



Agenda Item

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

14 JUNE 2005

FINAL REPORT – NIGHT TIME ECONOMY

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To present the findings of the Economic Regeneration and Transport Panel's review of the night time Economy.

AIM OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

2. The overall aim of the Scrutiny investigation was to establish how the local authority could develop the night time economy to include a range and diversity of activities which compliment the future strategy for the development of the town centre.

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

3. The terms of reference for the Scrutiny investigation were as outlined below:
 - (a) Develop an understanding of what is meant by the term night time economy;
 - (b) To investigate the factors currently influencing the development of the night time economy;
 - (c) To develop an understanding of the Council's vision for the development of a night time economy;
 - (d) To consider the economic implications of developing that vision;
 - (e) To investigate how the Council can ensure the development of a variety of night time provision to suit the needs of all age groups;

- (f) To assess if the infrastructure that is in place is robust enough to support the night time economy; and
- (g) Investigate how the Council will be able to achieve its aims in terms of the development of the night time economy.

METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

- 4. Members of the Panel met formally between 20 January 2005 and 20 April 2005 to discuss/receive evidence relating to this investigation and a detailed record of the topics discussed at those meetings are available from the Committee Management System (COMMIS), accessible via the Council's website.
- 5. A brief summary of the methods of investigation are outlined below:
 - (a) Detailed officer presentations supplemented by verbal evidence.
 - (b) Meeting with the Town Centre Company Board.
 - (c) Debate with key officers/police.
 - (d) Discussions with local business interests.
 - (e) Visit to Hartlepool Borough Council.
 - (f) Evidence from a specially commissioned survey of resident's views.
- 6. The report has been compiled on the basis of their evidence and other background information listed at the end of the report.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE PANEL

- 7. The membership of the Panel was as detailed below:

Councillors M Booth (Chair), Councillor P Sanderson (Vice-Chair), Councillors S Biswas, S Bloundele, W Ferrier, F Gill, J Ismail and M Williams

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 8. The Overview and Scrutiny Board approved the initial programme for the Panel on 15 June 2003. The second subject agreed was a review of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). The general scrutiny programme also contained the need to conduct a review of the 24 hour economy. Following the review of the draft licensing policy by the Overview and Scrutiny Board it became apparent that it was now timely for Scrutiny to embark on such a review, to coincide with the development of a Town Centre Strategy that is being developed by the Regeneration service area. It was considered appropriate for the panel to take on the review; therefore the review of the LSP was deferred pending the review of the night time economy.
- 9. The Government's commitment to the concept of an 'urban renaissance' is set out in the White Paper 'Our Towns and Cities: The Future – Delivering an Urban

Renaissance'. In brief the concept of 'urban renaissance' is about enabling more people to live in city and town centres where they can also work, shop and enjoy their leisure time through a number of diverse activities for all age groups. As more people are persuaded to live in and pass their leisure time in town centres, so the town centre's attractiveness and vitality in the evening will improve, therefore encouraging more visitors and in turn more investment.

10. There is, however, a balance to be found between late night facilities and residential provision. The Government requires that all local authorities must have a strategy for the evening economy that is informed by data such as the numbers of licensed premises, transport provision, street cleansing programmes and an upper capacity limit, i.e. the limit on the number of people an area can cope with at different times of the day.

THE PANEL'S FINDINGS

11. The panel recognise that there has been much debate recently about the implications of the new Licensing Act and whilst topical the panel did not want to focus the review solely on the issue of binge drinking and its consequences. This review is concerned with how the council can encourage developments of all kinds that will enable a night time economy to flourish and that will attract a wider range of people to come into the town during the evening to be involved in a wide range of leisure activities. The panel did of course take into account some of the issues arising from the late night opening of pubs and clubs that were linked to the evening economy but it was not the main focus of the panel's investigations.

DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT IS MEANT BY THE NIGHT TIME ECONOMY

12. Throughout the course of the review the panel learned the night time economy can be defined as two distinct periods, the evening economy, which is the time between 5pm and 8pm and the late night economy, after 8pm. For the purposes of the review the panel chose to entitle the review the night time economy. The key characteristics of these two phases are described later in the report.

The Impact of the Licensing Act 2003

13. The panel understands that the Licensing Act 2003 has transferred the responsibility for licensing from magistrates to local authorities in the context of a wholesale review of licensing arrangements. This included flexible opening hours for premises, with the potential for up to 24 hour opening, seven days a week, subject to consideration of the impact on local residents, businesses and the expert opinion of a range of authorities in relation to the licensing objectives. Each licensing authority must carry out its duties with a view to promoting four licensing objectives. These are:

- the prevention of crime and disorder;
- public safety;
- the prevention of public nuisance; and
- the protection of children from harm.

14. Although it was recognised that the Licensing Act will have an impact on the development of the night time economy there are also numerous economic aspects to consider which are detailed within the report.

TO INVESTIGATE THE FACTORS CURRENTLY INFLUENCING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NIGHT TIME ECONOMY

Economic Factors

15. In the light of the recent changes to the licensing policy, much discussion has taken place both locally and nationally regarding the evening economy and how this often centres on drinking and its associated disorder problems. However, whilst this is a factor, the evening economy is about more than drinking and controlling disorder and all partners responsible for the town centre need to consider the fuller range of policy issues.
16. The panel learned that the town centre was seen, by some influential key players, as the 'engine room of the local economy' and the future economic success of Middlesbrough is tied up with the performance of the town centre. Developing a more diverse evening economy can bring many opportunities and economic success to the town in terms of job creation, attracting businesses and people and altering the image of the town.
17. In order to develop an evening economy that grows and diversifies to provide leisure, cultural and residential facilities that compliment the ambitions of the town there are a number of issues that must be considered as prerequisites to achieving the ambition. In the panel's discussions with the Town Centre Company and the Regeneration service area they helpfully categorised a number of issues and which have to be taken into consideration when developing a night time economy, they are as follows:
 - i) Need for alternative and diverse provision for all age groups;
 - ii) Creating a pleasant place to be;
 - iii) Ensuring a safe environment for all; and
 - iv) Achieving good accessibility.
18. The panel considered the issues associated with the key drivers listed above and how they currently influence the present night time economy and its future developments.

