

**MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM**

**TUESDAY 28 OCTOBER 2014**

**REPORT OF RESEARCH AND PERFORMANCE OFFICER**

**Report prepared by Sam Bailey**

**1. TWILIGHT ECONOMY REVIEW**

1.1 Issue for Consideration

1.1.1 At the meeting of 26 August 2014, the Economic and Commercial Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee decided to undertake a review of the twilight economy in Maidstone.

1.2 Recommendation of the Research and Performance Officer

1.2.1 It is recommended that the Committee interview the witnesses to gather evidence for the review.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 At the meeting of 26 August 2014, the committee agreed that the twilight economy should be defined as:

*Economic activity that occurs in the town centre after ordinary shop and workplace closing times (around 5.30pm) but before the usual pub closing times (around 11.30 pm)*

1.3.2 The scoping document for the review (Appendix A), which was agreed by the committee at the meeting of 26 August 2014, outlined that the first set of witnesses could include:

- Cabinet Member;
- An officer from Economic Development; and
- A representative from Town Centre Management.

1.3.3 Dawn Hudd, Head of Economic and Commercial Development, and Laura Case, Cultural Services Manager, will be present to be interviewed on this topic. The committee may wish to ask the following questions:

- What is the current state of the twilight economy in Maidstone?

- Do officers feel there is a need for a more vibrant twilight economy in Maidstone?
- Does the council have a desire to improve the twilight economy offering in Maidstone?
- What previous initiatives have been implemented to try to improve the twilight economy in Maidstone, and how successful have they been?
- Are there any future initiatives planned to improve the Twilight Economy in Maidstone?

1.3.4 Members of the Night Time Economy Forum have been invited to attend this committee meeting to give evidence on the twilight economy. There is some crossover between the Night Time Economy Forum and the twilight economy. The Committee may wish to ask the following questions:

- What is the current state of the twilight economy in Maidstone?
- Do businesses feel there is a need for a more vibrant twilight economy?
- What do businesses feel would be helpful to improve the Twilight Economy in Maidstone?

1.3.5 The consultation documents for the phase 3 public realm improvements are attached as Appendix B. These were sent out in March and April of 2014. The sketch of the proposed improvements for Earl Street may be of particular interest for the twilight economy. The committee may want to ask the witnesses what the impact on the twilight economy may be of the proposed improvements.

#### 1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.4.1 The Committee could choose not to interview the witnesses, but this would make it difficult to carry out the review of the twilight economy.

#### 1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.5.1 This review has an impact on the following corporate objectives:

- For Maidstone to have a growing economy; and
- For Maidstone to be a decent place to live.

#### 1.6 Relevant Documents

##### 1.6.1 Appendices

Appendix A: Twilight Economy Review Scoping Document

Appendix B: Public Realm Phase 3 Consultation Leaflets

##### 1.6.2 Background Documents

None

<b><u>IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?</u></b>	<b><u>THIS BOX MUST BE COMPLETED</u></b>
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, this is a Key Decision because: .....	
.....	
Wards/Parishes affected: .....	
.....	