



## Notice of meeting of

### **Economic Development Partnership Board**

**To:** Councillors Steve Galloway (Chair), Jamieson-Ball (Vice-Chair), Kirk, Alexander, Gillies, Looker, Scott and Taylor

Mr Andrew Scott (First Stop York Tourism Partnership), Jez Willard (Retail Sector), Mr Brian Anderson (Trades Unions), Mr Len Cruddas (Chamber of Commerce), Mr Mike Galloway (Education/Lifelong Learning Partnership), Mr Kevin Moss (Finance Sector), Prof Tony Robards (University of York), Mr Mark Sessions (Manufacturing Sector) and Julie Hutton (Yorkshire Forward)

**Date:** Tuesday, 19 June 2007

**Time:** 6.00 pm

**Venue:** Guildhall

### **AGENDA**

**1. Introductions & Apologies**

**2. Declarations of Interest**

At this point, Members are asked to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they may have in the business on this agenda.

**3. Minutes**

(Pages 1 - 6)

To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2007.

**4. Public Participation**

At this point in the meeting members of the public who have registered their wish to speak regarding an item on the agenda or an issue within the Board's remit can do so. Anyone who wishes to register or requires further information is requested to contact the Democracy Officer on the contact details listed at the foot of this agenda. The deadline for registering is 18 June 2007 at 5.00pm.

**5. Report of the Future York Group** (Pages 7 - 10)

This report seeks to brief the Board on the final report of the Future York Group and to seek views on its main findings.

**6. Research Findings on the Evening Economy in York** (Pages 11 - 58)

This report seeks to brief the Board on research on the evening economy and the experience of York city centre in the evening, undertaken in association with the First Stop York Product Development Group. Views are sought on the draft vision and action plan prior to formal consideration by the City of York Council.

**7. Christmas Lighting - Proposals for 2007** (Pages 59 - 68)

This report updates Members of the Board on a number of options for Christmas Lighting – related activities for 2007, and also reviews other festive activities proposed and committed for this year. The report also highlights the need for a long term strategy on this issue.

**8. Any other business which the Chair decides is urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.**

Democracy Officer:

Name: Tracy Johnson

Contact details:

- Telephone – (01904) 551031
- E-mail – [tracy.johnson@york.gov.uk](mailto:tracy.johnson@york.gov.uk)

For more information about any of the following please contact the Democracy Officer responsible for servicing this meeting.

- Registering to speak
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports

Contact details are set out above.

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- ensure that what you want to say speak relates to an item of business on the agenda or an issue which the committee has power to consider (speak to the Democracy Officer for advice on this);
- find out about the rules for public speaking from the Democracy Officer.

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### **Holding the Executive to Account**

The majority of councillors are not appointed to the Executive (38 out of 47). Any 3 non-Executive councillors can 'call-in' an item of business from a published Executive (or Executive Member Advisory Panel (EMAP)) agenda. The Executive will still discuss the 'called in' business on the published date and will set out its views for consideration by a specially convened Scrutiny Management Committee (SMC). That SMC meeting will then make its recommendations to the next scheduled Executive meeting in the following week, where a final decision on the 'called-in' business will be made.

### **Scrutiny Committees**

The purpose of all scrutiny and ad-hoc scrutiny committees appointed by the Council is to:

- Monitor the performance and effectiveness of services;
- Review existing policies and assist in the development of new ones, as necessary; and
- Monitor best value continuous service improvement plans

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City of York Council

Minutes

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MEETING	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP BOARD
DATE	13 MARCH 2007
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS STEVE GALLOWAY (CHAIR), KIRK (VICE-CHAIR), MERRETT, D'AGORNE, FRASER (SUBSTITUTE FOR BLANCHARD) AND HYMAN (SUBSTITUTE FOR JAMIESON-BALL)  JEZ WILLARD (RETAIL SECTOR), MR ANDREW SCOTT (FIRST STOP YORK TOURISM PARTNERSHIP), MR LEN CRUDDAS (CHAMBER OF COMMERCE), PROF TONY ROBARDS (UNIVERSITY OF YORK) AND MR MARK SESSIONS (MANUFACTURING SECTOR)
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLORS HOLVEY, JAMIESON-BALL, MORLEY, AND BLANCHARD, MR BRIAN ANDERSON (TRADES UNIONS), MR MIKE GALLOWAY (EDUCATION/LIFELONG LEARNING PARTNERSHIP), MR KEVIN MOSS (FINANCE SECTOR) AND JULIE HUTTON (YORKSHIRE FORWARD)

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**15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were invited to declare at this point in the meeting any personal or prejudicial interests they might have in the business on the agenda.

The following personal non prejudicial interests were declared at the meeting:

Cllr Merrett is employed in the Rail Industry by Corus Infrastructure Services.

Cllr D'Agorne is employed by York College.

Cllr Hyman is a member of Science City York.

Len Cruddas is a member of the York Tourism Bureau.

**16. MINUTES**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the last meeting held on 26 September 2006 be approved and signed as a correct record.

**17. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation scheme.

**18. YORK TOURISM STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN**

Members considered a report which outlined the proposed new Tourism Strategy for the City of York, which had been developed by the York Tourism Partnership. The report highlighted objectives and priorities for tourism in York over the next few years, based on the fundamental principle of increasing visitor spending and length of stay.

The attached Tourism Strategy outlined the current strengths of tourism in York – very much a success story in the York economy, as demonstrated by the 52% increase in visitor spending from 1993-2005, the growing festivals and cultural offer and substantial commercial investment, especially in the retail, bars and limited service hotel sectors. The Strategy however recognised that in a competitive environment the city needed to be able to respond to internal and external pressures:

- Recent trends showing falling hotel occupancy in 2006
- The long term decline in overseas visitor numbers (from a third of York's visitors in 1995-96 to a fifth today)
- A change in visitor characteristics in the past 2-3 years which reflects an older and less affluent visitor profile (even though visitor spend has continued to increase)
- Changing visitor expectations and opportunities (through external developments such as low cost flights, alternative leisure spending opportunities etc)

The following points were made:

- It was noted that wider private sector involvement in this would strengthen the strategy, and keeping all partners actively engaged and fully supportive of the strategy was key.
- The strategy lacked vision and work was needed to provide a clearer consensus on where the partnership was going.
- The objective on addressing the specific skills and training needs of tourism businesses and their workforce should reflect the nature of the workforce which primarily consisted of low paid workers, although pay, and terms and conditions, had improved.
- Increasing sustainability issues should be reflected in the objectives, with an emphasis on green tourism.
- It was raised that marketing was key to the success of tourism, but was labour intensive. It was proposed that the new partnership embraces the marketing activity and employs staff to do that marketing. Officers reported that issues around governance, staffing and funding had not been looked at in detail, but they were looking at options for joining up various activities so that there was a single organisation going forward.



- RESOLVED:
- 1) That the above comments on the draft York Tourism Strategy be noted.
  - 2) That the objectives contained in paragraphs 7.1-7.12 be endorsed;
  - 3) That the establishment of a single tourism organisation to deliver actions be supported in principle, subject to a further report on the details of this.

REASON: This would allow the tourism partners to prioritise actions in future years by setting the context for activity and enable the tourism partners to best prepare tourism proposals to be put forward into the Sub-Regional Investment Programme

## **19. NORTHERN WAY GROWTH FUND ‘HUB AND SPOKE’ PROJECT**

Members considered a report which brought bring members up to date with a major Science City York (SCY) infrastructure project funded through a Northern Way initiative designed to improve the level of innovation across the three Northern Regional Development Agencies regions.

The report advised that this £2.6 million project was funding three developments in the City. These were a Creative and Digital Centre on the Terry’s site, a Biological Business Centre within the University’s Department of Biology, and Park Central, an in-fill building between the Innovation and Bio centre on the York Science Park. These facilities would provide much needed business accommodation and collaboration facilities within Science City York’s three focus clusters - bio-science, digital and creative technology.

The following points were made:

- It was highlighted that these state of the art sustainable buildings should serve as icons in terms of design and be built on as examples elsewhere in the city.

RESOLVED: That the project be noted and endorsed.

REASON: To help shape the effectiveness of future actions in order to bring benefits to the economic well being of the City and in meeting the City’s corporate priorities which were designed to focus effort on improving the economy.

## **20. SCIENCE CITY YORK: ESTABLISHMENT OF COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE PLAN**

Members considered a report which outlined the current progress in establishing the Science City York Company Limited by Guarantee.

The expectation was that the company would be formally established by the end of February, in time to appoint the Chief Executive in early March.

A formal meeting of the Members and Directors of the new company would be required in early March. The intention was to establish a company as a legal entity that was capable of employing the new Chief Executive. Once established, and with the advice of the new Chief Executive, the company would consider the governance arrangements required in the longer term, appoint additional directors, and amend the Memorandum and Articles of Association as desired.

Following formal registration of the company the City of York Council and University of York would become the sole members. This would leave the two stakeholders in full control of the company. Both the City Council and the University were arranging for formal decisions to become members of the SCY Company, and to appoint their representatives.

It was reported that the company had now been established but that there had been no appointment to the Chief Executive post as there had been no suitable candidates.

RESOLVED: That this report be noted and endorsed.

REASON: To help shape the effectiveness of future action.

## **21. SUB-REGIONAL INVESTMENT PLAN**

Members considered a report which outlined the current position in producing a revised Sub-Regional Investment Plan (SRIP), allowing the Board (representing the Local Strategic Partnership) to comment on key issues emerging from the strategic framework for the Sub-Regional Investment Plan.

Yorkshire Forward had decided to review SRIPs in the year following the review of the Regional Economic Strategy (RES). The RES was reviewed in 2005. There was a general desire to produce a 'Better SRIP' moving towards commissioning a smaller number of investment programmes. So far, work on producing a revised SRIP had focused on undertaking a Strategic Economic Assessment – from which the priorities for investment should emerge – and, in parallel, producing an overall strategic framework/vision for the whole of the sub-region.

Whilst work was being undertaken on the Investment Plan review, Yorkshire Forward were consulting on a proposal to move away from a Sub-regional approach to investment planning being undertaken on a City region basis. It was likely that this matter would be considered further by the Yorkshire Forward Board at its meeting in March 2007.

It was reported that from April 2009, there would be a move, on a phased basis, towards city regional investment plans (CRIPs).

The following points were made:

- It was raised that within the five main activity areas listed under paragraph 5 of the report, there may be a danger of failing to benefit from people's changing awareness of sustainability and new skills. It

was hoped that this SRIP would mention how to relate to sustainability. Officers reported that they would feed this back to the Board.

- The report was difficult to read and would be incomprehensible to ordinary people in the street.
- Concerns were raised about not including the city centre in the York section. Officers reported that city centre retailing did not lend itself towards investment planning but instead it would be focussed towards tourism.

RESOLVED: That the above comments be noted and incorporated within the sub-regional process.

REASON: To assist in meeting Council and LSP objectives.