Need for alternative and diverse provision for all age groups

19. As previously noted the panel had heard that the night time economy had two distinct periods. The time when the shops and offices close and early activity starts from between 5pm and 8pm and then a second wave of activity which occurs after 8pm until midnight. It was suggested that each of these two phases involve different requirements that place different demands upon services within the centre.
20. The panel learned that at present the town centre economy is dominated by the range of public houses and clubs located within the town centre. With key concentrations in a few areas i.e. Southfield Road/Linthorpe Road, the Central area and the northern part of the town including Wilson Street, Albert Road and Corporation Road.
21. There is at present, little activity between 5pm and 8pm as shops and daytime cafes close and evening venues do not open until 7-8pm. A lack of facilities may discourage people who work in the town from remaining in the town after work and can reinforce the perception that the town in the daytime belongs to one group of people and the night time to another. There is an economic opportunity for the town to encourage workers to stay in the town after work and provide services and amenities that would facilitate a transition from the day time into the evening economy.

22. It was noted that the town has relatively few restaurants within the town centre, and they are mainly concentrated within the Linthorpe Road Centre area and around the Leisure Park associated with the UGC Cinema. The UGC cinema attracted over 850,000 people over the period of a year and as a result the development of the leisure park has seen an increase in numbers attracted to the town centre on an evening and a number of eateries have opened in that area.
23. Results from the survey indicated that on a Monday to Thursday between 5pm and 8pm most people were visiting pubs (31%), shopping (26%) and visiting the cinema (19%) only 1% of people were visiting venues with live music and only 3% were visiting the town hall for concerts/entertainment. After 8pm the numbers of people visiting pubs rose (51%) as did those attending the cinema (21%). On Friday to Sundays between 5pm and 8pm again the most popular activities were visiting pubs (45%), the cinema (27%) and going to restaurants (20%) and after 8pm the pattern was similar with people visiting pubs (65%), nightclubs (35%), restaurants (29%) and the cinema (21%). With only 9% of people visiting venues with live music, 2% going to cafes and 9% using leisure facilities.
24. The panel heard evidence that indicated that the provision of a diverse range of leisure activities is the key driver to any night time economy policy. This policy would need to be publicised to make people aware that the town offers more than pub and club provision that is for a certain age group only. The panel's findings regarding this issue are explored in further detail at paragraphs 43 - 53.
25. The survey of Middlesbrough residents provides powerful evidence for the view that there is a strongly held perception amongst middle aged and elderly people that the town centre in the evening is not a place for them. For example 65% of 45 to 64 year olds never visit the town centre in the evening during the week and this figure increased to 75% at the weekends. It is also that whilst there are many additional activities that would encourage this age group to visit the town centre, the most important factor appears to be a greater feeling of security. Whilst there are a number of actions that can be taken to address this, altering the perception of the majority of middle aged people is a barrier to overcome.
26. When asked what would encourage people to visit the town on an evening a number of people replied that they would if they felt safer. The results were broken down by age group as follows

Table 1

Time	Age 16-24	Age 25-44	Age 45-64	Age 65 +
Between 5pm and 8pm	7.9%	19.3%	31.4%	33.3%
After 8pm	14.3%	26.4%	38%	40%

Creating a pleasant place to be

27. One of the aims of the Government's White Paper 'Our Towns and Cities: The Future – Delivering an Urban Renaissance' was to encourage people to work and live in town

centres. In Middlesbrough, whilst there are a number of town centre residential areas, they tend to be located in larger groupings such as the St Aidan's housing in Grange Road, the housing association stock in Central Mews and more conventional stock east of Central Gardens. There is little evidence as yet that accommodation is being converted into residential use. The panel learnt, however, that there are a number of planning consents for conversions of former office space to housing in locations such as Teesside House on Borough Road.

28. The town's public realm has been upgraded recently with over £12 million pounds worth of investment on pedestrianisation, public art and feature lighting. However one of the issues that were highlighted to the panel was the extent of shuttering on shops that are used within the daytime. There are no planning regulations that can control the extent of shuttering and for some businesses they cannot obtain insurance unless they take action. However, in Middlesbrough it is fortunate that the night time activity tends to be located in areas away from main retail frontages.

Ensuring a safe environment for all

29. The panel learned that one of the best ways to tackle any perceived fear of threatening behaviour is by encouraging more people to the town centre by providing a more diverse range of activities that appeal to a wider audience. People will be encouraged to come into the town on an evening if the services and amenities are there and when they know they will feel safe and secure.

30. In common with most towns and cities in England there has been much debate recently around the issue of binge drinking. Although the panel were not concentrating on this issue, it is clear from the survey of residents' opinion that this is an important consideration in attracting or deterring people to visit the town centre. At present there is a small element of those using the town centre pub and club circuit that will, as a result of drink or their character, indulge in threatening or violent behaviour which can, unfortunately, set the tone for the overall culture of the evening economy. Middlesbrough's approach to influencing this must be considered in the context of the location of the premises, the quality and types of outlets, the pricing and promotional policy of the outlets and helping to address issues which most heighten tension, for example queuing for taxis.

Achieving good accessibility

31. Another factor influencing people's willingness to come into the town centre during the evening is how they will travel to and from the area. Good public transport provision, by rail, bus and taxi and the provision of secure parking for those who choose to drive in are all key issues. The panel heard that improved taxi rank provision is necessary as is an expanded bus service and safe and secure 24 hour parking facilities.

32. Taxis are the obvious choice for people who are participating in the town's night club/pub provision. However, thought must be given to ensuring that potential hotspots do not occur as people leave the pubs/nightclubs at the peak times. This could include providing more ranks or working with the taxi companies to establish a more rapid way of responding to need.

33. Many towns have experimented with late night public transport provision. At present in Middlesbrough, most services finish before midnight and there are no trains after 10pm to Saltburn or after 11pm to Darlington. The panel received evidence which suggested that bus and rail companies are unlikely to consider running additional services at

present as the cost of running these additional services must be taken into account especially when the numbers of people who may use the service are unknown.

34. At the meeting with the Town Centre Company it was noted that there was a 'chicken and egg situation'. The bus companies did not know if there would be a demand for the night time bus services service until they provided one. However the panel was assured that the company was willing to talk to the Council about this issue.
35. There is the potential that demand for car parking spaces would increase with any expansion of the night time economy for example the opening of MIMA (Middlesbrough Institute for Modern Arts) and other potential new provision within the town. Including such facilities that could be available following improvements to Town Hall and the possibility of a Town Centre theatre. Discussions at the Town Centre Company Board meeting raised comparisons with parking provision in Sunderland City Centre, where visitors to the Sunderland Empire are encouraged to park, for a nominal charge, at the improved Bridges Car Park which is open until late and which offers secure parking. Given a need for increased parking provision Middlesbrough Council would have to consider where they would encourage people to park within the Town Centre and where such provision might be made.

