

## **Canterbury City Council Short Topic Scrutiny Review:**

### **Council Approach to City Centre Development – Final Report**

#### **Introduction**

The Scrutiny Management and Review Sub-Committee approved a short topic review into the Council Approach to City Centre Development on 13 July 2006. The review panel consisted of:

- Cllr Whitemore – Chairman
- Cllr Avery
- Cllr Mrs Law
- Cllr Parkinson

A small team of officers supported the review and other council officers gave their time as witnesses and provided data for the review.

As a short topic review, the Member panel was tasked with holding a series of meetings to investigate the topic, make initial recommendations and indicate where further work could be done. The terms of reference for the review are set out in the review scope set out at Appendix C.

The review concern was that development within the city centre might produce conflict between the needs of (new) residents and the council's aim to create a diverse cultural offering, and a vibrant late night economy. The review should contribute to the council policy framework and improve the coordination and consistency of the council's current approach.

As a short topic review dealing with a complex subject, the findings and resulting recommendations will point the way to more detailed work, possibly through a further in-depth review or via existing mechanisms such as specialist officer and member groups.

#### **Background Information**

In 2003, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister published a government plan entitled 'Sustainable Communities: building for the future', cited a healthy environment, a prosperous economy and social well being as key factors. Clearly, these cannot be provided by emphasising one element (day economy, evening economy, night economy and residential development) over another.

The environment and development of city and town centres is a key issue for the government and councils across the country. The vision is usually of a mixed-use urban centre with a strong residential element, complemented by a variety of small and large businesses. This is accompanied by new cultural attractions and the encouragement of a 'café culture'. This vision was encouraged as a way of taking advantage of the relaxation of licensing laws that would help pubs stay open longer, reduce binge drinking and promote a more active central area.

This vision has been set against another vision of the prevalent culture of heavy drinking, supported by a high concentration of pubs and nightclubs and the resulting anti-social behaviour, noise, litter and disruption to local residents and businesses.

However, the picture in reality is less clear-cut. Recent statements from government ministers<sup>1</sup> suggest that the hoped for attitude change has not occurred and that the introduction of 24-hour licensing laws has not created a new drinking culture. It is also fair to say that on the other hand, the laws have not led to surge in binge drinking, violence and disorder that many opponents expected and it is unlikely that a change of culture would occur in one year, but more likely over a longer period.

The two visions, which simplify the complex layers of legislation and circumstance that shape any city centre environment are applicable to Canterbury, which is seeing a growth in residential development within a city that has a large number of pubs, clubs and restaurants.

### **The Planning Framework**

Previously development was controlled by a system of local plans, structure plans and regional planning guidance. Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 this framework has been replaced by new system based around the Local Development Framework (LDF) – a portfolio of documents, which set out the spatial planning strategy for the district.

Other guidance supports this framework, for example supplementary planning guidance, landscape designations, affordable housing provision, developer contributions, trees, shop fronts, crime prevention and open space provision.

In addition to decisions on planning applications, one of the key documents affecting the implementation of planning policies within the city is the Licensing Policy. This sets out the framework by which the evening environment in Canterbury City is managed and influences the amount of control the council has over the project concern.

### **The review process**

As a council scrutiny review, one of the main aims was to look at these national issues but primarily through a local perspective. Therefore some of the main evidence was gathered locally.

#### *Yellow Book*

The review also took into account findings from the Yellow Book report commissioned by the council in December 2004 as a concept study for the

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<sup>1</sup> Sunday Times 31 December 2006: ‘We’re too boozy to be cafe people, says Blears’ and other related articles

proposed creative and cultural quarter of Canterbury. This reported in June 2005 and considered many of the areas covered by the review scope.

A key recommendation was to continue the multi-disciplinary officer group set up to steer the report which included planning and street scene officers, to steer the development and implementation of the business plan set out in the report. This approach guided the early fact-finding witness sessions of the review.

### *Witness Sessions*

The review panel held 4 sessions where they heard evidence from a selection of witnesses. These included council officers representing the relevant departments, representatives of residents associations, representatives of organisations with a stake in the city centre, the police, the Canterbury City Centre Manager, together with representatives of student bodies and licensing officers. A list of witnesses is set out at appendix B.