## **22. PROGRESS ON KEY ISSUES**

Members considered a report which picked up on any matters arising from the last meeting of the Board and briefed Board members on issues/progress in other areas of economic development activity.

The following points were made:

- It was raised that under the rail related issues, it did not include the importance of the East-West link to Manchester Airport, and the Harrogate-Leeds link. Officers reported that things were happening in other forums in relation to the other rail links.
- Concerns were raised about the bottleneck in funding at the York Training Centre for NVQ level 2 qualifications in Early Years and Health and Social Care and whether the backlog was for all types of training or just from a particular provider. It was reported that potentially it was both and that there was an issue around the availability of qualified staff in that sector. This was a constant problem as contracts were not being renewed as they had to reduce the number of staff working in the area, which reflected the availability of funding to deliver courses.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and endorsed.

REASON: To help shape the effectiveness of future action.

CLLR STEVE GALLOWAY  
CHAIR

The meeting started at 6.05 pm and finished at 7.05 pm.

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**Economic Development Partnership Board**19<sup>th</sup> June 2007

Report of the Assistant Director – Economic Development and Partnerships

**REPORT OF THE FUTURE YORK GROUP****Summary**

1. The report seeks to brief the Board on the final report of the Future York Group and to seek views on its main findings.

**Background**

2. The Future York Group was commissioned by the City of York Council to undertake an independent strategic review of the local economy, following a series of announcements regarding job losses in the City. The Group has been chaired by Christopher Garnett and has been well attended at its meetings by the group members. They have received a variety of presentations and background information to enable them to make their conclusions and recommendations. This authoritative report will provide the framework for future actions to be undertaken by the City of York Council and partners with regard to promoting the economic well-being of the City. Their final report was launched on 12<sup>th</sup> June when it was handed over to the City of York Council at a public event at the Mansion House. Members of the Board were invited to this event and a copy of the report will be made available to Board members before the meeting. The Council has yet to consider the report formally and there is, therefore, no firm commitment from the Council to the recommendations set out in the report. Nevertheless, the views of the Board are welcomed on the findings and conclusions of the Future York Group.

**Consultation**

3. The report is being provided for information and there are no recommendations with financial consequences. There is no consultation necessary for this report.

**Options**

4. This report is for information only and therefore does not present options for decisions by Board members. Where decisions are necessary specific reports on those issues and options will be presented. However, Board members are invited to comment on the information provided in this major study on the future of the economy.

**Analysis**

5. As stated in the paragraph above, options have not been presented therefore there is no need for appraisals.

## **Corporate Priorities**

6. The Future York Group report relates to the following objectives for the Council, the Economic Development Service Plan and the LSP Without Walls initiatives.
  - \* The “Thriving City” theme of the WOW Community Plan has the following strategic objective:

“To support the progress and success of York’s existing businesses and to encourage new enterprises in order to maintain a prosperous and flourishing economy that will sustain high employment rates.”
  - \* The Economic Development Service Plan sets identifies a number of corporate priorities:
    - DIP 5 Increase people’s skills and knowledge to improve future employment prospects.
    - DIP 6 Improve the contribution that Science City York makes to economic prosperity.
    - DIP 8 Improve the life chances of the most disadvantaged and disaffected children, young people and families in the city.
    - DIP12 Improve the way the Council and its partners work together to deliver better services for the people who live in York.

## **Implications**

7. Financial: As this is a general report seeking views on the Future York group prior to any formal consideration of the report by the City of York Council, there are no implications. Any significant implications to economic development activity will be the subject of future reports to the Board.
8. Human resources: None
9. Equalities: None
10. Legal: None
11. Crime and Disorder: None
12. Information Technology: None
13. Property: None

## **Risk Management**

14. In compliance with the council’s risk management strategy. There are no risks associated with the recommendations of this report.

## Recommendation

15. The Board's input and views on the Future York Group report are requested.

Reason: To help shape the effectiveness of future action.

## Contact Details

### Author:

Roger Ranson  
Assistant Director Economic  
Development & Partnerships  
Phone No: 01904 551614

### Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Bill Woolley  
Director of City Strategy

Report Approved



Date 01/06/07

Specialist Implications Officers: None

Wards Affected:

All



For further information please contact the author of the report

**Background Papers:** The Future York Group report – an independent strategic review of the York economy, June 2007

**Annexes:** None

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**Economic Development Partnership Board**19<sup>th</sup> June 2007

Report of the Assistant Director - Economic Development and Partnerships

**RESEARCH FINDINGS ON THE EVENING ECONOMY IN YORK****Summary**

1. The report seeks to brief the Board on research on the evening economy and the experience of York city centre in the evening, undertaken in association with the First Stop York Product Development Group. Views are sought on the draft vision and action plan prior to formal consideration by the City of York Council.

**Background**

2. The managed development of a healthy evening economy will bring social, economic and environmental benefits to the residents of York and has the potential to greatly increase the value that the city receives from tourism. Improving the visitor experience of York after dark will improve the city's ability to attract valuable overnight visitors. While only 16% of visitors to York stay overnight, they account for 61% of the impact of tourism on the local economy (£191 million pa). This implies that a focus on improving the evening experience of York will be very effective in boosting the evening economy and increasing tourism revenues overall. Conversely, this also means that this major revenue stream from overnight tourism would be significantly threatened by the incorrect development of the evening economy. In order to better inform future policy and action, an extensive study of the city centre evening economy with a particular focus on the relationship between tourism and the experience of the city centre after dark.
3. The research suggests that the correct "steer" for the York evening economy is towards a more inclusive evening experience with a more exciting and diverse range of evening activities, a higher amenity value and a higher perception of safety in the city centre. The research also highlights the need for co-ordination of activity in the evening economy to allow for greater communication and cooperation between the stakeholders involved including retail, hospitality, entertainment, accommodation and the local authority.
4. Key findings of the research, together with a draft vision and action plan to stimulate the evening economy in York are set out below. These have yet to be considered by the City of York Council and the views of the Board are welcomed at this stage as part of the discussion on how best to move forward with the development of the evening economy in York city centre.

## Consultation

5. The report is being provided for information and there are no recommendations with financial consequences. There is no consultation necessary for this report.

## Options

6. This report is for information only and therefore does not present options for decisions by Board members. Where decisions are necessary specific reports on those issues and options will be presented. However, Board members are invited to comment on the information provided.

## Analysis

7. As stated in the paragraph above, options have not been presented therefore there is no need for appraisals.

## Key Findings of Research

8. The research has been based upon examining national reports on developing the evening economy as well as seeking opinions. The main findings of the research undertaken in association with the First Stop York Product Development Group are set out below:

### Trends in the development of the evening economy of UK cities?

- According to "Night Vision" published in January 2007 by the Civic Trust (National) city centres have become dominated at night by alcohol related activity. *Appendix 1*
- Many people - particularly older people and women - can feel excluded from town centres at night, particularly at the weekend. They fear anti-social behaviour and believe that there are few activities in town centres to attract them. Whilst about 45% of 16-34 year olds go out on the town one evening a week, only 15% of over 55s do and 71% of over 55s would not go to a town centre in the evening. *Appendix 1*
- Night Vision proposes encouraging diversity of activity as a means of developing the evening economy and improving the evening experience of town centres for everyone: families, residents, businesses, older people, teenagers etc. *Appendix 1*

### What is the contribution of Tourism to the evening economy of York?

- 16% of visitors stay overnight in York (i.e. 600,000). *Appendix 4.*
- The average length of stay in York is 3.28 nights and this has increased over recent years. *Appendix 4.*
- In total there are 2 million visitor nights spent in York's evening economy per year. *Appendix 4.*
- Spend among visitors on (evening) food and drink and evening entertainment has risen significantly over the past 10 years (corrected for inflation) (per visitor per

night on food and drink from £8 to £12/13, per visitor per night on evening entertainment from £1.72 to £4.67). *Appendix 4.*

- Average spend per day by overnight visitors is approximately £77.97 including accommodation. *Appendix 4*
- We can estimate that the total spend in York by overnight visitors is approximately £153 million<sup>1</sup> (and a total economic impact, including the multiplier effect, of £191 million). The total spend by overnight visitor in York's evening economy is approximately £98 million<sup>2</sup> (total economic impact including the multiplier effect is approximately £115 million). *Appendix 4*
- Therefore, while only 16% of visitors stay overnight. Those overnight visitors account for 61% of the impact of tourism on the local economy. This implies that a focus on improving the evening tourism product will be very effective in increasing tourism revenues overall.
- Conversely, this major revenue stream from overnight tourism would be significantly threatened by the development of a less inclusive, less safe evening economy with a low amenity value.

### **How important is the evening experience of the city to the success of York as a destination?**

- In choosing a destination 52% of York's visitors state that a range of things to do in the evening is an important factor influencing their decision and this figure is rising steadily. *Appendix 4.*
- Changing population trends will lead to an older age profile and may create a diversity of demand in the current evening economy market. *Appendix 1.*

### **What is the current visitor experience of York in the evening?**

- In comparison to other cities visitors feel that York is relaxed and safe in the evening. *Appendix 7.*
- There has been a decrease in the percentage of visitors who think York is a dull place in the evening in recent years. *Appendix 4.*
- Eating out, ghost walks, going to a pub or bar and walking are the most popular activities for visitors to York in an evening. *Appendix 4.*
- The evening activities of visitors from social class A/B are more likely to involve going to a restaurant while the activities of visitors in social class D/E are more likely to involve going to a pub or bar. *Appendix 4.*
- While licensing has led to longer drinking hours over the past few years, the same period has seen a decline in alternative (i.e. alcohol independent) evening

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<sup>1</sup> 600000 visitors x 3.28 average nights x £77.97 average spend by overnight visitors

<sup>2</sup> 600000 visitors x 3.28 average nights x £49.74 difference between average spend by overnight visitors and average spend by day visitors

entertainment provision e.g. closure of the Barbican by CYC, closure of Odeon. *Appendices 1 & 2.*

### **How do resident's experience/ make use of the city centre in the evening?**

- There are high levels of regular usage of cafes, pubs, bars and restaurants by residents and such activities are perceived as one of the most important leisure activities. *Appendix 5.*

### **How could the visitor experience of York after dark be improved?**

- There was strong support from residents, visitors and evening economy stakeholders towards the development of a continental outdoor café culture in York in the evening. *Appendices 7 & 8.*
- Several research projects have revealed a strong demand among visitors for concerts/musical performances, outdoor theatres and cinema, street entertainment, street markets and evening festivals as possible evening activities. *Appendices 3, 4, 6, 7 & 8.*
- A survey of Film Alfresco attendees (visitors and residents) revealed that 60% felt there was not enough to do in York in the evening. *Appendix 6.*
- 50% of Film Alfresco attendees said they would attend an Open Air Cinema every month, 25% stated that they would attend twice a month and a further 9% would come weekly. *Appendix 6.*

