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| <p>Non-Executive Report of the: Licensing Committee 13th December 2016</p> |  |
| <p>Report of: David Tolley, Head of Environmental Health and Trading Standards Directorate of Communities Localities and Culture</p> | <p>Classification: Unrestricted</p> |
| <p>Community Alcohol Partnership and Best Bar None Review 2016/17</p> | |

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the progress of the Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP) initiative in Mile End as well as an update on the Best Bar None (BBN) Scheme within the borough.
- 1.2 The aim of both the CAP and the BBN is to seek to lower alcohol related crime and anti-social behaviour within the Borough.
- 1.3 A Licensing Projects Officer, within the Environmental Health and Trading Standards Service, has been separately funded to work on both these initiatives, which started in August 2015.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Note that it is intended for the CAP in the Mile End area to continue and to be further developed so as to assist in longer term strategies for Mile End: as the CAP is the only intervention that has had any successful engagement with both business and the public to reduce alcohol related nuisance and increase business compliance.
- 2.2 Note that subject to a positive evaluation of the CAP, to identify other areas within Tower Hamlets that would benefit from the introduction of a CAP.
- 2.3 Note that the Best Bar None (BBN) Award is to continue to be funded so as to gain greater status in the Borough and to encourage even more participants to celebrate high standards and success in Tower Hamlets.
- 2.4 Note that the BBN Award is to partner with a social media tourism company, subject to the agreement of the [Communications Team], to highlight BBN achievements within the Borough and to encourage and promote tourism within the borough.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The first CAP area focused on Bethnal Green and St Peter's ward where the main issue of concern identified was that of underage sales by Off-licences in the area. The CAP referred these premises to a responsible retail training scheme that was being run by the Environmental Health and Trading Standards Service to address the concern.
- 3.2 Between November 2015 and December 2015, a CAP survey was undertaken across Tower Hamlets to gauge residents' views on alcohol related crime and anti-social behaviour.
- 3.3 The results of this CAP survey indicated Mile End as an area that suffered from public alcohol consumption, which was visible both on weekdays and weekends, and revealed a case of under-reporting of anti-social behaviour (ASB) within this area. This was because residents believed that change was not possible in Mile End. (**See Appendix 1**). The survey also highlighted that adults were the main cause of discomfort but with young people becoming involved with drinking and ASB.
- 3.4 As a result of the survey and the information relating to crime within the area, the Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP) scheme was set up in Mile End.
- 3.5 Activity under the CAP was intended to complement the existing work of retailers and key stakeholders but without increasing resources in the longer term. Shared goals can then be achieved by all the organisations and agencies working together alongside the local community. This is because by working together far more can be achieved than working in isolation or in a silo culture.

Best Bar None Award

- 3.6 The Best Bar None (BBN) Award seeks to raise standards within premises that are licensed for on sales of alcohol. Applicants wishing to achieve the award are required to demonstrate to assessors that they are above the minimum standard for compliance with Licensing and Health and Safety legislation, and are at least broadly compliant with Food Safety legislation.
- 3.7 BBN also provides practical methods that uphold the four licensing objectives and aid in the prevention of alcohol related ASB. The sustained improvement and management of the venues across the Borough therefore encourages an environment where public nuisance is not tolerated.
- 3.8 The system of assessment and awards is highly sought after by businesses and premises will be allocated into certain categories according to their overall score. Premises with outstanding and highest scores are acknowledged as the best in their respective categories during an award ceremony.

Engagement

- 3.9 Intelligence both from the survey and other areas has identified a youth cohort as one of the main groups responsible for the alcohol and drug related ASB in Mile End. The CAP Partnership therefore tailored its approach to address these local issues and it is this partnership model that has succeeded in engaging with these youth groups. The CAP strategy involves taking a particular cohort off the streets through supporting and introducing structured sessions, and employment opportunities.
- 3.10 Through the CAPs own engagement with the youths, it identified that they enjoyed playing football. Based on this information, the CAP liaised with Sports Development as well as Celtic Football Club and secured that football could be played on the Mile End Leisure Centre's outdoor pitch. This saw an average of 20 young people per session engage with this activity. This gave the youths something to become engaged in other than alcohol and ASB.
- 3.11 The CAP also approached both the Rapid Response Team (RRT) and Sports Development and identified problems that were hindering the RRT from being able to effectively engage with these youths. This was mainly the location of the RRT Bus being deployed too far from the ASB Hotspot on Burdett Road. Burdett Road is a Red Zone managed by Transport for London and therefore the CAP approached TfL and secured parking permits for the RRT bus for two months free of charge.
- 3.12 The CAP identified that the youth cohort did not move far from their area in Mile End and therefore Youth Centres were too far away for them to travel to. Therefore, the CAP approached a local resource in the ASB hotspot, East London Tabernacle (ELT), that runs youth sessions on Monday. ELT has a general rule of allowing only young people that are residents of the E3 postcode and up to the age of 19 to attend these youth sessions and which therefore excluded this youth cohort. The CAP successfully negotiated with the ELT to engage the youth cohort by temporarily giving an exemption to this general rule thereby allowing them to attend the youth sessions.
- 3.13 The CAP opened discussions with East End Homes and negotiated a Service Level Agreement with them allowing the Southern Grove Centre to be used for youth sessions for two nights a week free of charge to the youth cohort.