TO DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE COUNCIL'S VISION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NIGHT TIME ECONOMY AND TO EXAMINE THE ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF DEVELOPING THAT VISION

36. The themes within the community strategy aim to enable Middlesbrough to fulfil its potential as the economic heart of the region. The Economic Vitality Thematic Action Group of the Local Strategic Partnership is charged with developing and delivering strategies under the theme of 'promoting the economic vitality of Middlesbrough'. This involves encouraging and supporting businesses to set up, locate here and grow, by changing attitudes and promoting Middlesbrough's success. It also includes promoting regeneration through culture, arts and learning through major cultural projects and flagship events. The development of the night time economy is also key in contributing to this vision. The Mayor has stated that the town is capable of being a 'designer town' that is 'open for business'.
37. In examining the economic costs of developing the night time economy, the panel thought that it was important to establish how much revenue and other benefits any development could potentially bring to the town.
38. In terms of the pub and club sector alone, in Middlesbrough there are an estimated 80 licensed premises within the town centre that comprises of over 50 bars and clubs and around 30 licensed restaurants and a capacity for approximately 20,000 people. It is estimated by the Association of Licensed Multiple Retailers that each bar, club or restaurant turns over £265,000 and contributes over £100,000 each year to the local economy. For Middlesbrough this amounts to an estimated £8,400,000. Since 1999 the total capacity for patrons has increase from nearly 8,000 to around 20,000.
39. The number of staff employed by the sector in Middlesbrough is estimated by the Annual Business Enquiries survey at about 3,544 people in 2003, employed in restaurants, bars and closely related sectors, of which one third were full time and the other two thirds being part time.

40. The multiplier effect through employment with other peripheral support industries significantly increase the numbers of those employed for example, in Manchester it is estimated that 12,000 people work in their night time economy. Over the last 25 years it is estimated that there has been an increase of 30% in the number of licensed premises, applications for new licenses run at 5,000 per annum, a 145% increase since the number granted in 1980 and the pub/club industry turns over £23 billion per annum.
41. Nationally night club admissions are also rising, in 1993 there were 142 million admissions to night club premises, in 1997 there were 185 million customers and the numbers are predicted to rise to 238 million customers spending a total of £2.5 billion.
42. As well as securing jobs and revenue for the town, there is the potential that by developing a more diverse night time economy it would benefit the local economy by: stimulating the further refurbishment of the town centre buildings, increase the town centre population, provide more jobs and bring money into the town's overall economy.

TO INVESTIGATE HOW THE COUNCIL CAN ENSURE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A VARIETY OF NIGHT TIME PROVISION TO SUIT THE NEEDS OF ALL AGE GROUPS

43. When the Council's Cultural Strategy was developed it was recognised that the development of the town's night time economy could play a key role in the regeneration of the town.
44. It is known that there has been a growth in clusters of night time provision for the 18-30 age group but that niches for other audiences are yet to develop. When the cultural strategy was being developed there were a number of key areas identified which it was considered would need to be developed in order to generate a diverse night time economy:
- i. The support and development of creative and cultural industries;
 - ii. The support and development of five key art forms (performing arts, music, film, literature and dance);
 - iii. The refurbishment or more extensive re-development of the Town Hall concert venues and complex;
 - iv. Development of town centre theatre provision;
 - v. The continued development of a diverse programme of festivals and events; and
 - vi. Development of the Middlesbrough gallery (MIMA).
45. The cultural strategy outlined the support for and development of the creative and cultural industries. The strategy recognised that by developing platforms for the performing arts, such as comedy, bands and poetry etc, in conjunction with town centre venues that this would make a contribution to diversifying the cultural provision that the town centre could offer.
46. The panel also learned that the research which was undertaken in the development of the Cultural Strategy identified that people not only wanted to attend venues to see music/performing arts they wanted to participate in them. The strategy outlined that support for local bands was a key area as well as providing opportunities for people to take part in dance, drama and singing.
47. Extensive discussions took place at one panel meeting regarding the current and potential use of the Town Hall. The cultural strategy identified the potential for the

venue to be refurbished and redeveloped and potentially could be identified as a hub for performance arts. This could include targeting initiatives within the 5pm-7pm timescale and specifically for the so-called 'missing' audiences (30+ age group, people who work in the town centre, families, younger teenagers and older people). The panel learned that there are successful projects which have already been developed on a joint programming basis with the council and Ten Feet Tall productions and Studio 64, for example events such as Popschool, Music Live, Boro Buzz, Tea Dances etc.

48. It was discovered that there were a number of initiatives that were underway, which will help to diversify the cultural provision in the town centre. However, in many cases these were one off projects, from one off pots of money and long term projects that had sustainable funding were essentially more difficult to establish.
49. The need for a town centre theatre was also highlighted at the evidence gathering meeting. It was noted that progress had been made at Middlesbrough Theatre (in Linthorpe) with improvements in the diversity and quality of programmes on offer. However, for the type and scale of production to extend, a town centre based theatre would be a good location and feasibility studies were currently being undertaken at the time of writing the report. It was suggested that a town centre theatre could become part of the cultural quarter and help to contribute to a more diverse night time economy.
50. There has been a continued development of a diverse programme of festivals and events, it was hoped that the public realm could be used for more regular events. There are examples of current provision, which include the recent Unsilent Night event.
51. It is anticipated that the new gallery, MIMA, will be open 6 days per week until 5pm. There will be a café-bar that will keep its own opening hours and which will be secured in a separate zone, this could open up the opportunity for the café to be open until 10pm.
52. When questioned, people's response to the survey showed that the most popular suggestion that would encourage them to visit the town on an evening would be large concerts which feature a range of music and events (30%), a theatre (25%) live music (21%) and swimming facilities (21%). Quality cafes, a wider range of restaurants, family friendly restaurants, and longer shop opening hours were the next popular choices. This supports the panel's view that diversity is the key to encouraging a wider range of people to visit the town.
53. When categorised by age the most popular suggestions for activities which would encourage people to visit the town were as follows: for people between 16-24 and 25-44 it was large concerts, for people 45-64 and over 65 it was theatre.