### **Visitor Attractions**

- Visitor attractions all close at between 5-6. *Appendices 2 & 7.*
- Focus group research (among both residents and visitors) indicated a strong demand for later (i.e. early evening) opening of historic attractions *Appendix 7.*
- Research based on trial late night openings of historic attractions suggests that 56% of visitors would be interested in visiting museums and attractions in the evening. *Appendix 3 .*

### **Evening Shopping**

- Currently there is no co-ordinated (or marketable) late night shopping in the city centre. *Appendix 2.*
- 40% of respondents to the Film Alfresco Questionnaire (residents and visitors) stated that evening shopping would encourage them into the city centre on an evening. *Appendix 6.*
- 35% of visitor spend is spent on shopping. This is the most valuable aspect, in terms of spend, of the visitor experience. It is therefore reasonable to deduce that the city is losing out on potential revenue from tourists as well as residents by not developing a regular co-ordinated evening shopping experience that can be marketed to prospective visitors. *Appendix 4.*

## Lighting

- Focus group research indicated strong demand for outdoor active recreation in the evening. Walking was highlighted as an important aspect of an evening's activities and entertainment. Visitors suggested that improved lighting could be used to make more of the city walls and waterfront as opportunities for evening walks. *Appendix 7.*
- Surveys throughout the UK have shown that investment in lighting leads to a reduction in crime levels and a greater perception of safety in the city centre after dark. *Appendix 9*
- York has recently seen significant investment in both permanent architectural lighting and temporary creative lighting aimed at improving the experience of the city centre after dark. This investment has been recognised as an example of how to improve the after dark experience of a city centre in a sustainable and inclusive manner. *Appendix 1.*
- There has been a very positive reaction to improved city centre lighting schemes among visitors (82% of people who've seen the lighting see this as attractive/beautiful, or as adding to the city's atmosphere). *Appendix 4.* 60% of residents surveyed had attended the illumination and light shows. *Appendix 5.*

## Which time periods are most in need of improvement

### 5-7pm

- Visitors and residents feel that York has plenty on offer during the day however there is a severe lull in the 5-7pm early evening period when the city seems to close down very early. *Appendix 7*
- The end of pedestrianisation at 4 pm coincides with the arrival of many vans in the city centre and gives the perception that the city is closing down very early. *Appendices 7 & 8.*
- Evening economy stakeholders felt that extending retail opening by an hour would be a significant boost to York's evening economy by making the city centre useful to people who have just finished work in the city and thereby retaining them in the city centre. *Appendix 8.*
- Extended opening hours of cafes was suggested by visitors, residents and stakeholders as a way to fill the early evening slot. *Appendices 7 & 8.*

### 7-9pm

- In a survey of Film Alfresco attendees 90% of respondents, when asked what time they would prefer city centre evening entertainment to take place, picked the 7-9pm period. *Appendix 6.*

## **Barriers to development of the evening economy**

### **Transport and Parking**

- Some evening economy stakeholders have expressed concerns about the introduction of evening parking charges in the city centre. Traders believe that the introduction of evening car parking charges has hurt evening businesses, however evening car parking charges were not seen as a deterrent by visitors. *Appendices 7 & 8.*
- According to focus group research with visitors and residents and discussions with stakeholders the early closing times of the Park and Ride sites make it more difficult to come into town in the evening (and therefore restrict the development of the evening economy). In general the last bus from the city centre is around 8.00pm with the gates of the car park locked after the last bus. This however needs to be set against the low level of usage of evening Park and Ride services when these were being trialled. *Appendices 2, 7 & 8.*
- Bus services are far less frequent in the evenings (after 7.00 especially)

### **Deterrents to using York in the evening**

- York in the evening is perceived by visitors as not very accommodating to children. *Appendix 7.*
- Most evening economy stakeholders who attended discussion groups expressed the belief that rowdy and anti-social behaviour (and specifically stag and hen parties) are a serious threat to the visitor experience of the city after dark and to the development of the evening economy. *Appendix 8*
- According to the Safer York Partnership “the community in York has a much greater fear of crime at night time than during the day. A street survey carried out by Safer York Partnership summer [2004] showed that the reason for this increase in fear is a perception that York is too quiet at night and does little to encourage families to come into the city during the evening”. *Appendix 9.*
- Some visitors feel the policy, among hotels in York, of not accepting one night bookings is a deterrent to staying overnight in York. *Appendix 7.*

### **Provision of Information about the Evening Economy**

- According to visitors the current provision of information regarding evening events (i.e. performances etc) and restaurants is poor. *Appendix 7.*
- Some hoteliers felt that the current provision of information about the evening economy was difficult to find, not always up-to-date and inaccurate which means they are often not in a position to inform their visitors of the current offer. *Appendix 8.*

## **Draft Proposed Vision and Action Plan**

9. Following discussions with the First Stop York Product Development Group, a draft proposed vision and action plan has been prepared. Views of the Board are welcomed on this, prior to any formal consideration of this by City of York Council and other partners.

Inspiration for the development of York's evening economy is available from the many historic cities on the continent where the streets at night are thriving and occupied by people young and old working, socialising, exercising and engaging in entertainment, cultural and community activities. The Civic Trust for Britain has recently proposed the following vision for the Evening Economy in UK cities.

*"The Civic Trust has a very clear vision for what town centres should be at night, in short we would like to create "town centres for all" - welcoming spaces that work at night for everyone: families, residents, businesses, older people, teenagers etc.*

*We want to see a reduction in:*

- *Crime*
- *Noise and disturbance*
- *Street fouling*
- *Drink and drug related A+E admissions*

*We want to see:*

- *Shops open in the evening*
- *Venues that cater for families and older customers*
- *More special events and festivals that add life to the town centre*
- *Innovative use of public buildings in the evening*
- *An increase in non alcohol related activities at night*
- *An improvement in public spaces and lighting*
- *Better night time public transport*
- *An increase in a responsible, adult presence such as street wardens."*

### **Proposed Action Plan**

The following action plan, based on the key research findings, recommends a series of measures to improve the experience of York in the evening and by doing so improve the evening economy and increase the number of visitors.

#### **Coordination and communication**

- Establish an Evening Economy Forum which will facilitate communication and co-ordination between the evening economy stakeholder groups e.g. venues, retail, visitor attractions, markets, restaurants, highway authority, the destination marketing organisation and the tourism partnership. This forum could facilitate the integration of retail opening hours, entertainment and opening hours of museums and attractions. The forum would be facilitated by the CYC Economic Development Unit initially then passed onto the York Tourism Partnership or BID company (if established), with a private sector chair.

- A CYC officer needs to be given specific responsibility to ensure that the coordination above takes place.

### **Improve the provision of non-alcohol dependant evening activities and entertainment.**

To get a more diverse set of evening economy users, improve the perception of safety and make the evening economy more inclusive and family friendly by:

- Improve the amenity value of the city centre and provide for active recreation e.g. walking, strolling, and jogging in the evening in the city centre. Recommend development of a high quality riverside walking, jogging, cycling route along both banks from Clifton Bridge to Millennium Bridge through greatly improved lighting, surfacing, and signage. Other possibilities include specific improvements to allow the walls to be opened at night e.g. Chester.
- Develop a permanent high quality, specifically designed outdoor events space in the city centre, which would be well-lit, have seating and would be used:
  - a. as the fixed site for street entertainment which would take place every early evening at a fixed time.
  - b. as the place to find information about what's going on in the city centre that night via information boards and/or display screens.
  - c. potentially the events space would be located alongside the VIC (see information section below).

### **Facilitate the development of a continental ambience**

- Simplify the licensing arrangements for bars, cafes and restaurants wishing to provide outdoor seating i.e. there should be a single licence rather than 2 or 3.
- Remove the "Café Curfew", Cafés, Bars and Restaurants should be allowed, where possible, to serve breakfast before 10 and evening meals and drinks after 8pm.
- There will soon be a need for defined outdoor smoking areas – developing continental style outdoor seating is an opportunity to make sure this happens in a co-ordinated and attractive way.
- Benefits in terms of responsible drinking and improved levels of informal surveillance and perceptions of safety on the street.

### **Develop better Evening Events and Festivals**

- Focus public support for events and festivals on those which improve the evening experience of the city.
- Develop one major, large scale event which will showcase York as an overnight destination.
- To facilitate the marketing of evening events and festivals, all public support should focus on events which will run for a minimum of 3 years i.e.; no one off events.



- Improved listings website (as below)

### **Encourage Evening Shopping**

- CYC to consider free evening parking on a specific night (weekly) to facilitate co-ordinated, regular and marketable late opening/ evening shopping.
- CYC should only consider this concession on the basis of a commitment from sufficient retailers in advance to open on that agreed night for an agreed number of months in order to trial the initiative correctly; the Council would need to closely examine the costs involved as well as the impact on servicing the city centre

### **Improving the 5-7pm period (tumbleweed time)**

- Keep people in town by
  - a. extending pedestrianisation hours and retail opening hours,
  - b. facilitating early evening street entertainment (as above)
  - c. extended opening times of attractions
- allowing outdoor seating to facilitate the early evening café culture. CYC to consider free evening parking on a specific night (weekly) to facilitate co-ordinated, regular and marketable late opening/ evening shopping.
- CYC should only consider any review to arrangements for pedestrian hours on the basis of an commitment from sufficient retailers in advance to open on that agreed night for an agreed number of months in order to trial the initiative correctly; the Council would need to closely examine the costs involved as well as the impact on servicing the city centre, as well as be assured of improvements in the retail and visitor offer.

### **Improving the 7-9pm period**

- Attract more people into the evening economy by facilitating more events and cultural activities e.g. more music concerts etc. There is a need for more performance venues in the city centre (involve the Barbican in any future plans).
- Improve information provision about evening events and activities. (see below).

### **Improved information provision re evening entertainment**

- Central city centre events & information point (as described above)
- Having within the daytime VIC a dedicated evening desk and information point which could also function as a booking service for evening events.
- Sustained minor investment in a proper listings website (to replace [www.whatsonyork.com](http://www.whatsonyork.com)) which would be more searchable and could be used to distribute weekly e-mail bulletins to accommodation providers. It may be that this website would be operated by a private sector company with some support from the Tourism Partnership and/or CYC.

- The use of the Evening Economy Forum (proposed above) to encourage an “Evening economy ambassador” in each hotel (as in the Queens Hotel Appendix 8)

## **Policy**

- Both the City of York Council and the York Area Tourism Partnership should adopt the policy of developing and promoting a vibrant, diverse and inclusive evening economy, as described in Appendix 1, which would bring benefits both to residents and visitors.
- There is a need for consideration of the evening economy in all relevant CYC strategies and plans.
- Development and adoption, across CYC including planning, licensing and network management and the York Area Tourism Partnership, of an evening economy strategy which will outline co-ordinated actions on a number of issues including, for example, development of evening shopping, management of stag and hen parties, licensing etc

## **Corporate Priorities**

10. The research on the evening economy relates to the following objectives for the Council, the Economic Development Service Plan and the LSP Without Walls initiatives.
  - \* The “Thriving City” theme of the WOW Community Plan has the following strategic objective:

“To support the progress and success of York’s existing businesses and to encourage new enterprises in order to maintain a prosperous and flourishing economy that will sustain high employment rates.”
  - \* The Economic Development Service Plan sets identifies a number of corporate priorities:
    - DIP 5 Increase people’s skills and knowledge to improve future employment prospects.
    - DIP12 Improve the way the Council and its partners work together to deliver better services for the people who live in York.

