

Briefing Note: Council Motion - Improving Public Safety in Oldham's Night Time Economy

Officer contact:

Bruce Penhale, Assistant Director, Communities and Early Intervention

Report Author:

Lorraine Kenny, Community Safety Manager

18th June 2019

Purpose

To provide a background to the work being undertaken to improve public safety in Oldham's Night Time Economy in response to the suggestions made within the Council Motion. The wording of the motion is attached at Appendix 1.

A report was taken to Overview and Scrutiny Board on 22nd January 2019 to discuss the motion. A meeting was held with relevant officers where it was understood that the 'Ask Angela' was already adopted.

Recommendations

The Overview and Scrutiny Board is requested to:

1. Note the work already undertaken in support of the 'Ask Angela' Scheme.
2. Support information provided be included in the Council Action update.
3. Whether a further update be provided to Overview and Scrutiny Board.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To provide a background to the work being undertaken to improve public safety in Oldham's Night Time Economy in response to the suggestions made within the Council Motion.

2. Update

2.1 Ask Angela

- 2.1.1 Through our work with Pubwatch Partners we have already adopted the 'Ask Angela' scheme.
- 2.1.2 We will be reviewing the available literature for the scheme and have agreed to develop localised materials.

2.2 Street Angels

- 2.2.1 The Street Angels have been established in the town centre for a number of years and offer support during the weekend period in the evenings. In addition to having volunteers out and about, they have also have premises, which individuals identified as most vulnerable through intoxication can be taken to, in order to receive support.

2.3 Communications and Key Messaging

- 2.3.1 Ask Angela and the Street Angels support is available for all individuals including students.
- 2.3.2 The Partnership Project Officer within Community Safety Services will engage with the colleges and the University to ensure students are aware of both schemes and have access to key messages about public safety.
- 2.3.3 We will be reviewing the available literature for the scheme and have agreed to develop localised materials.
- 2.3.4 It is recognised that young people also access the town centre in the evenings to attend the cinema, and personal safety messages are also being provided through secondary schools.

2.4 Private Hire Vehicles and Hackney Carriages

- 2.4.1 The Licensing Team have committed to explore with Private Hire Operators the most appropriate way to develop this area of work.

2.5 Licensed Premises

- 2.5.1 There is a wider piece of work which is being undertaken ensure we have a safe NTE, with specific activity in relation to premises which we believe are not being managed appropriately and the licencing objectives are not being met. Two premises have been closed following revocation of their licences (~one is subject to appeal).
- 2.5.2 The activity in relation to all premises is being closely monitored by our Licensing Team and GMP's Licensing Officer.

Improving Public Safety in Oldham's Night Time Economy

At the Council meeting on 12th December 2018, the following motion was debated:

“Council notes that:

- In Bradford and Manchester local businesses and community groups have joined with local colleges and universities to establish Student Safe Spots/Zones; these are premises self-identifying as havens for students who are being followed, or are feeling vulnerable and unwell.
Staff at these venues offer assistance in booking taxis home; in contacting the emergency services if their assistance is required; or offer a temporary safe haven until a problem has passed. Venues signed up to the scheme receive a sticker to place prominently to advertise their involvement and a list and map of venues is published on line for students to access.
- In Bradford, there also exists an agreement with local taxi businesses that students without money but presenting with a valid student ID badge will be offered carriage and the bill is then sent to the student for payment, via the relevant college and university authorities.
- The ‘Ask for Angela’ scheme is operated nationwide in many pubs and clubs. If a member of the public who feels vulnerable and threatened ‘Asks for Angela’ of the on-premises staff, they know to take that person to a safer location and offer them assistance, such as calling a taxi, contacting friends or in certain circumstances ringing the police. Premises promoting the scheme display posters, which are usually placed in the toilets of those establishments to be discreet.

Council believes that establishing such schemes in our borough would help safeguard vulnerable people in our Borough, especially students and women enjoying our night time economy, and would complement the excellent work being done by the Oldham Street Angels.”

Full Council resolved to ask the Overview and Scrutiny Board to examine in conjunction with relevant partners, including the Oldham College, Oldham Sixth Form College, University Campus Oldham, schools with post-16 provision, licensed premises and public and private hire taxi businesses, the practicality of establishing such schemes as soon as possible in our town and district centres.