TO ASSESS IF THE INFRASTRUCTURE THAT IS IN PLACE IS ROBUST ENOUGH TO SUPPORT THE NIGHT TIME ECONOMY

54. In order to be able to recommend how a strategy for the town's night time economy should be developed the panel thought it was important to consider and assess the town's current infrastructure. This would help them to ascertain whether or not the town

could support a developing night time economy and what the impact of any future developments in the town centre would hold.

55. To facilitate this the panel held a discussion with the following officers and representatives

- Executive Director for Economic Regeneration and Culture
- Head of Economic and Community Regeneration
- Head of Streetscene
- Head of Transport & Design
- Development Manager, Cultural Services
- Officers from Community Protection and Economic Regeneration
- Representative from Cleveland Police

56. The meeting took the format of an open discussion between Members and between representatives. The panel were focussing their evidence gathering around the following subjects:

- i) How to create a pleasant place to be;
- ii) How to ensure a safe environment; and
- iii) How to achieve good accessibility.

57. There were a number of issues that were considered during the debate and the panel would like to highlight the following issues as categorised in the list above.

Creating a pleasant place to be

58. Creating a pleasant place to be includes issues such as street cleansing, the condition of the public realm and zoning.

59. The panel learned that, from a street cleansing perspective, the service has a flexible town centre team and currently the streets are cleaned following the evening activity between 5am and 7am. There could be a time when the service may not be able to cope with the demands that could be placed upon it but at present it appeared not to be a serious concern. It was noted that the services could adapt to take into account the demands of the night time economy.

60. One of the issues included within street cleansing is that of toilet provision for those people who are using the town on an evening. Currently there are no public toilets that are open after 6pm with the exception of the bus station toilets that are open when the bus station is open. This issue is common to Councils in many towns and cities who are all trying to develop a solution. There are obvious costs to the Council, but this has to be balanced with ensuring that the town is an attractive place that is able to encourage investors.

61. As previously detailed within this report the public realm in the town centre has undergone a great deal of refurbishment and in discussions with local businesses, the panel learnt that they considered that the refurbishments had improved the look of the town and that they considered that the improvements would have a positive impact on the image of the town. They also considered that the new lighting enables the town to be brightly lit and safe. It was considered that even small things, such as lighting up public buildings, all adds to the ambience of a vibrant town centre on an evening.

62. The town is starting to develop two distinct zones, as mentioned there is the area around Wilson Street, the Exchange Square area and Albert Road, which mainly caters

for the night time economy after 8pm and consists of pubs and clubs and the Linthorpe Road area, where cafes and restaurants are located. At present this has generally occurred as an organic process, the Executive Director for Economic Regeneration & Culture considered that the issue of zoning could perhaps be planned and different parts of the town centre could have different uses. Any strategy which is developed needs to plan at least five years in advance and take into account the developments which will also take place in Middlehaven.

63. The perspective is supported by the results of the survey the panel commissioned. It is suggested by respondents that people do not want to use night time facilities such as restaurants which are located where drinking is taking place, and different sectors catering for different requirements could be an answer to this.

Ensuring a safe environment for all

64. It is imperative to ensure a safe environment for everybody who uses the town on an evening. Details from the survey showed that for those people who come into town less than twice a month, when they were asked what would encourage them to visit more often between 5pm and 8pm 27% said that nothing would as they don't like to go out in the evening, 24% prefer to go to other locations and 25% answered that they would if they felt safer in the town centre. After 8pm the findings were similar with 33% of people who said if they felt safer, 31% preferred not to go out and 26% preferred other locations.

65. Of those people who considered that they would come into the town centre on an evening if they felt safer, 82% would like additional policing, 58% would like wider CCTV coverage and 46% would like to see a ban on drinking in public places and 21% would like to see family friendly alcohol free zones.

66. The panel learned that currently the police are trialing new methods of involving the business community in contributing to the cost of policing and street cleaning, a scheme that is currently operational in nearby Yarm.

67. The panel has learned about the importance and need for adequate town centre parking provision in attracting people to towns on an evening. Currently the Cleveland Centre car park closes at 6pm and the Zetland at 7pm. Parking is, however, available at the France Street car park, next to the leisure park which is open on an evening and is free from 6pm.

68. The town centre car parks could be kept open however if security were provided there would be a cost to the Council. One area that if developed, may provide an impetus for other car parks to remain open, is the introduction of late night opening of town centre shops and department stores. This would also have the additional benefit of spreading peak travel times and creating the need for buses to operate later. Unfortunately, evidence provided to the panel suggested that there is not much interest from major retailers in extending their opening hours into the early evening on a regular basis.

69. One option that could be considered in order to achieve the safe and secure parking that is required would be the Gurney Street Triangle. The Town Centre Company highlighted that investigations are taking place into the development of a 24-hour town centre car park on that location.

70. If the Council were to consider where they would encourage people to park, one suggestion that was made to the panel was that people could be given the option to purchase parking tickets for specific car parks when they buy their concert/show tickets.

71. The panel heard that there were also people who worked in the town centre on an evening, as well as those that work in the leisure sector such as the pubs and clubs there are also a number of people who work in other sectors such as the call centre within Centre North East for example. Whilst they too require access to safe and secure parking facilities they also have the potential to contribute to the town's economy in terms of their requirements much like people working in the town through the day such as cafes, food outlets etc. The Survey results showed that of those questions an average of 6.5% of people work in the town on an evening on various times and days.

Achieving Good Accessibility

72. It was brought to the attention of the panel that at certain peak times on an evening there is an issue regarding the efficiency of ensuring large numbers of people get out of the town centre quickly and home safely. Many towns face the same problem and it is hoped that the policy of staggered closing times may reduce the number of people trying to get home at the same time, however the panel considered that it is perhaps too early to analyse the results of this policy at present.

73. In terms of public transport provision the panel felt that a co-ordinating strategy must be developed for public transport in order to ensure that if more people were encouraged to visit the town on an evening that they would be able to get home safely. The panel discussed the issue of public transport with bus operators, which is detailed in paragraph 89.