## **Implications**

11. Financial: As this is a general report seeking views on the evening economy prior to any formal consideration of the report by the City of York Council, there are no Financial implications. Proposals set out in the vision and draft action plan proposals are presented with no firm commitment or financial support from the City of York Council.
12. In considering the draft vision and proposed action plan, Board members may wish to consider additional background information regarding previous trials to encourage the evening economy such as evening park and ride and a “free parking” evening in the run up to Christmas 2005. Both of these activities were

undertaken at a cost to the Council with little or no measurable impact on the evening economy. A note on recent car parking charges is also appended to this report for the information of Board members. A report on evening car parking charges is due to be presented to the Council's Executive within the next month. Evening parking currently generates about £250,000 per annum, with the likely cost of just removing the residential element of evening parking likely to result in a £75,000 together with additional costs in the order of £20,000 due to the need for changes to signage. Any amendment to evening car parking charges needs to bear in mind the need to compensate for these costs.

- 13. Human resources: None
- 14. Equalities: None
- 15. Legal: None
- 16. Crime and Disorder: None
- 17. Information Technology: None
- 18. Property: None

### **Risk Management**

- 19. In compliance with the council's risk management strategy. There are no risks associated with the recommendations of this report.

### **Recommendations**

- 20. That :
  - 1. The Board's input and views on the key finding of research, draft proposed vision and action plan for the evening economy in York are requested;
  - 2. The Board support in principle the development of a vibrant, diverse and inclusive evening economy in York.
  - 3. A further report is presented on a costed action plan to support the development of the evening economy in York city centre.

Reason: To help shape the effectiveness of future action.

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**Report  
Approved**



**Date** 01/06/2007

**Specialist Implications Officers:** None

**Wards Affected:**

**All**

**For further information please contact the author of the report**

**Background Papers:** None

**Annexes:**

Annex 1 - York After Dark Appendices to research and proposed action plan on the evening economy and the visitor experience of York in the evening  
Annex 2 – Car Parking Background

# York After Dark

Appendices to research and proposed action plan on  
the evening economy and the visitor experience of  
York in the evening

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## Methodology

The research methodology for this report involved a number of different stages and the consideration of a range of sources of information.

The first stage of the research reviews a number of key pieces of existing research, which includes both national and local focused work. The Civic Trust Opportunities Review Research which has been discussed, is part of a major national three year research programme and highlights possible future trends, market responses and examples of good practice. The York Archaeological Trust research considers the current market and product of York in the evening, including an audit of the evening offer, due to developments over the past few years a 2006 update of this information is outlined. Other aspects of the research included a review of other historic cities and their evening economies and research related to a number of trial evening openings of visitor attractions.

The report also includes analysis of existing primary data from the First Stop York Visitor Survey, The Economic Impact of Tourism Study and the Council's Talkabout Panel, which provided information about the current behaviour and attitudes of both visitors and residents of York in the evening.

The research outlined above is supported by a number of new research projects commissioned for this report. This included a self-completion questionnaire which attendees at the two Film Alfresco screenings, which took place in York during September 2006, were asked to complete. The questionnaire asked a number of questions specifically in reference to the cinema but also gauged attendees views on aspects of York's evening economy. To involve and record the opinion of stakeholders in the evening economy two discussion groups took place, this provided individuals from different business sectors which impact upon the evening economy to discuss the current strengths, weaknesses and possible improvements which could be made to the evening economy. The final piece of new research were focus groups which took place with both visitors and residents of York, where the attitudes towards York as an evening destination were investigated and new product development ideas for York's evening offer were tested.

This combination of research methods and qualitative and quantitative data has produced a detailed understanding of York's evening economy and as a result the information has been used to highlight a number of key findings which in turn have lead to the development of a proposed action plan in response to the current evening economy of York.

## 1 – The National Picture

**NightVision: Town Centres for All**  
**Civic Trust, January 2007**

**Year Three Evening Economy Work Programme – Opportunities Review:**  
**“Consumers and Products of Tomorrow”**

**Erskine Corporation LLP (commissioned by the Civic Trust), October 2005**

In 2003 the Civic Trust were awarded a funding grant from the Department for Communities and Local Government for a three year programme of events, research and case studies to look at good practice in managing and developing the evening and night time economy. The research involved a number of sources ranging from interviews with key stakeholders in the evening economy, local authorities, national government, developers, the drinks industry, licensees, retailers and also consumers.

The NightVision report published in January 2007 combines this wealth of research to outline a vision for better town centres at night and the practical steps that can be taken towards achieving this vision. The overall vision and aims of the report are outlined below:

*The Civic Trust has a very clear vision for what town centres should be at night, in short we would like to create “town centres for all” - welcoming spaces that work at night for everyone: families, residents, businesses, older people, teenagers etc.*

*The Civic Trust want to see:*

- *Shops open in the evening*
- *Venues that cater for families and older customers*
- *More special events and festivals that add life to the town centre*
- *Innovative use of public buildings in the evening*
- *An increase in non alcohol related activities at night*
- *An improvement in public spaces and lighting*
- *Better night time public transport*
- *An increase in a responsible, adult presence such as street wardens.*

The report further outlines a number of core principles and methodology which are seen as fundamental in changing town and city centres to be more inclusive and sustainable night time destinations that work for all stakeholders.

The NightVision programme also incorporated an Inclusive Town Centres Survey, the survey of local authorities highlighted that many people - particularly older people and women - can feel excluded from town centres at night, particularly at the weekend. They fear anti-social behaviour and believe that there are few activities in town centres to attract them. Whilst about 45% of 16-34 year olds go out on the town one evening a week, only 15% of over 55s do and 71% of over 55s would not go to a town centre in the evening.



A further aspect of the NightVision programme is the Opportunities Review: “Consumers and Products of Tomorrow” report which focuses on future evening consumer trends, market responses and the potential for more inclusive town centres.

Evidence suggests that a lack of diversity in the evening offer is a bad thing and there is also a limited argument that a more diverse town centre is likely to be of benefit to wider society. Specific research related to creative classes<sup>1</sup> suggests that nightlife is a key component to a city’s appeal for this particular group of individuals, however this does not reflect the opinions of society as a whole, further work is required to gauge general opinion.

Furthermore an emerging problem appears to be who owns the evening economy, in most towns this is a difficult question. However it is clear that the government wants local authorities to be responsible for the direction and development of the evening economy, with ownership sitting with the LSP. There is a range of legislation and policies which impact upon and shape the evening economy such as BIDs (business improvement districts), the Licensing Act 2003 and the How to... Manage Town Centre guides.

The report suggests that in terms of licensed premises, which have dominated the evening economy in recent years, market forces have not encouraged diversity but instead created a uniformity of provision. However population trends which will lead to an older age profile with high disposable income may force a change in the available evening leisure activities and licensed premises. Furthermore it is highlighted that teenagers are not provided for in the current evening experience, entertainment is focused upon the cinema and under-age nightclubs, which reinforce existing attitudes and behaviour in the town centres in the evening. Although pubs, bars and clubs will remain central to the evening economy, future changes include the growth of eating out, increasing importance of live entertainment and city centre cinemas which lead to the provision of an experience rather than just an event.

A range of interventions are highlighted which are seen as expanding the current evening economy offer. It is recognised that although evening shopping does well in certain locations, in a number of major centres there is a lack of integration between later opening hours, marketing campaigns, entertainment and other events to keep people in the centre in the evening. Museums and galleries are also developing as evening entertainment as an attempt to increase participation and extend opening hours.

The report also looks at a number of case studies including York, which they highlight as interesting town centre formats. The Idea Stores in Tower Hamlets, London is a new method of combining libraries and adult education centres providing focal centre points in both the day and evening for the local community. The Stores appeal to a wide variety of age groups and provide the spaces for a range of activities even spaces for doing nothing. A further case study is Komedia which has venues in Brighton and Edinburgh, they provide a range of entertainment in a café culture style, providing an informal space for a meal or drinks with entertainment as well. The focus on York outlines the Renaissance: Illuminating York project using various methods all involving light to improve the evening experience.

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Florida’s description of the “creative classes” is similar to the “Cosmopolitan” lifestyle types identified as 1 of 2 key market segments for York Tourism. According to the Arkenford lifestyle market segmentation “Cosmopolitans view themselves as stylish, but individuality rather than fashion is most important.... They are risk takers; this is reflected in their purchases, but also in their desire for things that are new and different and provide them with new challenges, both physical and intellectual. This includes an appreciation of art and culture”.

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In conclusion the report focuses on two recommendations,

- a joined up approach by government departments to deliver a programme of training, best practice and action planning which would support the development of safe and successful evening economies.
- a long term vision for the evening economy in towns and cities which would be used to develop an evening economy strategy. There is a further need for all strategies which impact on the evening economy to be evening economy proofed.

The information from the NightVision report which encumbuses the Opportunities Review will be used by the Civic Trust year together with consultants Erskine, to produce four pilot projects with local partners to put the key principles into action through innovative projects that will lead to real local improvements, the development of good practice and policy formulation. The pilot projects will be then used to develop a 'core agenda of techniques and standards to be disseminated to practitioners and policymakers.

## 2 - Audit of Current Evening Economy Provision in York

### York Archaeological Trust

#### 'Unlocking our Heritage – The Market and Product' 2004

#### updated by Economic Development Unit, City of York Council November 2006

The following section provides an update of information which was outlined in the 2004 York Archaeological Trust 'Unlocking our Heritage – The Market and Product' report, which is discussed in a further section of this report. The report provides an outline of important aspects of the evening economy, such as transport, retail and entertainment: these aspects have been updated below, with particular emphasis upon any significant changes that have taken place since the report was published. A number of other factors which have further been recognised as important to the evening economy are also outlined in this section.

### Transport

The transport infrastructure of York is an important contributing factor towards the evening economy as without adequate transport links both residents and visitors will be unable to access the current evening offer.

#### Park and Ride

- There are now five Park and Ride sites which operate in York, the system works by allowing users to park in secure car parks located on the edge of York and travel into the centre of the city by bus.
- The Rawcliffe Bar, Designer Outlet, Grimston Bar and Monks Cross services operate until around 8.00pm on an evening. This may limit the length of stay of users of the city centre on an evening, whereas the Askham Bar service which runs until 12.00pm provides a more flexible transport option and may encourage users to stay in the city centre for longer periods of time.

