

## **County Council - 7 June 2019**

### **Agenda Item 8(b) - Notice of Motion by Mr Jones**

#### **Night-time Economy - Briefing Note**

The County Council's Economic Growth Plan 2018-23 recognises the important role town centres and high streets play in economic well-being and the future prosperity of West Sussex. Vibrant and successful town centres and high streets are important to attracting and retaining businesses, residents and visitors.

Town centres are facing huge challenges, which are well documented. The Districts and Boroughs are the lead authorities for their town centres and the County Council is working closely with them on a range of initiatives, which depending on local priorities, will support the development of night-time economies. Examples of the County Council's support include the following.

- To stimulate fresh thinking on town centres, the Leader of the County Council hosted a 'Let's Talk About Our Towns' event in September 2018 with Bill Grimsey of the Grimsey Review on town centres as a key speaker.
- District and Borough Growth Deals where the regeneration and public realm improvements in town centres has been prioritised. Crawley and Worthing are early examples where good progress is being made;
- Experience West Sussex which encourages residents and visitors to enjoy all the county has to offer throughout the year; and
- Practical support for the district and borough councils in developing bids to the Government's Future High Streets Fund.

During the development of the Economic Growth Plan 2018-23, which included an all-member session, member scrutiny and extensive engagement with partners, the night-time economy was not highlighted for consideration or inclusion as a focus for the County Council in the Plan.

The Economic Growth Plan 2019/20 Action Plan reflects the priorities agreed with Members through the adoption of Economic Growth Plan in 2018, with resources allocated to achieving these.

Some district and borough councils, and others including town councils and Business Improvement Districts, have identified the night-time economy as an area for focus in their local strategies and plans, and are pursuing initiatives to support and grow the night-time economy, including engaging with residents and businesses.

Support, advice, toolkits and case studies are available from national associations and other sources to support these local plans and activities associated with creating a safe, vibrant and well-balanced evening and night-time offer.

**Lee Harris**

Executive Director of Place Services