INVESTIGATE HOW THE COUNCIL WILL BE ABLE TO ACHIEVE ITS AIMS IN TERMS OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NIGHT TIME ECONOMY

Local Business Representatives

74. The panel was interested to gain an insight into the business community's view of the development of the night time economy. In order to do so a number of representatives were invited to a panel meeting. The panel held a discussion around the following questions:

- What could the Council do to assist in the development of the night time economy and what would help their businesses to thrive;
- Should shops stay open later;
- What activities/provision did they think would attract people to the town after 5pm;
- Did they envisage any problems and what could the Council do to help prevent them; and
- Whether a co-ordinated partnership or forum would be useful for key stakeholders?

75. The panel talked to representatives of the café sector, the bus operators, the property sector, the Town Centre Company and officers from Regeneration.

76. The panel was interested to hear about businesses' experiences of late night opening. The panel heard that the experiences were that late night café opening had not been successful, which was unfortunate because the money which could be spent is not therefore being spent in Middlesbrough. In their opinion, it was due to a number of factors such as that there is not a large enough amount of people who live within the town centre, therefore there is no passing trade, and unfortunately there is no café culture as yet. They saw a need for luxury apartments and with it the lifestyle that leads to people requiring the facilities of quality cafés and restaurants. Although it was suggested that the emerging need for café culture now in Middlesbrough was similar to where successful city centres with café culture such as Leeds and Newcastle were five years ago.
77. However when a café owner introduced late night poetry nights, held on a Wednesday, the café was full. This anecdote indicates that people can be attracted to come back into the town centre for a cultural activity. One suggestion was a 'Thursday night is culture night' that gets away from idea of town just being providing for drinkers and ensure certain nights could be associated with cultural or alternative uses based away from the drinking culture.
78. There was a consensus that events at the Town Hall and a Town Centre theatre would encourage people to stay in the town. Colloquial evidence of the experience of Sunderland following the redevelopment of the Town Centre Theatre and the provision of secure night time parking was that Sunderland's restaurant sector is thriving.
79. It was thought that the Council could help in terms of opening local authority owned buildings, such as extending opening hours for libraries, ensuring that the town hall was redeveloped and able to provide a more varied programme of activities and events, ensuring that the new art gallery is able to stay open late and even encouraging shops to open later.
80. Throughout the course of the review the panel have been interested on the impact of the town centre's shops being open later. If shops stayed open it would encourage people to visit the town when it is otherwise quiet, retain people who are leaving work and also gives people a reason to stay and use a café or restaurant.
81. Evidence from the survey showed that for those people, who visited the town less than twice a month, 14% said that they would visit the town centre more frequently between 5pm and 8pm if the shops were open later.
82. Sunday trading and late night shopping on Thursday unheard of a few years ago and it has worked and is accepted. It was considered that shops could be asked to extend their opening hours on a given night on a trial basis and establish if it is commercially viable to them and to see if it helped to attract people to the town, especially between the 5pm-8pm period.
83. The panel learned that currently it can be difficult to retain people who work in the town between 5pm and 8pm if they have plans for example to attend concerts at the Town Hall. If people are coming back to attend concerts etc it is because the commuters do not generally travel great distances to get to work so can go home, change and return to the town for 7pm. However, a choice of cafés, shops and restaurants to visit may encourage them to stay in the town prior to using facilities that are open later.

84. It was suggested that Middlesbrough does not have access to the large funding sources that were invested into Newcastle and Leeds by the development corporations etc. However it was pointed out that the Jesmond area, an area populated by students, has a thriving restaurant sector and it isn't based on the Quayside development which has benefited from large levels of investment.
85. The panel also discussed the potential for zoning parts of the town to encourage developments of certain types of provision such as restaurants in the same place. Again there was a consensus that good quality restaurants should be encouraged and that they need to be away from established drinking areas.
86. The panel therefore discussed the impact of a ban on drinking in public places. If there is a perception that the public do not want to be near areas where drinking takes place then a ban would ensure that people attending cultural events or going to restaurants etc would not encounter people who are drinking. The representatives agreed that it was not about putting police on every corner where it creates a perception of a problem but thinking of other ways to ensure a safe environment to encourage visitors.
87. In order to do this it was suggested that all stakeholders, including the council, need to work together to consider potential problems and solutions and the idea of a forum for stakeholders involved in the night time economy received a positive reception as it was agreed that they had a useful insight into the issues.
88. It was also agreed that there needs to be a range of initiatives that are happening at the same time and obviously a need for a night time economy strategy. It was also thought that publicity for those events would also be the key to encouraging visitors.
89. The provision of late night transport is always an issue. Unfortunately the panel learned that in bus operators' experiences, the trial of late night buses have failed. This is mainly because people are not prepared to sit on a bus that does not take them to their door and that it hasn't been commercially viable to run late night buses. It was thought that it would be useful to look at transport in other areas to see if there are any lessons learned from other authorities and find out areas of good practice, for example in Leeds where 24 hours buses work quite successfully.

Visit to Hartlepool Borough Council

Lessons to be learned from a neighbouring authority

90. The panel wished to look at a neighbouring authority to consider and compare how they had developed their night time economy. The panel was advised to visit Hartlepool Council.
91. To put the comparison into context, Hartlepool's town centre capacity is smaller to Middlesbrough; they have a capacity for 10,500 people and have licenses for 23 takeaways and 14 restaurants/cafes. There are two distinct areas in Hartlepool where the late night economy occurs and which appeal to different sectors. The western area that is near the residential part of town and which generally sees establishments close at 12pm and then the Church Street area where pubs and clubs are open until 2pm. There are also restaurants located at the Marina development.

92. The panel found that the issues that they discussed with officers and Councillors from Hartlepool were similar to those in Middlesbrough. That the night time economy should not just be based around the pubs and clubs that already exist but could include health clubs, cultural events, further education etc.

93. In Hartlepool the Council realised that market forces alone should not be left to shape the development of the night time economy and that some public sector intervention was needed to ensure that it was not just pubs and clubs that were developed.

94. Hartlepool Council was fortunate in that there had been a number of initiatives such as City Challenge and the Teesside Development Corporation that had brought funding into the town centre and enabled the development of the marina. It also enabled the Council to redevelop many of the old historic buildings, this ensured that the town complimented the new marina. People did not bypass the town if they went to the marina as they also had a reason to visit the town. The money available to the council at the time made non-viable projects into viable ones. Although in order to make it work the development relied on a range of factors that were areas the panel had discussed previously such as an improved public realm, CCTV, safe environments, car parking, and business support.

