

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD

8 MARCH 2005

ECONOMIC REGENERATION & TRANSPORT SCRUTINY PANEL

PROGRESS REPORT

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To provide members of the Overview and Scrutiny Board (OSB) with an update on the progress of the Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel.

RECOMMENDATION

2. That the Overview and Scrutiny Board notes the content of the report.

PROGRESS OF THE PANEL

3. Since the last update to the Board the panel has started to receive evidence for their review of the development of the night time economy. The panel has met with the Head of Economic and Community Regeneration and the Chief Executive of the Town Centre Company to find out about the current night time economy provision and the Council's vision for the future.
4. For the next evidence gathering meeting on 2 March the panel are investigating the following terms of reference:
 - How the Council can ensure the development of a variety of night time provision to suit the needs of all age groups: and
 - To assess if the infrastructure that is in place is robust enough to support the night time economy.
5. In order to do so the panel will be holding a debate with officers from all the relevant service areas and also the Police.

6. As part of the review, Members of the panel were invited to attend the Board meeting of the Town Centre Company to elicit the views from its Board members who represent a wide range of business interests. I attended along with Councillor Maelor Williams and the Scrutiny Support Officer. The discussions from the meeting raised a number of important points that will help develop the final report.
7. In order to find out how other neighbouring local authorities have encouraged a diverse night time economy the panel are also planning to undertake a site visit to Hartlepool to meet with the Assistant Director Planning & Economic Development and view some of Hartlepool's night time facilities.
8. To gain public opinion a survey is also being commissioned, the survey will involve face to face questionnaire of people visiting the town centre to establish what facilities/activities local people would like to see provided and a postal questionnaire that will also be sent to local businesses.
9. The panel will hold its final evidence-gathering meeting on 24 March and it is anticipated that the panel will agree the final report and recommendations on 20 April.
10. Finally, the recommendations which were developed as a result of the review of the Local Transport Plan were approved by the Executive and the Mayor give his assurance that the recommendations would be delivered.

COUNCILLOR MARTIN BOOTH
CHAIR OF THE ECONOMIC REGENERATION AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY PANEL