#### Bus Services

- The Local Transport Plan 2006-11 highlights that bus patronage in York has increased by 49% since the start of the 2001/02 plan, this is whilst other traffic levels have dropped. Bus usage is a key aspect of the plan and a priority of the City of York Council.
- There are a number of bus operators across York, however the First Group provides the core services across the city to the main settlements around the perimeter of York, the last services to and from York tend to leave at around 11, however the frequency of service does decrease in the evening.

#### Car Parks

- All council owned surface car parks remain open throughout the night, underground car parks such as Piccadilly and the Shambles are open until 6.30pm.
- Coach parking tends to be located at Council run car parks and overnight facilities are available, with related charges.
- At the time that the YAT report was produced (in 2002) there were no evening parking charges however since then charges have been introduced. There is a flat rate of £2.00 to park from 6.00pm to 8.00am (or £1.00 for those with a resident parking discount badge) The introduction of such charges, which were controversial when first launched, may be a deterrent to potential visitors and users of York in the evening.

## Rail

- There are a number of train services to nearby towns and settlements such as Leeds, Harrogate, Selby and Scarborough. The last trains of the various services run until 10.00pm – 2.00am.

## Retail

- Although only 7% of visitors to York, stated that shopping was their main reason for visiting, 50% of visitors do go shopping whilst in York, furthermore it is an alternative leisure activity which could be used to lengthen the stay of users of the city centre.
- The main closing time period for retail is between 17.30-18.00, however there are isolated stores in the city centre which operate later opening hours such as Borders.
- A current initiative by retailers in the city is the Petergate Party Nights, this involves a particular area of the city opening until 8pm on the last Thursday of every month.
- The out-of-town shopping centres tend to have regular later opening hours, Monks Cross is open until 8.00pm every week night, the Designer Outlet is open until 8pm every Thursday and stores at Clifton Moor also operate similar opening times.

## Entertainment

### Food and Drink

- There are around 200 cafes and restaurants and 200 pubs and bars in York, recent changes to licensing restrictions have extended opening hours with some premises now opening until 2am.
- There are 3 city centre night clubs, which close at around 3-4am.

### Visitor Attractions

- Since the YAT report was published in 2004 there has been little change in the opening hours of historic attractions across York, with most attractions closing between 5.00pm – 6.00pm, at some venues e.g. York Dungeon and Clifford's Tower this does vary according to the season.
- YorkBoat operates a series of evening cruises from April to October, which depart at different times across the evening.
- The opening hours of the City Walls is until dusk, this can be until 8.00pm in May and August and as late as 9pm in July however in the winter the walls close as early as 3.30pm.
- The Yorkshire Wheel was opening until 9.00pm over the summer months, however this stopped at the end of September. There may be plans for similar opening hours in 2007.
- The wide range of festivals which take place in York, involve evening events and activities such as Wine Tasting which is part of the Food and Drink Festival and musical performances which are part of the Early Music Festival. These activities provide interesting additions to the evening offer however the events tend to take place annually.
- Most venues offer some form of hospitality and corporate entertainment in the evenings on a private hire basis.

### Cinema and Arts Venues

- Since the recent closure of the Odeon cinema in the city, there is now only the City Screen which is based in town, located out of town is the Vue Cinema at Clifton Moor.
- The theatres and arts venues in the city include the Grand Opera House, York Theatre Royal, Joseph Rowntree Theatre, National Centre for Early Music and the Friargate Theatre.

DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION: York after dark:

Research into the evening economy and the visitor experience of York in the evening

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- The art galleries in the city include the York Art Gallery, Adze Gallery, Coppergate Gallery, Blake Gallery and Minster Fine Art, however they are not open in the evening.

#### Other Evening Venues and Activities

- Fibbers Live Music.
- A range of ghost walks.
- York Brewery Tours, arranged by appointment.

#### Changes from 2004 to 2006

- Closure of the Odeon cinema in the city centre, there is now only the City Screen which is based in town, located out of town is the Vue Cinema at Clifton Moor.
- Closure of Barbican centre.
- Decline in evening shopping, there is no longer a dedicated website and marketing campaign.
- Introduction of evening parking charges, a flat rate of £2.00 to park from 6.00pm to 8.00am.
- Improved lighting across the city, in exhibition square and along the waters edge at The Guildhall and Lendal Bridge.
- There are a number of new bars and restaurants such as The Living Room and The Biltmore.

### **3 - York's Historic Attractions and the Evening Economy**

#### **York Archaeological Trust**

#### **“Unlocking our Heritage”**

#### **Prepared by the Partners Group and David Leon Consulting 2003 and 2004**

The York Archaeological Trust was commissioned by the City of York Council in 2003 to look at the current evening offer in York and to test the feasibility of the evening opening of attractions.

The first aspect of this project looked at York's current evening offer, concluding that it is mainly focused around eating and drinking establishments, the two theatres and cinemas in the city centre. Whilst these main conclusions have not changed significantly, since the report was published, the evening offer has changed slightly with a number of establishments closing. An update of the current evening offer and analysis from the annual visitor survey is outlined in the previous section entitled The Current Evening Economy Provision in York.

#### Historic Cities and the Evening Economy

The second aspect of the project involved a review of other historic cities work involving interpretation of their historical heritage and their contribution to the evening economy. This involved a review of existing literature, contact with TICs and conversations with museum staff and tourism professionals across a number of key historic towns.

The project specifically focuses upon Chester as a case study and highlights the similarities between York and Chester in terms of the limited evening offer and the current prominence of drinking as an evening activity.

Chester's tourism strategy outlines the need to improve interpretation across the city and also emphasises the role of attractions as part of the evening offer, which in turn can improve the safety and desirability of Chester at night. Chester's vision for its night time experience is further outlined in the 'Towards a Chester at Night Strategy' (Draft 2004), an integrated approach to manage and promote the evening economy. The use of zoning within the city is key to this strategy, establishing a number of alternative areas which will inform planning, licensing and even the provision of facilities such as public toilets, evening buses and taxi ranks. It allows the drinking culture to continue but also make the city centre available to other users in the evening and extends the scope of cultural venues in the evening.

Due to the timescale of the YAT project there is little evaluation of the Chester at Night Strategy, and since the report was released a final Chester at Night Strategy has been produced. However the multi-agency approach and wide ranging consultation involved with producing the strategy does suggest there is a much wider and joined up backing to this vision.

#### York's Historic Attractions Trial Evenings

The final aspect of the project focused on York's historic attractions and their role in the evening economy, this was trialled through three late night openings of Jorvik and Arc and three food and entertainment events, each were linked to the Jorvik Viking Festival. To explore the reaction of both residents and visitors to such events both face-to-face surveys and self-completion questionnaires were carried out.

---

York Tourism Partnership, April 2007

To comment please contact: Sophie Packman, [sophie.packman@york.gov.uk](mailto:sophie.packman@york.gov.uk) or Rory McCarthy [rory.mccarthy@york.gov.uk](mailto:rory.mccarthy@york.gov.uk)

The face-to-face surveys targeted a broad range of people in the city centre, including residents, day visitors and tourists. The results outlined that 56% of respondents were interested in visiting museums and attractions in the evening, overnight visitors were most likely to be interested. In terms of the activities which would influence people to visit a historic attraction in the evening, a concert or musical performance, an event involving food and drink and a play were highlighted as being most attractive to visitors. The research specifically focused on walking tours as an evening activity and highlighted that the most popular form of tour was with a guide as a part of a group. Opinion around the attendance of children at evening events was divided with 36% of respondents stating they would be more likely to attend, 35% stating it would have no influence and 27% stating it would make them less likely to attend.

A total of 190 people took part in the trial evenings, the most popular events appeared to be the late night opening of Jorvik with 134 people in total attending. A self-completion questionnaire was used to gather feedback from the trial events. The research outlined that the late night openings of Arc and Jorvik were most likely to be attended by overnight visitors, whereas the food and drink related events were more likely to be attended by residents. There were high levels of enjoyment across all the events with respondents rating their enjoyment as either excellent or good.

The research concludes that there is a market for evening events in York, and proposes that the core target market is the overnight visitor. This is due to the low take up of residents at some of the events, despite claiming to be interested in such activities. However it may be the case that as a resident the late night opening of attractions, which they may have visited before may not be appealing as a more unique activity or event. The research further indicates that the most popular format of event involved food and drink or a concert or play.

Proposed actions included working with hoteliers to target the overnight visitor, operating a further series of trial events during the high season to develop the product and organising such events on a regular evening over an agreed period of time to increase awareness and to make promotion more easier. The overall aim is to develop products which will become integrated into the possible options which the public will consider when looking for evening entertainment.

## 4 – Visitors and the Evening Economy

### First Stop York Visitor Survey – 1996 – 2006 and The Economic Impact of Tourism in York: Estimates for 2005

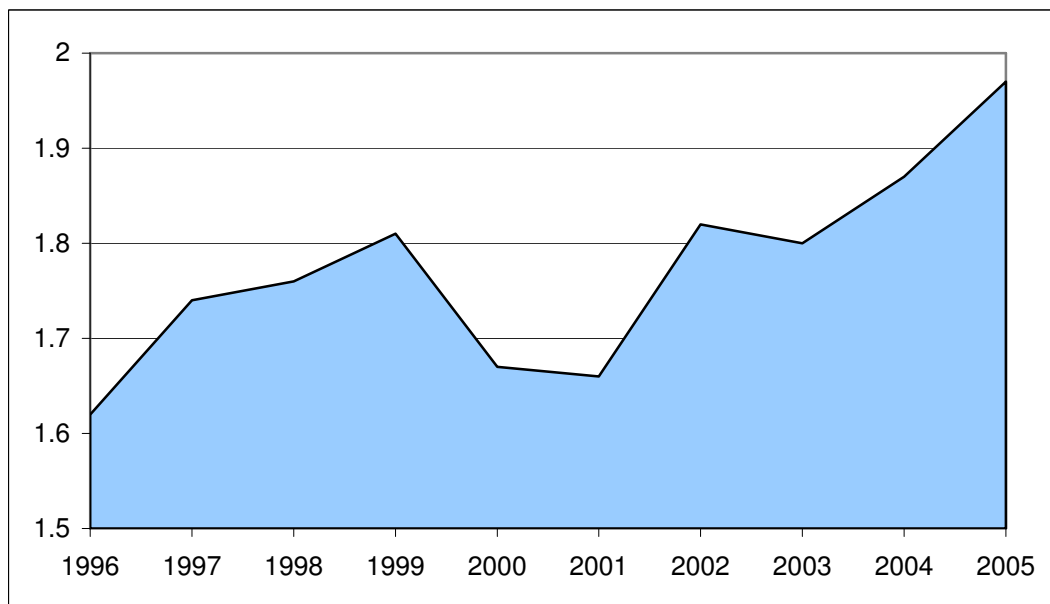
**Bernard Stafford and Stephen Martin**

The First Stop York Visitor Survey takes place every year and looks at the characteristics, attitudes and spending patterns of visitors to the city, it includes a number of questions which are relevant to the evening experience and economy in York and provides useful information about visitor behaviour. Further information from the Visitor Survey is combined with data from the Yorkshire Tourist Board and a number of other sources to calculate the Economic Impact of Tourism in York in terms of estimations of visitors and their spend, information from both sources is outlined in the following section.