The main points and findings from each witness session are set out below:

#### Session one

This meeting covered the council officers from departments most relevant to the topic: Planning, Licensing and Economic Development.

All the first session witnesses felt that licensing has a major impact on the operation of the city, especially in the evening. Current policy is to encourage 'mixed use' sites and create a vibrant city environment. Members of the panel suggested that whilst this approach would be supported, they felt that the balance of outlets should be more toward restaurants and cafés rather than public houses and night clubs, as these seem to be where much of the concerns of residents have focussed in terms of noise and late night disturbance.

However, the panel were advised that planning or licensing policies, on a case-by-case basis, exercised the main influence. It is difficult to discourage pubs and clubs unless there is a demonstrable cumulative negative impact on a specific area.

One way of tackling this would be to develop a strategic approach to the city centre economy and especially the late night economy. This might be through the creation of a specialist officer group or through inclusion in the Licensing Policy and Local Development Framework of stronger or more specific policies. The creation of such a group was also supported in the Yellow Book report<sup>2</sup>. It would also build on the model established by the Community Safety review. Here a 'virtual' team led by the Head of Housing and Community Development, brings together officers of different departments on a regular basis to work on a single issue important to a wide range of stakeholders.

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<sup>2</sup> Yellow Book page 61: This study [Yellow Book] has been steered by an officer group.....We recommend that this group should continue with a remit to oversee the development and implementation of the business plan."

*Recommendation 1: That a specialist City Centre group is set up to coordinate the council's approach to the city centre and take forward the relevant recommendation in the Yellow Book report.*

Other ways of approaching management of the city centre environment might be via a zoning arrangement. However, this would be a long-term solution. Cardiff City Council had adopted legislation of this type, but such an arrangement for Canterbury may take some time to be able to use it effectively. Also, if a zoning approach were to be adopted then it would be difficult to prevent breach of the zone conditions without effective enforcement, which in itself could be very problematic.

In terms of specific prohibitions, the council could draw on the lessons learnt by Medway Council's "alcohol control zone". This imposes restrictions that would see anyone consuming alcohol in public and causing a problem having their drink taken away. They can also be fined up to £500 or arrested. An evaluation would need to see how the zone affected the city centre environment in terms of managing disturbance and what the change was on the previous environment. It may be that by tighter controls drinking and reducing anti-social behaviour as a result, the environment is made more attractive to retailers and cafés, but this is speculation. The assessment of the zoning impact on Canterbury would require in-depth consideration – including if a strong case existed for introducing such a measure and more information on how other zones work.<sup>3</sup> Also it is worth noting that implementing any sort of zoning and meeting the expectations arising out of it would be more difficult in a smaller city like Canterbury.

Therefore, part of the brief for the proposed city centre officer group in recommendation one, might be to investigate the suitability of introducing measures such as zoning. This could be incorporated as part of the overall city centre policy suggested in recommendation seven, although more investigation would need to be done, before specific recommendations could be made.

The witnesses felt that there was a case for extending initiatives such as "Pub watch" and working through existing mechanisms such as City Centre Management. Many problems seem to be the result of bad behaviour by patrons as they returned from an evening out – it may be more cost effective to encourage initiatives to improve public transport provision away from the city centre during the evening and early morning.

*Recommendation 2: That public transport provision away from the city centre during the evenings, later in the night and the early morning, especially weekends is improved. Part of this improvement should include targeted advertising of public and other transport options in evening entertainment venues such as pubs and clubs.*

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<sup>3</sup> At the moment, work is currently being carried out by the council around adoption of the powers given by the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 to control alcohol consumption in public places. This will involve designating target wards, applying for an order to be drawn up and working with other agencies to tackle alcohol-related disorder.

The transport solution assumes that the majority of patrons do not live locally and would therefore require transport to leave the city centre. Those patrons who live nearer would still in most cases walk and here better transport would have less effect, but overall the footfall would be reduced.

