

Night Time Borough Champions Network minutes, 13 March 2024

Key information

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1. Attendees

Chair: Amy Lamé – Night Czar

Cllr Jake Short – Chair of Licensing Committee – LB Sutton

Cllr Louise Phelan – Vice Chair of Licensing Committee – LB Sutton

Cllr Anne Clarke – Cabinet Member for Community Wealth Building – LB Barnet

Cllr Cafer Munur – Cabinet Member for Growth – LB Bexley

Cllr Yvonne Bear – Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation & Housing – LB Bromley

Cllr Jonathan Simpson – Chair of Licensing Committee – LB Camden

Cllr Mariam Lolavar – Lead for Business and Economic Growth – Royal Borough of Greenwich

Cllr Susan Fajana Thomas – Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Regulatory Services – LB Hackney

Cllr Kemi Akinola – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Voluntary Sector, Business Engagement and Culture – LB Wandsworth

Cllr Iman Less – Lead Member Night Time and Mental Health Champion – Westminster City Council

Cllr Louise Brett – Cabinet Member for Decent Living Incomes – LB Ealing

Cllr Jeet Bains – Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration – LB Croydon

Cllr Barry Mugglestone – Cabinet Member for Public Protection – LB Havering

Cllr Kim Taylor-Smith – Cabinet Member for Employment, Economy and Culture – Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea

Cllr Martin Seaton – Cabinet Member Jobs, Business and Town Centres – LB Southwark

Michelle Rankin – Assistant Director (Business Employment and Skills) – Royal Borough of Greenwich

Tim Spires – GLA 24 Hour London Team

Julieta Cuneo – GLA 24 Hour London Team

Satu Streatfield – Publica

Daniel Blyth – Publica

2. Welcome and updates from the Night Czar

Amy Lamé welcomed attendees and restated the aims of convening the Night Time Borough Champions – to share outcomes and lessons from night time projects and initiatives, disseminate best practice and identify shared challenges. The network ensures every borough has a councillor championing their town centres at night and helps ensure night time is well planned and integrated across all council activities.

The Night Czar provided an update on research that the GLA has commissioned into race equality in the licensing of music events. The GLA is working with the music industry and the Metropolitan Police to understand discrimination faced by Black and ethnically diverse artists. Amy called upon Night Time Borough Champions to get in touch if they become aware of discrimination in licensing in their boroughs.

Amy shared recent findings and evaluations from the Night Time Enterprise Zones. Bromley, Vauxhall and Woolwich received funding following a successful pilot in Walthamstow in 2019. The evaluation report provides a summary of what the three zones did and the resulting impacts. You can [read an online short summary report](#), alongside a [full report](#) that offers a deep dive into each zone.

In total, the three zones funded 56 evening and night time events. Across the events, local spend increased by up to 70% between 6pm and 9pm and 65 businesses extended their opening hours to coincide with the events. Surveys revealed that 69% of people felt safer when events were taking place. The programme also unlocked some longer-term benefits and legacies, such as new night time stakeholder forums to manage the zones at night, additional lighting, new branding, new murals, public realm improvements and electricity power points to support future events and markets.

Amy shared some recent research by BT that used data from the High Street Data Service to identify night time hotspots, footfall and travel patterns at night, and clusters of night time industries and employment.

3. Updates from boroughs

Ealing

Cllr Louise Brett explained that the current strategy guiding night time activity Ealing was produced through the relatively narrow lens of licensing and is no longer fit for purpose. A new cross-departmental night time strategy

will provide specific policies for each of the borough's seven town centres. It will be a holistic strategy and include issues such as women's night safety and creative enterprise. The council just launched an online survey to inform the strategy and is engaging with local universities, large employers and small businesses. The ambition is to publish a draft strategy in the summer of 2024 for consultation.

Barnet

Clr Anne Clarke gave an update from the recent night surgery with Amy in North Finchley. The aim was to use the night surgery to inform a future night time strategy. North Finchley is primarily a residential area with a large high street but few pubs and restaurants. North Finchley, and the borough of Barnet more generally, is not seen as a destination for culture and socialising at night.

This is something the current administration would like to address, both to support businesses and to make Barnet an attractive borough to live in. The borough is already integrating new evening and night time uses in upcoming housing developments and is pushing for more mixed uses. Europe's first indoor baseball venue is opening in the borough and there are opportunities to attract new complementary uses at night. The borough has more small businesses than any other in London but is also home to many large night time employers, predominantly in health and transport sectors.

Camden

Clr Jonathan Simpson provided an update on the recently adopted Camden Evening and Night Time Strategy. The council's research suggests the borough has the sixth largest economy at night in the UK with turnover of over £950 million. 133,000 Camden residents work in night time industries. The sector is hugely important to the borough, both economically but also for the borough's character and heritage. The strategy recognises that the sector is struggling and that there has been a decline in the number of music venues, galleries and LGBTQ+ venues. The development of the night time strategy started nearly two years ago when Amy Lamé visited the borough on a night surgery. Engagement for the strategy reached 1,600 people and included thematic workshops across the borough and a citizens' assembly to develop the vision for Camden at night. The strategy includes commitments to convene a night time panel, promote family-friendly non-alcohol led experiences, increase opportunities for recreation and exercise at night, roll out a business rate reduction scheme for grassroots music venues, pilot evening and night markets, and develop a licensing charter as part of a refreshed licensing policy. Currently, it looks like the new licensing policy will follow Hammersmith and Fulham's lead by removing their Cumulative Impact Zones and framework hours.

Clr Simpson also announced that Secret Cinema had just secured a 10 year lease in Camden in a former bingo hall. Cllr Simpson echoed concerns about apparent racial profiling by the police who appeared to be issuing blanket objections to concerts featuring grime artists. Amy reiterated the importance of gathering and sharing data and experiences to feed into the research on racial equality in music.

Westminster

Clr Iman Less gave an update on the findings from the recent Westminster After Dark Stakeholder Assembly. The assembly brought together residents, businesses, visitors, students and key stakeholders to discuss the opportunities for a night time strategy in the borough over three consecutive events. Westminster is internationally recognised for its night time and cultural venues and businesses. The night time strategy seeks to protect, support and future-proof this sector.

Engagement so far has been targeted to hear from marginalised voices and a range of businesses. Engagement to date has highlighted concerns around safety, the costs of going out and running a business at night and the need

for better infrastructure to support night time businesses. The programme has been supported by online engagement through a Commonplace mapping tool, which includes 500 comments that highlight concerns and positives about the borough at night. The strategy extends beyond licensing policies to support art and culture at night, diversify the economy and align with the Violence Against Women and Girls strategy. The aim is to have a draft of the strategy published by June for public consultation and a final version adopted by the Autumn.

RBKC

Cllr Kim Taylor-Smith shared updates about the Gaumont cinema on King's Road, which will open soon. The cinema will feature the largest screen in London and a rooftop bar. The development contributes to an emerging cluster of cultural and night time venues, which will include a new theatre and bar.

Sutton

Cllr Jake Short updated attendees on a recent successful crowdfunding campaign to secure the future of the Sound Lounge music venue. The venue is operated by a Community Interest Company and is the country's first carbon neutral venue. It was able to reach its funding target to cover costs for the next year in just 24 hours. ORU Sutton also recently launched in Sutton town centre, providing a new 24 hour mixed use workspace.

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