#### Number of nights spent in York

The Economic Impact of Tourism study calculates that there are nearly 4 million visitors to York a year, 16% of whom stayed overnight in 2005/06 which is a large number of potential users of York in the evening. The graph below outlines the total number of visitor nights, spent in York from the period 1996 – 2005, showing a significant increase in the number of nights since 2001.

**Total Visitor Nights (mn)**



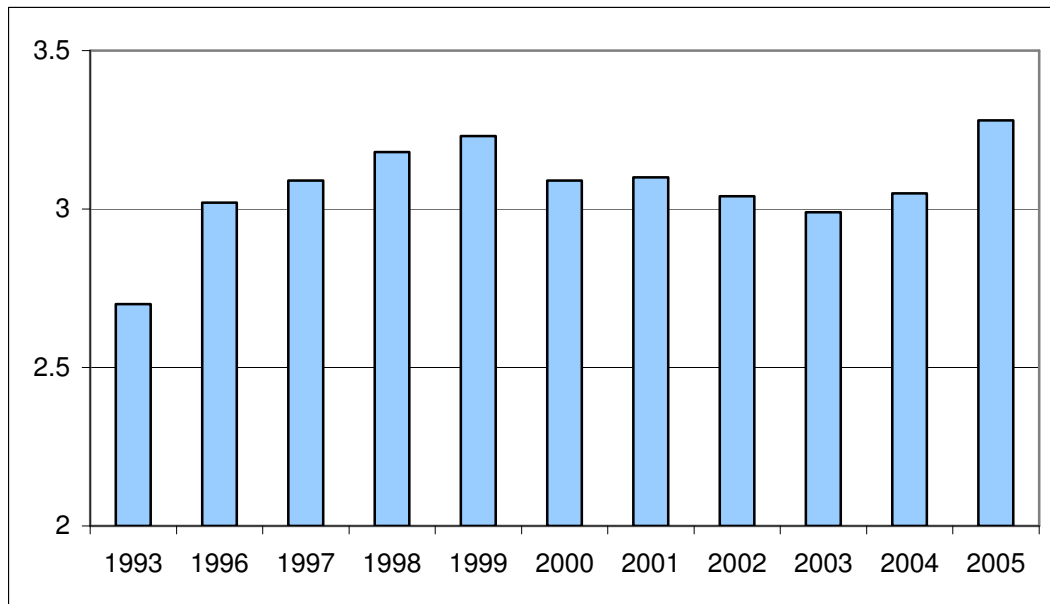
Source: The Economic Impact of Tourism in York: Estimates for 2005, Bernard Stafford and Stephen Martin

Information from the Visitor Survey shows that overseas visitors, perhaps not surprisingly, are more likely to be staying overnight in York and that those respondents aged between 16-24, 25-34 and 45-54 were more likely than other age groups to be staying in York for 2 nights, this may suggest that these age groups are most likely to come to York for a weekend break and would be therefore looking for evening activities and entertainment.



The graph below outlines the average length of stay in nights over the period 1995 – 2005, this has increased from 2.7 days to 3.28 days in 2005. This again reflects the increasing number of visitor nights spent in York and the growing numbers of potential users of the York evening economy.

**Average Length of Stay (Nights)**



Source: The Economic Impact of Tourism in York: Estimates for 2005, Bernard Stafford and Stephen Martin

### **Importance of evening activities and events**

The survey asks visitors to York to rate a list of factors which are important when thinking about places to visit, In particular relevance to the evening economy, a new factor was added to the 2005/06 questionnaire which asked whether a range of things to do in the evening was important, this question is about any destination and is not just specific to York.

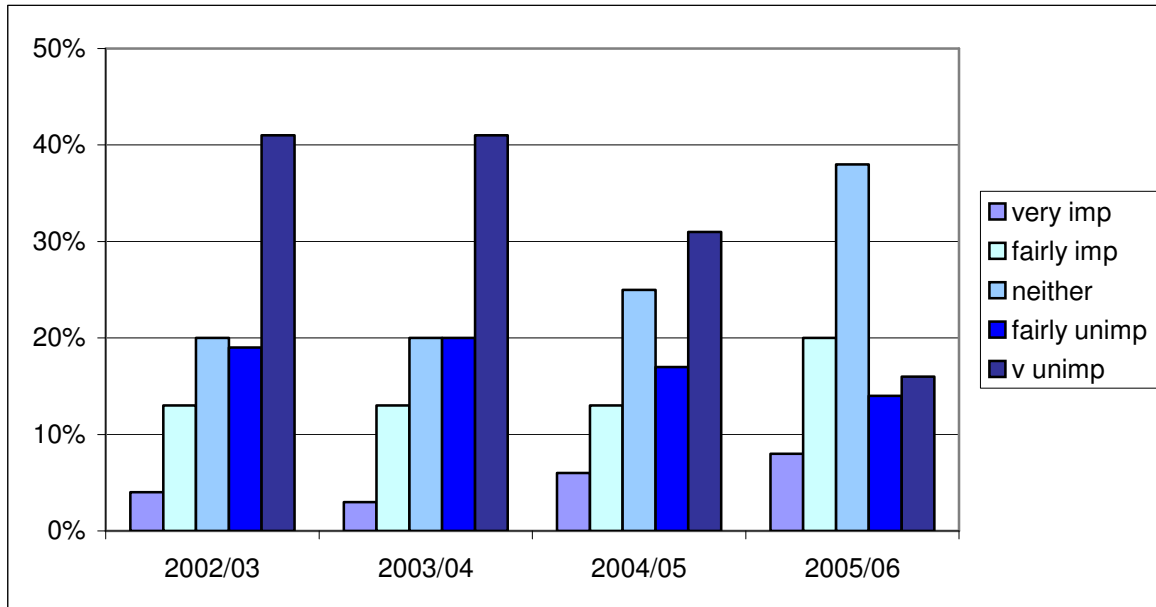
52% of respondents stated that a range of things to do in the evening was either very important or fairly important, 30% stated that it was neither important nor unimportant and 14% stated that it was either fairly unimportant or very unimportant. Closer analysis highlights a relationship with age as respondents within the younger age groups of 16-24 and 25-34 were much more likely to state that a range of things to do in the evening was important, in comparison to the older age groups. Although based on a small sample size the results do suggest that those respondents who stated that they enjoyed York less than other destinations were more likely to state that a range of evening activities was very important.

Interestingly when the same question was asked but in specific reference to York, only 28% of respondents stated that a range of things to do in the evening was either very important or fairly important, this is a much lower percentage than compared to the overall importance of things to do in an evening outlined in the previous question. This may suggest that

visitors do not currently feel that the evening experience in York is particularly important in comparison to other destinations.

The following graph outlines the importance of evening entertainment as a factor influencing visitors to York. Over the period 2002/03 to 2005/06, there has been a shift in the perceived importance of evening entertainment as in 2002/03 16.6% of respondents stated that evening entertainment was either very or fairly important whereas in 2005/06 this had increased to 28%.

### Importance of a good range of evening entertainment as a factor in influencing visitors to come to York



Source: CYC Visitor Survey

### York is a dull place in an evening

A further question in the visitor survey asks respondents to state whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement that York is a dull place in an evening. In 2005/06 2% of visitors stated that they agreed with this statement, 41% disagreed and 57% stated 'don't know'. Although there is a low percentage of respondents stating that they agree that York is a dull place in the evening, the high percentage of don't knows may suggest that these people have yet to experience York on an evening, or may reflect the day visitors. This may also be reflected through the fact that those respondents who had stayed more than one night in York were more likely to state that they disagreed with the statement rather than stated don't know. Since 2002/03 there has been a slight decrease in the percentage of respondents agreeing with the statement that York is a dull place in the evening. It should be noted that these percentages are small.

### Evening Economy Questions

In 2005/06 a number of new questions were added to the visitor survey, these questions specifically focused on evening activities and opinions towards the new lighting schemes in the city centre. However as this is the first year the questions have been asked it is not possible to look at any historical trends but this information will prove particularly useful to gauge opinion of future improvements to the York evening products.

The research outlines that in 2005/06, 50% of visitors indicated that they had spent time in York in the evening, 44% stated that they had not spent any time in York in the evening. Closer analysis of age highlighted that the younger age groups were much more likely to state that they had spent time in York on an evening with 60% of the 16-24 age groups doing so.

In terms of the activities which respondents took part in during the evening, the majority of people (50%) spent their evening dining out, but the second largest visitor activity in the evening is the ghost walks at 17%. Other popular activities included going to a pub or bar (16%) and walking (13%). Again there was a significant relationship between the type of activity which took place and the age of the respondent, individuals aged 16-24 were more likely to go to a pub or bar or visit a night club, whereas those aged 25-34, 35-44 were more likely to go out for a meal, finally those aged 65+ were more likely to go walking. Furthermore in terms of social class, those in class AB were more likely to go for a meal whereas those respondents in social class DE were less likely to go for a meal and more likely to go to a pub or bar.

Respondents were asked whether they were aware that York had recently invested in new lighting across the city. 14% of respondents stated that they were aware of the lighting, 71% stated that they were unaware and 15% stated don't know. Of those respondents who were staying 1+ nights and those who had already stayed a night were more likely to state that they were aware of the lighting. Furthermore those respondents aged 25-34 and 35-44 were more likely to be aware of the lighting.

There was a positive reaction to the question gauging opinion of what respondents thought about the lighting with 82% of people who'd seen the lighting stating that they thought it was attractive/beautiful, or that it added to the city's atmosphere. Respondents from overseas were more likely to state that the lighting was good, as were respondents aged 16-24 and those from social class C1.

## Visitor Spend

### Visitor Spend Breakdown

The Economic Impact study shows that there was £265 million of direct revenue from tourism in 2005. The following table illustrates how this revenue is broken down across the various aspects of the visitor experience, it shows that the main percentage of revenue is spent through retail, however hotel accommodation also makes up a significant percentage. The retail figure is particularly interesting as only 7% of visitors to York, stated that shopping was their main reason for visiting, however it appears that once in the city the majority of the visitor spend takes place in shops.