95. Through the course of the visit panel members learned of a number of initiatives that Hartlepool Council had either implemented or were considering.

- The Council holds meetings of the Hartlepool Passport Group; this is made up of a number of representatives from the tourism sector including members from the historic quay, football club, restaurants and the marina development. The group works collaboratively on ideas and projects which will bring people into the town, to get them to come and stay, to use the hotels and the restaurants whilst visiting what Hartlepool has to offer.
- As discussed in this report the vast numbers of people exiting the town at peak times in the evening can lead to various 'flashpoints' and areas where trouble occurs. In Hartlepool they are considering the use of bus stops as places to people to be able to 'flag' taxis.
- In order to deal with issues that may occur at the town's busiest times on an evening, a police office is located in Church Street that is open on a Saturday evening.
- As with Middlesbrough there are no late night toilets available and the possibility of mobile toilets is being considered.
- The Council is also working with the health sector to look into the possibility of paramedics being available at peak times to treat minor injuries and stop the need for visits to Accident and Emergency. A scheme that is also underway in Greater Manchester.

Summary of Survey Findings

96. A questionnaire of a sample of 500 Middlesbrough residents was undertaken and an in-depth analysis is as follows.

Current Frequency of Visits to the Town on an Evening - Weekdays

97. Just over half of the respondents (56%) never visit the town centre on weekdays between 5pm and 8pm. Of those it was more likely that male respondents (36%) visited the town than female respondents (23%). Younger respondents were also significantly more likely to visit the town centre at this time than older respondents, with 51% of those aged 16-24 visiting at least once a month compared with 7% of those aged 65+.

98. On weekdays after 8pm 68% of respondents never visit Middlesbrough, again male respondents (25%) were more likely to visit the town centre than women (16%). Again, younger respondents were also more likely to visit the town with 46% of those aged 16-24 visiting at least once a month compared with only 2% of those aged 65+.

Visiting the town throughout the week – current attractions

99. The main reason for visiting Middlesbrough Town Centre on weekdays between 5pm and 8pm was to visit pubs (31%), go shopping (26%), visit the cinema (19%), go to work (11%) and to go to restaurants (10%). After 9pm the results are slightly different, the main reasons for visiting Middlesbrough town centre at this time were to visit pubs (51%), to visit the cinema (21%), to go to restaurants (19%), to go to nightclubs (13%) and to visit leisure facilities (12%).

Current Frequency of Visits to the Town on an Evening - Weekends

100. On weekends over half of respondents (55%) never visited between 5pm and 8pm and 59% never visit the town centre after 8pm. Again it was more likely to be younger people.

Table 2

Between 5pm and 8pm	16-24	25-44	45-64	65+	TOTAL
Several times a week	10%	6%	3%	0%	5%
At least once a week	28%	16%	9%	2%	14%
Once or twice a month	25%	20%	8%	1%	14%
Less often	8%	14%	15%	12%	13%
Never	30%	44%	65%	85%	55%

101. Male respondents (36%) were more likely to visit Middlesbrough town centre on weekends (Fri-Sun) between 5-8pm at least once a month than female respondents (29%). Younger respondents were also significantly more likely to visit Middlesbrough town centre at this time than older respondents, with 62% of those aged 16-24 visiting at least once a month compared with only 3% of those aged 65+.

102. Just under three fifths of respondents (59%) never visit Middlesbrough town centre on weekends (Fri-Sun) after 8pm. Of those who do visit at this time 4% visit several times a week, 12% at least once a week, and a further 13% once or twice a month

Table 3

After 8pm	16-24	25-44	45-64	65+	TOTAL
Several times a week	11%	5%	1%	1%	4%
At least once a week	30%	16%	4%	0%	12%
Once or twice a month	18%	22%	6%	2%	13%
Less often	12%	13%	14%	6%	12%
Never	29%	44%	76%	91%	59%

Visiting the town on a weekend – current

103. The main reasons for visiting Middlesbrough town centre between 5pm and 8pm were to visit pubs (45%), to visit the cinema (27%), to go to restaurants (20%), to go shopping (15%) and to visit leisure facilities (10%). The full results are shown in Table 7 on the following page. After 8pm the main reasons for visiting Middlesbrough town centre at this time were to visit pubs (65%), to go to nightclubs (35%), to go to restaurants (29%) and to visit the cinema (21%).

What would encourage people to visit the town more often?

104. Between 5pm and 8pm just over one quarter of respondents (27%) answered that nothing would encourage them to visit more as they don't like to go out on an evening. A further 25% would visit more if they felt more safe in the town centre, 24% prefer to go to other locations, 14% if the shops were open later, 14% if there were more variety of entertainment / activities available and 13% if there were more secure parking facilities close to venues.

105. Respondents aged 65+ (42%) suggested that nothing would encourage them to visit the town centre more often as they simply don't like to go out on an evening. However, respondents aged 45-64 (31%) and 65+ (33%) would be more likely to visit more often if they felt safe in the town centre, more than the younger respondents.

106. After 8pm one third of respondents (33%) claimed that they would visit Middlesbrough town centre more often if they felt safer in the town centre. A further 31% answered that nothing would encourage them to visit more as they don't like to go out on an evening. 26% prefer to go to other locations, 14% if there were more secure parking facilities close to venues and 12% if there were more variety of entertainment / activities available.

107. Of those respondents (33%) who claimed that they would visit Middlesbrough town centre more often if they felt safer in the town centre 82% of those respondents answered that they would feel safer when visiting Middlesbrough town centre if there was additional policing. This was followed by wider CCTV coverage (58%), a ban on

drinking in public places in the town centre (46%), family friendly alcohol free zones (21%) and better street lighting (14%).