Youth Employment Project (YEP).

- 3.14 The YEP is a CAP initiative that offers young people a Level 1 qualification in employability. This is provided by the Gateway Housing STEP programme and which is followed by work experience with Sainsbury's in Whitechapel. The need for employment and training opportunities after this work experience

was required. The CAP therefore partnered with Skillsmatch to offer support towards its range of modern apprenticeships.

- 3.15 The CAP has made use of social media, such as Instagram and Twitter, in publicising these opportunities and their progress. So far, 5 young people have participated in the YEP over the summer holidays. They completed the course and then moved on to 2 weeks practical work experience at Sainsbury's.
- 3.16 Young people have therefore received practical benefits including increased confidence as well as customer and sales skills. All the young people were mentored by senior members of staff at Sainsbury's and worked in a number of different departments so as to obtain as much experience as possible. One young person was subsequently offered a part time position and the Sainsbury's manager has reported that he is pleased with the project and progress of the young people.

Aesthetic Improvements to the Mile End Park

- 3.17 Project Regenerate is based on the Broken Window Theory and the document Decent Parks Decent Behaviour. This is that if a park is neglected and contains crime, then the residents will not use the park and will also feel bad about their area.
- 3.18 The CAP sought to improve part of Mile End Park to change and improve the local perception of their area. The CAP approached Ecotalent. This is a scheme for young people to receive accreditation on projects focused on improving the environment. The CAP presented the need to improve Mile End Park and requested their help. This was agreed and on a weekly basis, 4 Young People undertook volunteer work on Saturdays cleaning and clearing a highly visible and neglected part of Mile End on the corner of Mile End Road and Burdett Road.
- 3.19 This corner is a thoroughfare for pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, students and residents. This work produced a very visible improvement in Mile End street scene and therefore gave a positive message to the community. The young people also received their accreditations and the costs for project were provided by Ecotalent.

Education

- 3.20 The CAP learned that having workshops prioritised for Mile End was difficult as there were not enough providers to cover the Tower Hamlets area. Therefore, the CAP created A Drop Down Day product around alcohol awareness which was modelled on guidance from the Alcohol Education Trust. The CAP then offered this free to Schools and Youth Groups within the Mile End Area. This consisted of an assembly talk on alcohol awareness

followed by exercises tailored made by the CAP. 2 of 4 assemblies have been completed for year 9 of St Paul's Way Academy consisting of 243 young people.

- 3.21 Two Youth centres have also signed up for a National Alcohol Awareness week sessions to be run by the CAP.

Responsible retailing programme

- 3.22 The CAP has been able to offer Off Licenses in Mile End and the surrounding area Responsible Retail Training. 26 Premises have been offered training. 18 refused but 8 accepted. This Training is due to commence in January 2017.

Enforcement

- 3.23 The CAP introduced Challenge 25 and issued free posters to the Off Licenses in Mile End and its surrounding wards. Following the introduction of this the CAP carried out compliance testing in August 2016. This was followed by a test purchase operation with Trading Standards for underage sales in September 2016.

- 3.26 The results for the Compliance test showed that of the 22 Tested, 17 Passed, and 5 Failed. Premises who failed were then sent warning letter and offered of training. Results for the test purchase operation by Trading Standards resulted in 30 premises visited with, 30 Passes, and 0 Fails. This indicates an improvement amongst the Off Licenses within Mile End and surrounding area.

Tackling ASB

- 3.27 The Urban Adventure Base (UAB) is a youth club based within Mile End Park. At night the building attracts regular groups who gather with alcohol and drugs leaving the paraphernalia behind and which the Youth Club have to clear in the morning. The CAP went into the UAB and assisted them in to effectively using their CCTV system to record evidence of this ASB activity and for this evidence to be provided to the Safer Communities Tasking Group. The Tasking Group then requested THEO patrols for 4 weeks which led to:

- a. 17 patrols from 26th September to 24th October 2016
- b. 8 CSAS name and address request
- c. 3 CSAS alcohol seizures
- d. 1 Cannabis warning

- 3.28 As a result the littering of drug and alcohol has stopped outside Youth Centre and the groups have stopped congregating outside the UAB.