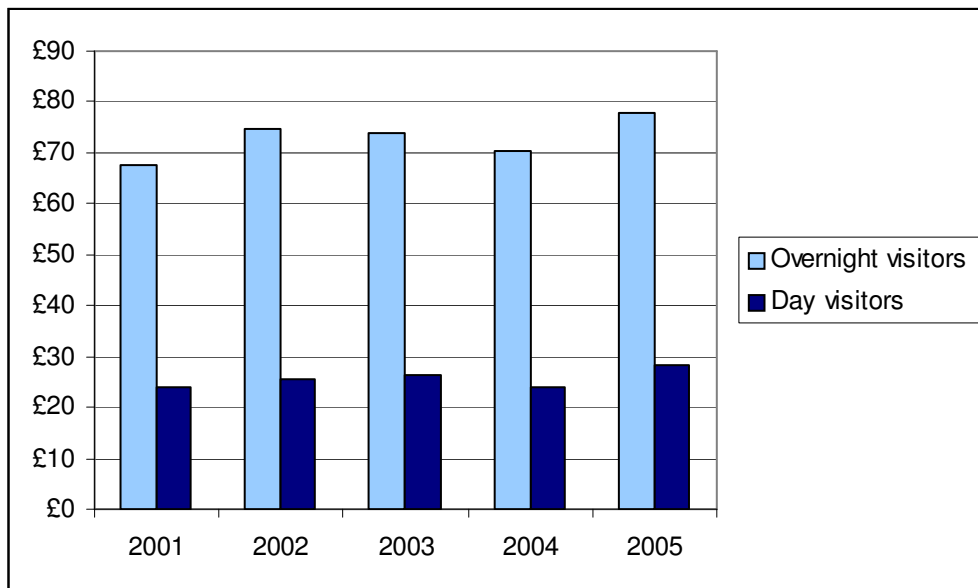
Aspect of stay	Percentage of revenue
Shops	35%
Hotels	32%
Food and Drink	17%
Attractions	11%
Evening Entertainment	3%
Local Transport	2%

Source: The Economic Impact of Tourism in York: Estimates for 2005, Bernard Stafford and Stephen Martin

### Overnight and Day Visitor Spend

The following graph outlines the average daily spend per person for both overnight and day visitors to York. There is a significant difference between the amount spent by the two types of visitor, with the overnight visitor spending more, the majority of this difference is likely to be due to the cost of accommodation.

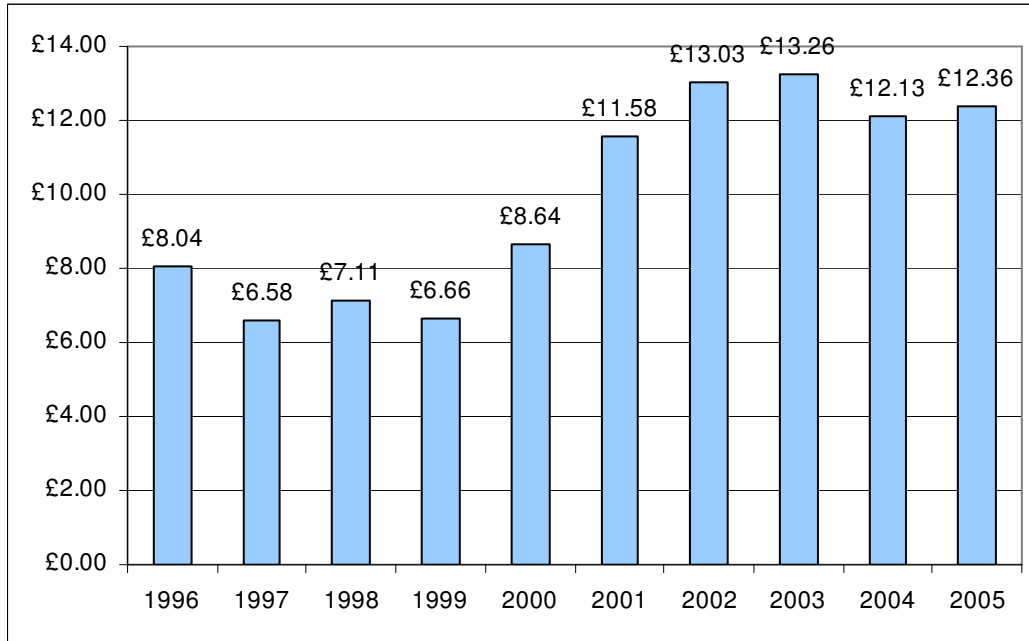
**Average Daily Spend by Overnight and Day Visitors**



Source: The Economic Impact of Tourism in York: Estimates for 2005, Bernard Stafford and Stephen Martin

### Visitor Spend on Food and Drink

The report calculates the average daily spend per person across a number of categories of expenditure. The graph below outlines the average spend on food and drink per visitor per night from 1996 to 2005. This highlights that between 1997 and 2001 there was a continuous increase in the average spend on food and drink, totalling around £5.00 however since 2001 there has been some fluctuation of the average spend amount but tends to be around £12-13.

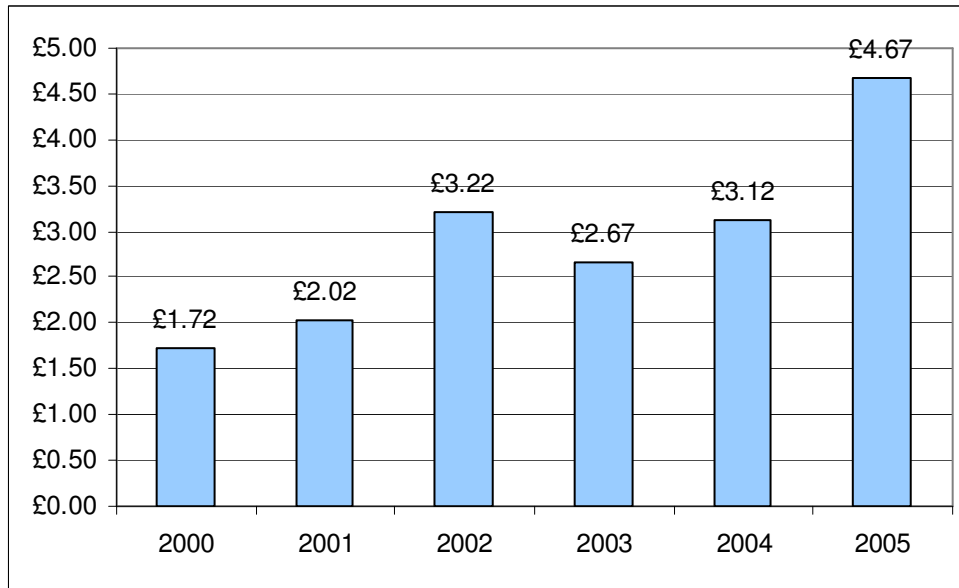
**Average spend on food and drink per visitor per night**

Source: The Economic Impact of Tourism in York: Estimates for 2005, Bernard Stafford and Stephen Martin

#### Visitor Spend on Evening Entertainment

A further aspect of spend which is calculated is the average amount spent on evening entertainment per visitor per night. The graph below outlines the amount spent over the period 2000 to 2005. There has been a significant increase in this amount from £1.72 in 2000 to £4.67 in 2005 again suggesting an expanding market for evening events and activities.

**Average spend on evening entertainment per visitor per night**



Source: The Economic Impact of Tourism in York: Estimates for 2005, Bernard Stafford and Stephen Martin

## 5 – Residents and the Evening Economy

### City of York Council’s Talk About Panel 2000 – 2006

Talk About – City of York Council’s Residents Panel – is one of the ways that the council consults with and involves local people in the governance of York. It is a statistically balanced panel of 2,000 local people, which is broadly representative of York in terms of age, gender and area and includes residents from different geographic, social, economic and cultural groups. The panel receives postal questionnaires at regular intervals throughout the year that ask for their views on a variety of local issues facing the council and York as a whole. Due to its wide ranging remit, over recent years the panel has answered a range of questions which are of relevance to the evening economy and provide useful research into the opinions and attitudes of residents.

### Importance of Evening Leisure Activities to Residents

Panel members were asked how important they felt a range of leisure and recreational activities were during their free time. Although not the most important activity, 67% of respondents stated that going to pubs, night clubs, restaurants and cafes was either very important or fairly important to them, performances at the theatre and going to the cinema also had high levels of importance.

#### The importance of different leisure and recreational activities and facilities in respondents’ free time

	Very imp	Fairly imp	Neither / nor	Fairly unimp	Very unimp	Net imp
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Going to pubs, night clubs, restaurants and cafes	30	37	16	10	6	+51
Attending performances at the theatre (plays, musicals, pantomimes, opera, ballet, dance)	19	45	22	10	4	+50
Going to the cinema	23	38	23	11	6	+44
Attending live music performances (concerts, live local bands, festivals)	15	32	31	15	6	+26

Source: TalkAbout Panel, September 2000

Further research into the importance of the theatre in particular shows that 66% of panellists state that the theatre is important to them and members of their family, only 11% of respondents state that the theatre is unimportant. An even greater proportion of panellists think that the theatre is important to the evening economy of the city, with 83% of respondents stating that they think it is important. Only 5% of panellists think that the theatre is unimportant to the city’s evening economy.

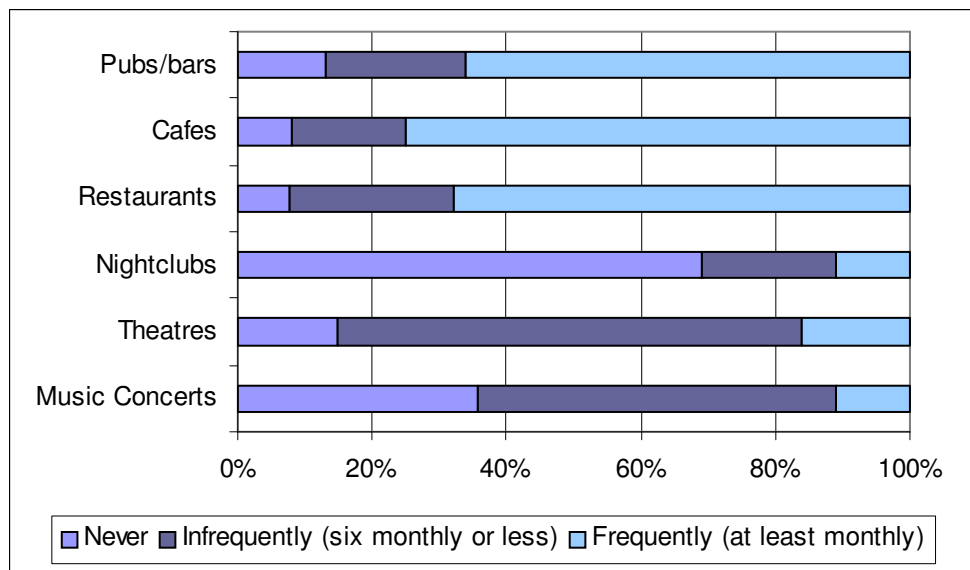
### Resident Usage of Evening Establishments and Entertainment

Due to proposed changes in licensing regulations, the panel were asked a number of questions about licensed premises which are of relevance to the evening economy. Analysis shows that there are high levels of frequent usage of cafes, pubs, bars and restaurants by residents, with panel members stating that they visit cafes (75%), pubs and bars (66%), and restaurants (61%) on a frequent (at least monthly) basis.