The panel also felt that locating leisure developments such as nightclubs in industrial parks away from the city centre had advantages in terms of reducing noise in residential areas.

### Session two

This meeting considered evidence from residents associations. Their views were sought on the review and what they felt the city council could do, either alone or with partners, to reconcile the competing pressures in the city centre environment. All witnesses had been sent a copy of the scope prior to the meeting.

The witnesses felt strongly that the council should be encouraging a mixed economy with an emphasis on quality accommodation and entertainment. The scope's description of "vibrant" late night economy encouraged an extension of the so-called "drinking culture" in the city centre, together with the associated problems in noise and anti-social behaviour. Although it was appreciated that there were relatively few incidents of anti-social behaviour, they felt the enforcement should therefore be more effective.

The witnesses felt that the licensing act had merely re-located the noise and other disturbance related to closing time, from 11 – 11.30pm to 2 and 3am.

The witnesses felt that the views of residents were not being considered as much as they should. For example they felt that residents associations could have much more of a constructive dialogue with the licensing committee.

In terms of the city centre environment the witnesses had concerns with:

- Uncollected rubbish
- The regeneration of Palace Street
- The number of street pedlars
- Opening hours of public toilets

The primary concern was with the levels of noise and disturbance, notably from patrons as they returned home at night. It was here that the tension between residents and the evening economy was most evident and the area the residents associations receive the most comments about. Witnesses asked that the panel convey these concerns to the police at the next witness session. In summary, the witnesses felt, that development of the 'evening' rather than a 'late-night' economy should be a priority for any management efforts in the city centre.

### Session three

Here, the Member panel heard evidence from representatives of organisations with a stake in the city centre: Phillippe Esclasse, City Centre

Manager for Canterbury, Inspector Sharon Adley, Kent Constabulary and Mark Richardson, Head of the Public Safety Unit.

In response to questions from the panel, the City Centre manager said that he felt City Centre Management (CCM), the organisation set up to manage the economic development of the City Centre, should do more to help manage the city centre in terms of environmental issues, such as noise and graffiti. To assist in this end, a sub-group of CCM could be established to look at public realm issues. This should include amenity societies and other residents groups. However, it was suggested that past experience of resident involvement in city centre issues was not effective and that any future engagement should be clearly defined and more focused toward the operational management of the city centre environment, rather than the strategic development area.

Also, it was felt that the consultation base should be wide and not just include the regular groups who involve themselves in these issues. It was important to engage 18-25 year olds in the debate, and it would be useful if the sub-group involved them.

In terms of anti-social behaviour, Members of the panel felt strongly that the nighttime economy in the city should be properly policed. Inspector Adley said that the introduction of neighbourhood policing should go some of the way to achieving this by allocating specific resources to a defined area. Also, the Partnership and Communities Together (PACT) panel would be a key interface for residents to help define local police priorities (See 'Discussion').

Members felt that local involvement from a variety of sectors was essential to ensure that the right balance between an attractive late night economy and an attractive environment for residents was established. Also, that the needs of visitors to the city, who may be looking for a balance of both types of environment, was created.

It was felt that anti-social behaviour (ASB) might deter visitors. Panel witnesses mentioned that systems to tackle this, such as Shop and Pub Watch together with effective CCTV coverage, were in place. Police and council licensing teams were working closely together to help manage the evening environment and prevent ASB. Also, new powers coming into force in 2007 would replace current by-law powers and allow police to make judgements on the potential for individuals to cause an incident or create a nuisance. Witnesses felt that the introduction of the licensing act had been helpful in reducing the street disturbance, although it was recognised that there were issues with more disturbance in the early hours of the morning when the pub and nightclubs closed.

Members of the panel suggested that a stronger police presence later in the evening might help prevent this, although it was pointed out that it might have the opposite effect. Moreover, generally the city was a safe place, with Canterbury the third safest city out of thirteen in Kent, according to Kent Police statistics.

Members passed on the view that many of the city's residents and traders felt that the public realm in the city was deteriorating. The problems were 'city centre' issues and probably different to those experienced in the rest of the district. Perhaps one of the ways to help change the evening emphasis was to have longer shop and coffee bar opening hours to keep the streets busy allied with a longer refuse collection and street cleaning 'window'.