Table 4

What would encourage respondents to visit more often between 5pm and 8pm	%
Nothing, I don't like to go out on an evening	27%
If I felt more safe in the town centre	25%
I prefer to go to other locations	24%
If the shops were open later	14%
If there were more variety of entertainment / activities available	14%
More secure parking facilities close to venues	13%
More information about what there is to do	6%
Extended local public transport	5%
If there were more choice of activities I could do straight after	4%
If there were more public places with a non smoking policy	4%
If there were more non alcohol related activities	3%
Don't know	3%
If there were more taxi ranks at more locations	2%
Other	2%

Table 5**After 8pm**

Factors which would encourage respondents to visit more often after 8pm	%
If I felt more safe in the town centre	33%
Nothing, I don't like to go out on an evening	31%
I prefer to go to other locations	26%
More secure parking facilities close to venues	14%
If there were more variety of entertainment / activities available	12%
Extended local public transport	9%
If the shops were open later	8%
More information about what there is to do	5%
If there were more non alcohol related activities	4%
If there were more public places with a non smoking policy	4%
If there were more taxi ranks at more locations	3%
Don't know	3%
If there were more choice of activities I could do straight after	2%
Other	2%

What additional activities would encourage people to visit the town centre?

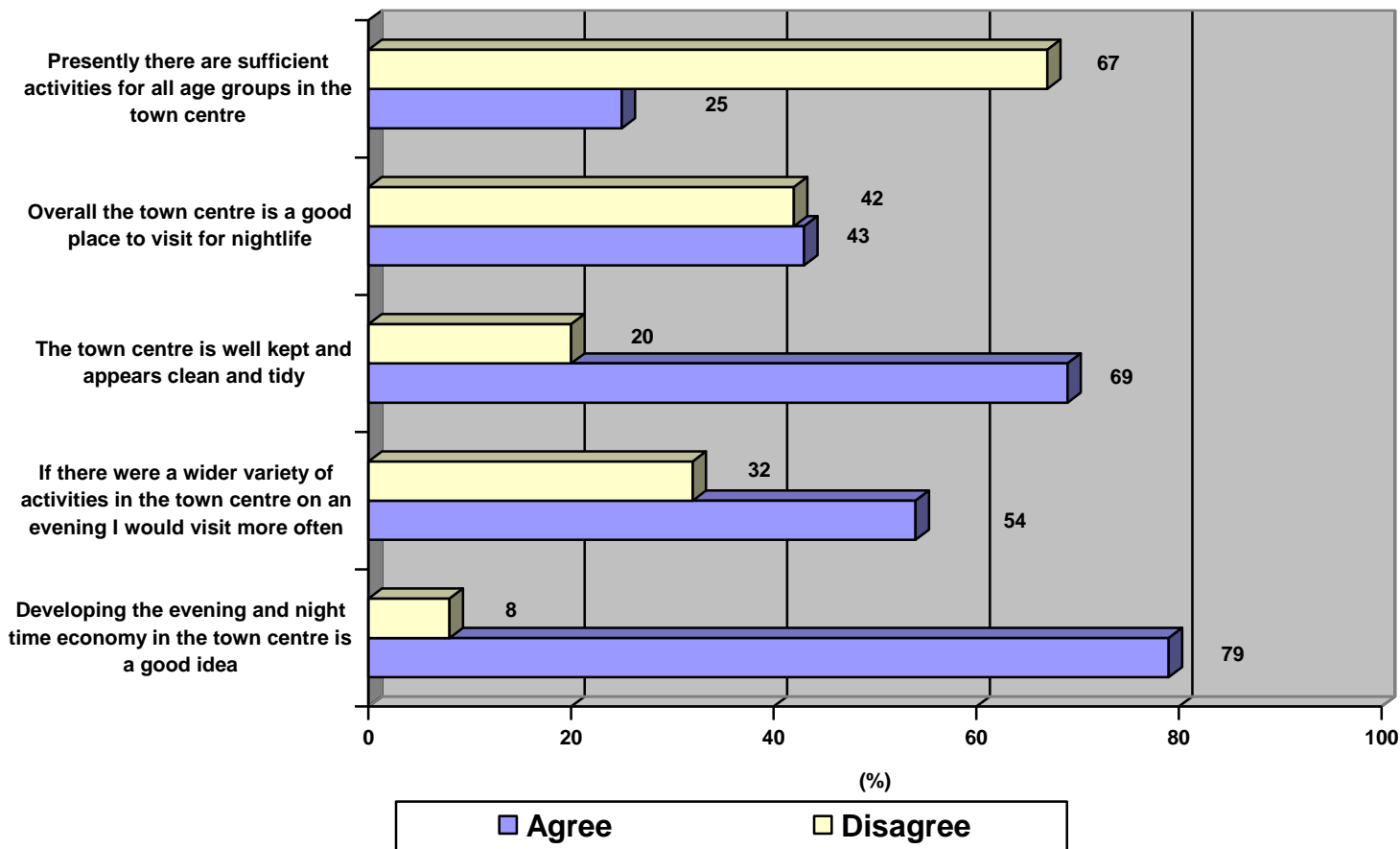
108. Additional activities which would encourage most people to visit Middlesbrough town centre were large concerts featuring a range of music and events (30%), a theatre (25%), live music (21%), swimming facilities (21%), a wider range of restaurants (17%) and longer shop opening hours (16%). Nearly one quarter of respondents (23%) answered that no additional activities would encourage them to visit Middlesbrough town centre. The following table shows the full results for this question.

Table 6

Facilities	%
Large concerts featuring a range of music and events	30%
Theatre	25%
None	23%
Swimming	21%
Live music	21%
Family friendly restaurants	18%
Wider range of restaurants	17%
Longer shop opening hours	16%
Bowling	13%
Ice rink	13%
Quality / pavement cafes	13%
Sporting activities	12%
Bingo	8%
Snooker	8%
Art Gallery events	7%
Casino	7%
Foreign cinema	6%
Roller skating rink	5%
Ballet	4%
Museums	4%
Gallery events	3%
Longer library opening hours	2%
Opera	2%
Skateboarding	1%
Other	1%

Support for developing the night time economy

109. People were asked a number of statements, for which the answers are shown in the table below. There was a very positive response to the question regarding the development of the night time economy. The statements which received the highest level of agreement was “developing the evening and night time economy in the town centre is a good idea”; 79% of respondents agreed with this statement, whilst only 8% disagreed. This was followed by “the town centre is well kept and appears clean and tidy” for which 69% of respondents agreed and 20% disagreed. The statements which received the lowest level of agreements was “presently there area sufficient activities for all age groups in the town centre”; only one quarter (25%) of respondents agreed with this statement, with 67% disagreeing (of which 43% strongly disagreed). Full results are shown in Chart 1 below.



