural production **whilst being a safe, respectful and enjoyable experience.** A night-time that everyone belongs in, whether living, trading, working or visiting.

### Camden ENTE Strategy Vision Statement – as submitted (*Committee Bundle P223*)

Guided by our residents, businesses, visitors and workers, we will make Camden a welcoming, safe and inclusive place to spend time in the evening and night-time.

We believe that by working together we can do more to support our creative and rebellious culture, nurture and protect community heritage, grow the economy and create good work opportunities which are accessible to all.