This approach has been tried by Westminster City Council, which has a street-cleaning regime that runs through the night, at a cost of nearly £2 million a year. Although this would not cost as much in Canterbury, there clearly would be a budgetary implication with any extension to the council's current cleaning regime.

Also, extending the opening hours of council services, such as Museums may help encourage the change in emphasis in the city centre.

*Recommendation 3: That CCM consult city centre retailers, coffee bars and council services such as museums, regarding the feasibility of later opening hours during the week and at weekends.*

#### Session four

This meeting considered evidence from Licensing Officer and two student representatives who gave their perspective both as representatives of their individual student bodies and as young people who use the city centre. Their views were sought on the review and what they felt the city council could do, either alone or with partners, to reconcile the competing pressures in the city centre environment. All witnesses had been sent a copy of the scope prior to the meeting.

In response to points raised in the discussion, witnesses felt that although there was anti-social behaviour in Canterbury, it was no worse than other communities. It was accepted that some of this was attributable to the city student population, much was not and that students are an "easy target". The student population contributes a great deal economically and socially to the district. For example, 4,000 students of the University of Kent carry out approximately 26,000 hours of community work each year. Much of the student related anti-social behaviour occurred in specific areas and not necessarily the city centre.

Members of the panel stressed the need for students to publicise their contribution to the community more effectively. It was felt that many residents were not aware of the good work carried out.

The witnesses were also asked what they thought would improve the city centre. It was felt that whilst generally there was a good range of bars and nightclubs, the lack of a live music venue was an area that stood out. With such a venue, more varied entertainment could be encouraged. Although such a venue existed at Orange Street the relatively small size limited the type of entertainment that could be staged there. A larger venue that could cope with bigger, more popular groups was required.

Providing such a venue would be beyond the scope of the council alone and would require the input of key partners across the district. As such the most appropriate group to drive the work forward would be the culture sub-group of the Local Strategic Partnership – [Culture@Canterbury](#).

*Recommendation 4: That [Culture@Canterbury](#), the Local Strategic Partnership culture sub group investigate the feasibility of locating a live music venue in Canterbury.*

Extended shop opening would provide an alternative to a drinking culture. The cheap drinks promotions held at some outlets, including nightclubs on a Monday night, have fostered this. In addition, the entertainment provision at Christ Church University would be reviewed to improve attendance and help contain student nightlife.

Transport out of the city centre was also raised as a key area for some students. As many of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year students lived outside the city centre but within walking distance. This meant an increase in noise-related disturbance and safety-related issues. To this end Christ Church Students Union were piloting a night bus service to help students travel home safely and quietly.

The panel supported such an initiative, although council funding would not be available, as no budgetary provision had been made. It was suggested that the council strongly endorse and encourage the proposed approach.

*Recommendation 5: That the council encourage the universities and/or student unions in their efforts to provide an evening bus service from city centre venues to locations of student housing and the universities themselves.*

The Member panel took evidence from the licensing officer, who agreed that drinks promotions were not helpful when trying to manage anti-social behaviour and disturbance in the city centre.

However, many of the measures that could be used to control anti-social behaviour and disturbance needed to be applied in a more joined up way, possibly through a late night economy or city centre policy. This document would bring management and prevention of anti-social behaviour, noise reduction, and the late night and day time economies into an overall framework, together with associated actions.

The new Licensing Act had meant more noise in the early hours of the morning. Residents felt that much of this was drinking related and noted the lack of alternatives. They stressed the need for a more 'balanced' evening economy. The witness agreed with the earlier witnesses that the evening economy needed diversifying so that there was less reliance on alcohol-related entertainment.

However, it was also felt that the Licensing Act had helped drive down crime in what was statistically a safe city. In general, residents suffered from public nuisance rather than serious and violent crime. Although it was appreciated that fear of crime was important in discouraging people from the city centre.