Reasons for visiting other town centres

110. Under one quarter of respondents visit each of the other town centres. Redcar was the town centre visited most frequently by respondents, with 9% visiting at least once a month, followed by Stockton, which is visited at least once a month by 8% of respondents. The main reasons for visiting each of the other towns varied, and included visiting friends/family, going to pubs or for a night out. Full results are shown below

Table 7

	Hartlepool	Stockton	Darlington	Redcar
Every night	0%	0%	0%	0%
At least once a week	1%	3%	0%	5%
Once or twice a month	2%	5%	3%	4%
Once or twice a year	3%	9%	8%	9%
Less than once a year	3%	3%	3%	2%
Never	91%	79%	86%	79%

Table 8

	Hartlepool	Stockton	Darlington	Redcar
Visit friends / family	21%	14%	7%	17%
To visit pubs	21%	37%	26%	33%
Night out	14%	13%	13%	16%
Shopping	7%	4%	4%	6%
Theatres	7%	3%	36%	3%
To visit Marina / Quay	7%	0%	0%	11%
Leisure facilities	7%	13%	4%	4%
To visit restaurants	5%	8%	6%	7%
No answer	7%	11%	9%	9%
Other	5%	3%	1%	3%

NB. Please note that the sample sizes for this question were relatively low.

111. The full findings from the survey can be found at appendix 1

CONCLUSION

112. Based on evidence given throughout the investigation the Panel concluded:

- a) There is a clear need to develop and diversify the range of leisure uses and opportunities available in Middlesbrough town centre during the evening. This development is necessary because there is a need to:
 - Provide opportunities for new businesses and the further development of existing businesses that create more employment opportunities and further enhance the role of the town centre as the engine room of the town's economy;
 - Counter the perception that the town centre is a place where drinking to excess is the main leisure activity and that this attracts, in the main, only young people; and
 - Build Middlesbrough's reputation as the sub regional centre which is dependant upon the town centre being widely perceived as a place where people come in the evenings for entertainment and leisure that includes theatre, art, music of all kinds, cinema, sport and physical activity, shopping, dining and meeting people;
- b) It is clear from the survey and other evidence provided to the panel that, whilst there is general agreement that this is desirable, the current position is a long way from this goal and there is some degree of scepticism in some quarters that

this can be achieved. The view that Middlesbrough will never develop a café culture was put to the panel. This view is rejected by the panel.

c) The panel was presented with evidence that the town centre is beginning to change and develop in the desired direction. For example:

- The UGC Cinema has been very successful, attracting nearly one million people a year and other leisure facilities, especially restaurants have flourished at this end of the town centre;
- Linthorpe Road south is successfully supporting increasing numbers of restaurants and cafes;
- Planning consent has been given to develop two town centre office blocks into accommodation that will attract young professional to live in the town centre;
- Town centre businesses reported to the panel that they wish to diversify and develop their activities;
- The Middlesbrough Institute for Modern Art (MIMA) and the new Civic square will be open in 2006 and will provide a new focal point for activities; and
- The Council has ambitions to develop the concert facilities at the town hall and to provide a town centre theatre.

d) There are a number of key areas which require further investigation and policy development. These include:

- The need for secure evening parking for people visiting town centre venues;
- The need for improved evening public transport services to and from the town centre;
- The need to encourage retailers to provide early evening shopping opportunities;
- The need to address the public concern about personal security in the town centre in the evenings;
- The need to ban drinking in public spaces in the town centre; and
- A recognition that there is a need to build confidence and work incrementally towards a changing and diversifying the town centre leisure offer.

e) Whilst the developments at Middlehaven are to be welcomed, we cannot afford to await developments here, nor is it desirable that this should be seen as the answer to diversification. It is the existing town centre that needs to diversify its evening economy.

- f) There is a need for the Council to develop a town centre diversification strategy and there is a need to establish a partnership body, led the Council, which owns and implements this strategy. The key elements of this strategy are likely to be:
- Encouraging and facilitating the development of a range of leisure and entertainment activities that will attract the public to the town centre during the evenings;
 - The development of living accommodation in and around the town centre that will attract a diverse range of people to live in the town centre;
 - Encouraging retailers to provide evening shopping opportunities;
 - Dealing with security and transport issues;
 - Discouraging the further development of the kinds of pubs and clubs that currently exist within the town; and
 - Encouraging the development of restaurants, cafes and non alcohol related leisure activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

113. That the Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel recommends to the Executive:

- a) That the Council accept the conclusions of this report and resolves to develop a town centre strategy that will lead to a diversification of the evening economy in Middlesbrough Town Centre
- b) That the Council establish a town centre diversification partnership which promotes co-operation between the private an public sector in developing and implementing these proposals.
- c) As part of this overall strategy that the Council pursues the provision of a town centre Theatre and the improvement of the Town Hall Concert facilities with vigour.
- d) That the Council considers banning the consumption of alcohol outside of licence premises and their forecourts throughout the whole of the town centre area.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

114. The Panel is grateful to all those who have presented evidence during the course of our investigation. We would like to place on record our appreciation, in particular of the willingness and co-operation we have received from the below named:-

- Sandra Carlidge – Head of Economic and Community Regeneration
- Les Southerton – Chief Executive of the Town Centre Company
- The Board of the Town Centre Company
- Superintendent Gary Gamesby, Cleveland Police
- Councillor Stan Kaiser – Hartlepool Borough Council
- Stuart Green – Assistant Director – Planning and Economic Development
- Ralf Harrison - Head of Public Protection and Housing
- Juliet Farrar – Development Manager, Cultural Services
- Mike Wood – Head of Streetscene
- Brian Glover – Head of Transport & Design
- Ernie Vickers - Community Protection
- Judith Hedgley – Community Protection
- James Glancey – Economic Regeneration
- Lorraine McDonald – Corporate Services
- Paul Hutchinson – Sam’s Place
- Peter Broom – Python Properties
- Ian McInvoy – Arriva North East

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

April 2005

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were consulted or referred to in the preparation of this report:

- (a) The Vision, Middlesbrough Council, 2004
- (b) Draft Corporate Plan 2005-06 – Middlesbrough Council
- (c) The Evening Economy and the Urban Renaissance – OPDM: Housing, Planning, Local Government and the Regions Committee 2002-2003
- (d) Minutes of the Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel Meetings held on 2 January, 14 February, 2 March and 20 April.
- (e) Alcohol Concern – Alcohol and the Night Time Economy – Factsheet
- (f) Results of the Survey undertaken by ADTS – April 2005