Results

- 3.30 The CAP has successfully engaged with both organisations and youths within the Mile End area resulting in diversionary and employment activities/opportunities. This has resulted in the removal of the youths from the area and provided them with activities away from alcohol and ASB. It has also decreased under aged sales of alcohol within the area, and which has in turn helped enforcement teams tackle long standing ASB issues. Initial reports are that all these measures have worked to reduce alcohol related ASB within the Mile End area and the CAP intends to resurvey in January 2017 and it is estimated that this will demonstrate the CAPs successes and show a marked difference on the target area.

Best Bar None Update

- 3.31 Last year 10 venues applied for the award and to date 27 venues have applied.
- 3.32 This year the BBN Officer has been successful in gaining the support of both Canary Wharf and the Truman Brewery who have agreed to be partners to help boost promotion and recognition of the scheme.
- 3.33 BBN Terms and Conditions were introduced this year which gave clear rules for applicants wishing to apply to enter the award. This led to re-rating requests to improve low Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) Scores. This has allowed the Borough's Best Bar None to improve relationships between other Teams within Environmental Health and Trading Standards and assist venues in improving food hygiene as well as giving them opportunities for greater training opportunities. It has also led to partnership working and promotion of the Food for Health Award.
- 3.34 Best Bar None has also been added to the proposed Town Centre Strategy to enhance its visibility. A common issue for the Town Centre Team and Best Bar None is the touting which has now become a long running issue in Brick Lane. To assist with this Best Bar None has for the first time offered Restaurants who are licensed to sell alcohol to apply for this award. 13 restaurants have applied and this should raise standards of compliance within these premises and assist in reducing touting within Brick Lane.

4.0 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

- 4.1 This report provides an update on the progress of the Community Alcohol Partnership initiative and the Best Bar None Scheme. The initial reports have shown that the measures in place have achieved reductions in tackling alcohol, Anti-Social Behaviour, and touting issues. This has also resulted in improved partnership working.

- 4.2 Both these initiatives are funded on an annual basis from the Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) core budget that is not supported from the public health allocation. The resources support the fixed term post of a Licensing Project Officer within the Environmental Health and Trading Standards Service.
- 4.3 The CAP scheme is evaluated both at the beginning and end of the year. Subject to a positive evaluation at the year end that considers measures specific to a reduction in alcohol related ASB, it is being recommended that the CAP be extended or replicated to other areas of the borough. Subject to the resources remaining in place to support the funding of post in the future, the costs can be contained within the existing resources.

5.0 LEGAL COMMENTS

- 5.1 Community Alcohol Partnerships (CAP) is a Community Interest Company whose aim is to tackle underage drinking and the resulting harm to local communities. A combination of enforcement, education, engagement of the community and local businesses, and provision of appropriate positive activity for young people is the hallmark of the CAP model. CAP is the national co-ordinating organisation for the establishment of local Community Alcohol Partnerships which can be set up in any area with evidence of an underage drinking problem. Within Tower Hamlets, the current CAP is for Mile End and the report provides an update on the progress of the CAP.
- 5.2 As to setting up fresh CAPs, once an area has been identified, it is important that the issues of concern are known and that there is proper planning before any commencement. It is essential to build evaluation (pre- and post-) into any action plan as evaluation is a mandatory part of any CAP scheme. It is also important to bring together a number of agencies working to reduce alcohol related harm to young people and associated anti-social behaviour as well as involving local alcohol retailers.
- 5.3 As to Best Bar None Scheme, this is a National Award Scheme supported by the Home Office and aimed at promoting responsible management and operation of alcohol licensed premises. The Scheme's purpose is:
- Reduce alcohol related crime and disorder
 - Building a positive relationship between licensed trade, police and local authorities
 - Reduces harmful effects of binge drinking
 - Improves knowledge and skills of enforcement and regulation agencies, licensees and bar staff to help them responsibly manage licensed premises
 - Process of becoming recognised by BBN includes meeting minimum standards and culminates with a high profile award night with category winners and an overall winner
 - Responsible owners are recognised and able to share good practice with others

- Highlight how operating more responsibly can improve the profitability of an individual business and attractiveness of a general area

5.4 In its consideration of this Report, the Council must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful conduct under the Equality Act 2010, the need to advance equality of opportunity and the need to foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not (the public sector equality duty).

6.0 ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 No adverse impacts have been identified

7.0 BEST VALUE (BV) IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Partnership identifies greater synergies between various Services and is outcome focussed.

8.0 SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

8.1 There are no adverse impacts identified

9.0 RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

14.1 The Council will be at risk of legal challenge if its decision making process on compliance testing not transparent and evidentially based.

10.0 CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

10.1 One of the key licensing objectives is to prevent licensed premises from being a source of crime and disorder. The CAP and BBN supports and assists with crime and disorder reduction by controlling those who manage premises open to members of the public and imposing conditions on relevant premises licences

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report – None

Appendices:

Appendix One: Summary of Mile End Residents Survey

Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)

List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this report

List any background documents not already in the public domain including officer contact information.

NONE.