Much of the incidence of crime could be reduced by a high-visibility regulatory presence in the city centre. This did not have to be police officers and could be community support officers (who currently only work until 9 pm) or council staff in high visibility clothing. An “official” presence usually acts as a deterrent rather than inflaming the situation.

## **Discussion**

The challenge for any city centre is to create a sustainable environment within a complex balance of residential development, retail and office buildings together with restaurants, pubs and nightclubs. Conflicts between the differing requirements of residents, retail and entertainment sectors, for example, noise and anti-social behaviour can create a one-sided impression that the city centre environment is not functioning as it should.

The issues raised by the witnesses are recognised in the Yellow Book report for the council, although the report was not specifically recommending a strategy for the city centre. The witnesses expressed their strong concerns that the needs of residents would be in conflict with the development of a ‘vibrant’ evening economy.

External research however, demonstrates that far from being counter productive, a resident population contributes toward the sustainability of the local economy by making use of the city centre in the day and to a lesser extent the evening economy. The research also indicated that a mix of young and older adult residents worked best as opposed to families with children.<sup>4</sup>

Generally councils recognise the value of a vibrant night-time economy together with the regenerative benefits of increased residential development, in tandem with increased day-time economic activity, primarily retail. However the familiar tensions: noise, litter, night anti-social behaviour and lack of public transport at night feature strongly in reports and strategies.

It was felt by some witness that these issues could be tackled by a more focussed police presence. However, police resources are finite and these would have to be used as effectively as possible by closer working with other partners to a set of agreed priorities.

Review witnesses have indicated that local steering of police priorities will be made more effective by the introduction of neighbourhood policing. This is an initiative co-ordinated by Kent Police that aims to have a police officer in every neighbourhood of our district by March 2008.

Part of the programme involves each defined neighbourhood establishing a PACT panel (Partners and Communities Together) in their area. This could be an enhancement to existing consultation forms. The idea behind this panel is for partner agencies and residents to work together to establish the priorities for the neighbourhood and deliver a more focussed and effective service. The

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<sup>4</sup> City Centre Regeneration through Residential Development: Contributing to Sustainability, Urban Studies, Vol 42, No 13.

police are making a commitment to providing a point of contact in each neighbourhood to assist priorities, concerns or issues.

The issues around PACT panels are being considered by a local implementation board, chaired by the council's Community Safety Manager, including in which order these panels should be set up around the district and the impact on resources.

Bearing in mind the importance of community safety and anti-social behaviour management to the city centre, it would be desirable if the implementation panel recommends a city centre PACT early in the process.

*Recommendation 6: That the Neighbourhood Policing Implementation Board consider the development of a city centre PACT panel early in the neighbourhood policing roll out and has regard to the existing city centre consultation forum.*

It is fair to say that Canterbury is not alone in experiencing the tensions of city centre residential development and a strong evening economy. Reports produced by other public bodies, including Westminster City Council, London Assembly, Gloucester, Wolverhampton and Cambridge<sup>5</sup> point in the same direction.

### **Other Cities**

Many of the problems are similar and it therefore follows that some of the solutions may have relevance for Canterbury, or at least support existing initiatives.

Gloucester City Council have reviewed their night-time economy and identified issues such as managing youth culture and the associated issues of alcohol-fuelled disturbance, improved facilities and cleansing and the associated issues of public toilet provision; Accessibility and the need for better transport and pedestrian flow out of the city, and the Perception of Crime where people feel unsafe at night due to the predominantly youth orientated evening population and the predominance of incidents at the weekend.

The council has set itself targets to improve the city environment by improving the city centre cultural offer (restaurants, café culture and heritage with later opening, etc), attracting a new hotel into the city, greater satisfaction with the street scene environment and interestingly more residents in the city centre area, together with greater use of the city centre by students.

It is clear that Gloucester sees more residential development as beneficial and desirable, but within the context of a more diverse evening environment. The resulting action plan contains many elements, better marketing, encouraging a café culture, safe car parks and a high-quality city centre hotel,

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<sup>5</sup> London Assembly 2005: London's Night Time Economy, Westminster City Council 2001: West End Entertainment Impact Study, Gloucester City Council 2005: 'Night-Time Economy Strategy', Wolverhampton City Council 2004: 'Wolverhampton City Centre Strategy and Action Plan' and Cambridge City Centre Management business plan 2003 – 2006.

that have already been delivered in Canterbury. Others, such as improved street cleaning, reducing noise pollution and fear of crime by a more effective enforcement presence are familiar issues to the review.

