

WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

CHIPPENHAM AREA BOARD

11 JANUARY 2010

Night Time Economy - Taxi Marshals

Purpose of Report

1. To update the Area Board on the action agreed at the meeting of September 14th 2009
2. To present the Area Board with a 'Night Time Economy' Action Plan and to seek the Board's endorsement of the recommendations of the task and finish group outlined within this report.

Background

At the September meeting of the Chippenham and Villages Area Board it was agreed that a task and finish group should be convened to look at the issues relating to late night crime and disorder in Chippenham Town Centre (the Night Time Economy).

The task for the group was to identify key actions and interventions to address the issues, to agree and present recommendations back to the board.

This included reviewing the use of Taxi Marshals in Chippenham Town Centre.

Background documents used in the preparation of this report

1. Impact of Taxi Marshals on Violent Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour in Wiltshire Town Centres - Lorraine Jones, Wiltshire Police, April 2008
2. Impact of Taxi Marshals on Violent Crime and Anti Social Behaviour in Wiltshire Town Centres – a Professional Practitioner Perspective - Qualitative Responses - Ishti Turner, Community Safety Manager, West Wiltshire District Council, June 2008

Main considerations

Taxi Marshals were introduced into four Wiltshire Market towns in August 2007, as a pilot project. This pilot was funded by the Wiltshire Community Safety Partnership. The aim was to reduce violent crime and alcohol related anti-social behaviour in the night time economy.

Two evaluations, quantitative and qualitative, were undertaken in April and June 2008. These provided no clear evidence that the Taxi Marshals schemes were impacting on crime and anti-social behaviour although there was marginal evidence of impact in Chippenham.

The Wiltshire Community Safety Partnership therefore agreed in July 2008 to cease the pilot in all areas but Chippenham, the Chippenham scheme to continue funded by the WCSP for one further year only until the Area Board was established. This funding ceased in June 2009.

There is no identified budget for the Taxi Marshal scheme in Chippenham, which costs approximately £1,100 a month (covering Friday and Saturday nights).

Although the 'public reassurance' value of the Taxi Marshals is recognised there continues to be limited evidence that their presence is reducing crime and anti-social behaviour.

The task and finish group therefore recommend that the scheme ceases.

The use of taxi marshals for specific calendar points such as The World Cup and The River Festival could be considered when planning for these events. The task and finish group consider that any such need could be met by a condition of licence. The Area Board may wish to consider the provision of Taxi Marshals for peak evenings during Christmas and New Year when developing their budget for 2010-2011.

It was clear to the task and finish group that the problems relating to the late night economy in Chippenham required a more holistic approach and an action plan has been developed which is attached to this report.

This work will be taken forward by the group and includes consultation with the community members most immediately affected by the problems, in order to ensure public re-assurance and community engagement.

Environmental and community implications

The implementation of the action plan will directly improve quality of life for the community living within the town centre of Chippenham and will also improve safety for those using Chippenham Town Centre for social and leisure purposes during the Night Time Economy.

The action plan includes suggestions to take forward with regard to environmental problems including on street urinating and litter.

Legal implications

There are no specific legal implications contained within the report.

HR implications

There are no specific HR implications contained within the report.

Equality and Inclusion Implications

There are no specific Equality and Inclusion implications contained within the report.

Officer recommendations

That the Chippenham and Villages Area Board endorse the recommendations of the task and finish group outlined within this report, and supports and endorses the action plan attached.

Appendices: Chippenham Night Time Economy Action Plan

Report Author Pippa McVeigh
Head of Crime Reduction Wiltshire Council
01225 776 890
Pippa.mcveigh@wiltshire.gov.uk