Cambridge City Centre Management (CCCM) was established to provide co-ordination of the day-to-day operation of the city centre and strategic efforts to enhance the city centre. The CCCM business plan clearly states that Cambridge is considered a university, cultural, nightlife and residents city, with around 8,000 inhabitants in the city centre area. Much of the evening economy work is delegated to an Evening Economy forum and many of the main actions in the CCCM action plan deal with improved transport, removing barriers to participation in the evening economy, improving CCTV and marketing the city's secure car parks.

Wolverhampton, by contrast, has very little residential development within the city centre and has designated a number of sites for housing and mixed-use schemes. The council's city centre strategy states that the "combination of increased residential use and increased evening facilities will serve to bring life into the city through the evening and will help to make the city feel safer by providing more passive security". The strategy also points to the current spate of developments in the city centre, suggesting that they will help attract young professional and other affluent individuals or couples to live in the city centre, increasing passive surveillance and helping to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. The presence of affluent individuals will also increase demand for restaurants and other leisure facilities currently lacking in Wolverhampton city centre, which is primarily geared toward pubs and clubs.

The report does go on to say that this development will present challenges in terms of services, balance of accommodation (the differing needs of single people, couples, families and older people), together with the need to minimise potential conflicts between residents and other city centre users. To this end the council has a 'residential sites strategy' and an 'evening economy action plan' which apart from encouraging more partnership working and planning controls, requires all licensed venues to prepare business plans detailing such issues as their proposed approach to venue management (in terms of being responsible neighbours) and prevention of problem behaviour.

The London Assembly has also considered the balance between residential development and the night-time economy. They make strong links between town centre 'failure' and people being 'zoned out' – that city centres which are made unattractive places to live, become voids where very little happens apart from crime and anti-social behaviour.

The Assembly recognised that it was not possible to resolve all the tensions within the city centre environment – a successful nighttime economy drives regeneration; new residential accommodation is developed and new residents complain about the problems caused by the businesses that were already there. Some of the issues can be addressed by good quality construction (soundproofing), layout, (will residents be disturbed by delivery vehicles, etc); and proximity to nighttime economic activity, e.g. pubs and clubs.

The Assembly suggest a number of possible avenues to help reduce the conflict between the evening economy and residents, such as longer opening for museums and galleries, night-time marshalled taxi ranks and 'safe waiting areas', planning agreements for street cleaning with potential businesses and better CCTV and lighting of key areas.

Finally though, the Assembly recognised that some of the conflicts do not have an answer that pleases everyone, and in these circumstances a local authority has to make a judgement about what serves the greater good of the local people and the local economy as a whole.

## **Summary and recommendations**

The evidence heard by the review panel and information from the other authorities, pointed strongly to the successful management of the late night economy as a key element of successful management.

An essential part of this is to change the balance of evening activity away from the drink-related, to a more diverse offering. More specifically that the emphasis needs to be on an 'evening' - broadly speaking pre-midnight –rather than an alcohol-driven 'late night' – broadly speaking post-midnight - economy. Such a change would be a long-term goal and not all the successful elements are within the council's jurisdiction. This is why the panel recommends that the council strongly urge the retailers in the city centre to extend their late evening opening to the remainder of the week for a trial period of 6 months.

An element of the developing city centre should be to encourage more high quality restaurants and cafes. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this is already happening. A recent survey by the City Centre Manager indicated that there were approximately 30 pubs and around 100 cafes/restaurants in the city centre area. This trend should be encouraged. Despite the status of Canterbury as a relatively low crime area, the panel felt that a stronger uniformed presence should be encouraged during the evening. This could be provided by other agencies, e.g. CSO, licensing officers and not just the police. This should be a matter of concern for the new PACT panels which would help local residents feed into the process of setting police and other agencies priorities.

Consultation with stakeholders suggested that transport, especially during the early hours of the morning where public transport does not operate, should be improved. This is a particular problem for students. To address this, student unions are trying to develop cross-city late night transport. The council should support them in this aim.

Witnesses on the review, especially those from the town centre associations criticised the late-night economy in Canterbury as too drink-focussed. Although it would be fair to say that to an extent this is changing and a greater proportion of outlets, e.g. restaurants, where the primary purpose is not drinking alcohol, is growing. However, the lack of a late-night venue for live music was identified as a key shortcoming in addressing the balance away from pubs and other primarily drink-related outlets.

Many of the elements of a successful city centre are in place, although at the moment co-ordination efforts rest with City Centre Management, which does not cover some of the main council function impacting on the city centre, such as planning, tourism and licensing. It would therefore be desirable for a multi-disciplinary officer group, chaired by an officer of appropriate seniority, such as the Head of Regeneration and Economic Development, to co-ordinate and improve council policy towards the city centre. Such a group would also need to be shadowed by an appropriate Member arrangement, although it is suggested that deciding the composition and membership of such a group would be best left to after the May elections.

It is also important that any group works within a clearly set out policy framework. To this end, it is recommended that:

*Recommendation 7: The council adopt a city centre policy that sets out how the city will be managed and developed. This policy would be formulated and developed by the city centre group and guided by Members in association with key partners and stakeholders within the city centre, for example, City Centre Management and external stakeholders, such as the County Council.*

Clearly such a group or groups will not in themselves address all the issues related to the city centre and the juxtaposition of residential development and a 'vibrant' evening economy. However, other councils do have similar strategies and groups that steer them in conjunction with key partners. This may indicate a common understanding that the issues around modern city centres are difficult to resolve unless all the potential influences are working together to deliver solutions. Therefore it is hoped that the city centre group would be a statement of commitment to a successful city centre and create a framework that shaped the council's response. This would give a clear steer to residents and other agencies to follow its lead.

## **Appendix A - Summary of Recommendations**

*Recommendation 1: That a specialist City Centre group is set up to coordinate the council's approach to the city centre and take forward the relevant recommendation in the Yellow Book report.*

*Recommendation 2: That public transport provision away from the city centre during the evenings, later in the night and the early morning, especially weekends is improved. Part of this improvement should include targeted advertising of public and other transport options in evening entertainment venues such as pubs and clubs.*

*Recommendation 3: That CCM consult city centre retailers, coffee bars and council services such as museums, regarding the feasibility of later opening hours during the week and at weekends.*

*Recommendation 4: That [Culture@Canterbury](#), the Local Strategic Partnership culture sub group investigate the feasibility of locating a live music venue in Canterbury.*

*Recommendation 5: That the council encourage the universities and/or student unions in their efforts to provide an evening bus service from city centre venues to locations of student housing and the universities themselves.*

*Recommendation 6: That the Neighbourhood Policing Implementation Board consider the development of a city centre PACT panel early in the neighbourhood policing roll out and has regard to the existing city centre consultation forum.*

*Recommendation 7: The council adopt a city centre policy that sets out how the city will be managed and developed. This policy would be formulated and developed by the city centre group and guided by Members in association with key partners and stakeholders within the city centre, for example, City Centre Management and external stakeholders, such as the County Council.*

## **Appendix B - Persons consulted during the review**

Tony Parker	Head of Environment and Street Scene
Kim Bennet	Head of Development Services
Dawn Hudd	Local Economy Manager
Adrian Verral	Local Plan Manager
Mr J Telfer	Alliance of Residents Associations
Rev John Arnold	Alliance of Residents Associations
Jenny Forrester	Alliance of Residents Associations
Mr M Goard	Craddock Road Resident's Association
Inspector Sharon Adley	Canterbury Police
Mark Richardson	Community Safety Manager
Philippe Esclasse	Canterbury City Centre Co-ordinator
Lara Pratt	Welfare Officer University of Kent Student Union
Rob Thornton	President Canterbury Christchurch University Student Union
Roger Vick	Commercial Health Manager