Of those respondents who stated that they visit bar and pubs, not surprisingly the most popular times to visit them were weekday evenings (50%) and weekend evenings (59%). However, there was a significant minority visit who visit such establishments late into the night. One in eight do so during the week (12%) and slightly more (16%) at the weekend.

Similarly, restaurants are also most likely to be visited on weekday evenings (50%) and weekend evenings (64%). However, and perhaps not surprisingly, very few people visit them late into the night (3-4%). Cafes, in contrast, are most often visited on weekday afternoons (60%) and weekend afternoons (42%).

#### How often residents visit different establishments



Source: TalkAbout Panel, August 2002

Research which took place in May 2006 updates regular analysis of participation in cultural activities, although the questions and the activities did not specifically indicate that they take place in the evening, they are particularly relevant to the evening economy.

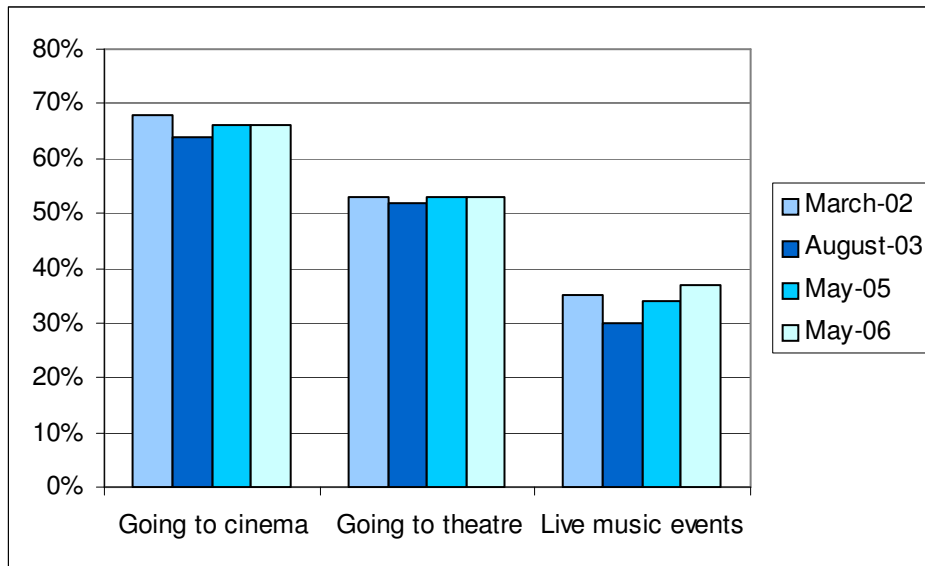
The most popular cultural activity overall was going to the cinema with 66% of respondents (in May 2006) stating that they had participated in this activity in the last 12 months, levels of participation have remained stable over recent years. In terms of other activities 53% of panellists stated that they had been to the theatre in the past 12 months and 37% of panellists stated that they had been to a live music event, since 2003 there has been a slight increase in participation across the activities in recent years.



In terms of future participation and those respondents who were interested in taking part in cultural activities over the next 12 months, cinema, theatre and live music events remained popular. There was an equal proportion of panellists who have visited and are interested in going to the cinema. Comparatively there was a slightly higher percentage of respondents

who stated that they were interested in going to the theatre or to live music events in the next 12 months in comparison to existing participation.

**Participation in cultural activities relevant to the evening economy**

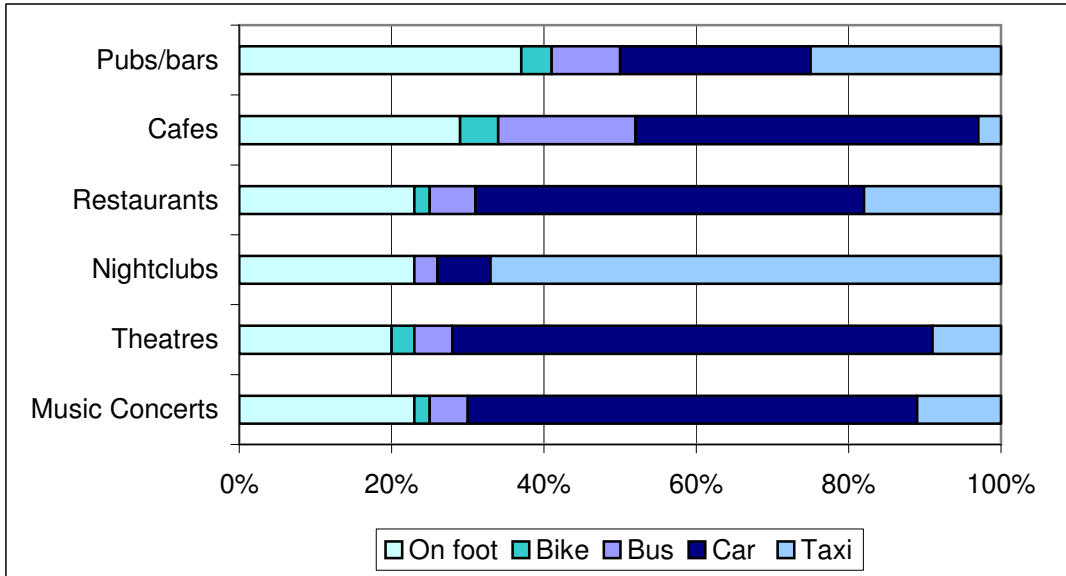


Source: TalkAbout Panel, May 2006

**Transport**

Transport is key area which impacts upon the evening economy. The graph below shows the different methods of transport people use to travel home from different establishments. It appears that those activities most associated with late night drinking, namely pubs and bars and nightclubs, are linked with either walking or the use of taxis. However it is important to note that this survey took place before the evening parking charges were introduced and this may have affected methods of transport.

**Method of travelling home from different establishments**



Source: TalkAbout Panel, August 2002

Further questions involving participation in city centre events shows that 60% of respondents had visited Illumination and light shows, which are particularly relevant to the evening experience of York, 50% of those who had attended rated the shows as either good or very good. Furthermore 44% of respondents stated that they would like to see more illumination and light shows, this was the third most popular events especially with respondents aged 17-34.

## 6 - Film Alfresco Questionnaire

### Economic Development Unit, City of York Council September 2006

On the 7<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> of September, two Open Air Cinema screenings of the films Singin' in the Rain and Chocolat took place at St Williams College Green, approximately 800 people attended the events and on both evenings questionnaires were circulated to gather opinions about Open Air Cinemas and the evening economy in general, around 300 questionnaires were returned.

The results from the questionnaire show that there is strong support for an Open Air Cinema, with respondents indicating that they would attend regularly. The most popular form of seating at such an event would be picnic style, with the opportunity for attendees to bring their own seats or blankets. The expected price for a ticket was between £2-4 and the most popular types of films to be shown would be comedies, musicals and classics. The attendance of children would be unlikely to affect attendance.

In terms of the evening economy in general the majority of respondents stated that there is not enough to do in York in the evening, however the most popular activities to encourage people into the city centre in the evening were Concerts or Musical Performances and to a lesser extent Evening Shopping. Respondents were looking for this activity to take place between 7-9pm.

#### How often would you attend an Open Air Cinema in York?

Code	Response	Number	Percent
1	Weekly	27	9.0%
2	Twice a month	74	24.7%
3	Monthly	145	48.3%
4	Twice a year	54	18.0%
5	Never	0	0.0%
	Total	300	

There is strong support for an Open Air Cinema with nearly half of respondents stating that they would attend monthly and a further 25% stating that they would attend twice a month.

#### Would you prefer an Open Air Cinema to have:

Code	Response	Number	Percent
1	Seating provided	109	36.8%
2	Picnic style	164	55.4%
	Both	23	7.8%
	Total	296	

Over half of respondents stated that they would prefer picnic style seating at an Open Air Cinema, with attendees providing their own seats and blankets, 36.8% stated that they would prefer seating to be provided and nearly 8% would like a choice of both.

**How much would you expect to pay for an Open Air Cinema?**

Code	Response	Number	Percent
1	£2.00 - £4.00	173	57.9%
2	£4.01 - £6.00	119	39.8%
3	£6.01 - £8.00	6	2.0%
4	£8.01+	1	0.3%
	Total	299	

In terms of the cost of attending an Open Air Cinema, the majority of respondents would expect to pay between £2-4, however a further 40% would also expect to pay between £4-6.

**What kind of films would you interested in watching?**

	Comedy		Action		Horror		Musical		Sci-Fi		Classics	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	219	72.3	92	30.5	64	21.1	219	72.3	73	24.1	250	82.5
No	84	27.7	210	69.5	239	78.9	84	27.7	230	75.9	53	17.5
Total	303		302		303		303		303		303	

The most popular kinds of films were Comedy, Musical and Classics, with more than 70% of respondents indicating they would be interested in watching these types of films. Horror and Sci-Fi were the least popular types of films with around 20% of respondents stating that they would be interested in watching them.

**Would the attendance of children at an Open Air Cinema make you:**

Code	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	Less likely to attend	100	33.4%
2	More likely to attend	31	10.4%
3	Neither	168	56.2%
	Total	299	

Over half of respondents stated that the attendance of children would not effect whether or not they would attend an Open Air Cinema, a third of respondents stated that it would make them less likely to attend.

**Do you think there is enough to do in York on an evening?**

Code	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	Yes	117	40.2%
2	No	174	59.8%
	Total	291	

Nearly 60% of respondents stated that there is not enough to do in York on an evening, the remaining 40% stated that there is enough to do.

This is further supported by research carried out by Norwich Union, as part of their employee survey which looked at the successes and possible improvements and changes which could take place in York, in relation to the evening economy the need for more evening events, particularly cultural events and a music venue with greater advertisement of events was highlighted.

#### What types of evening events and activities would bring you into the city centre?

	Concert or Music		Children Activities		Better Lighting		Evening Shopping		Other	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	259	87.2	27	9.1	30	10.1	118	39.7	71	23.9
No	38	12.8	270	90.9	266	89.9	179	60.3	226	76.1
Total	297		297		296		297		297	

The most popular types of events and activities to encourage people into the city centre on an evening were Concerts or Music, with nearly 90% of respondents supporting such activities a further 40% of respondents stated that Evening Shopping would also bring them into the city centre.

When asked to suggest any other evening events and activities which would bring respondents into the city centre, the most popular suggestions were Theatre (particularly outdoor) and other outdoor activities.

#### At what time of the evening would you prefer this activity or event to take place?

	5.00-7.00pm		7.01-9.00pm		9.01-11.00pm		11.01+pm	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	26	8.6	270	89.1	74	24.4	14	4.6
No	277	91.4	33	10.9	229	75.6	289	95.4
Total	303		303		303		303	

90% of respondents stated that they would prefer for an evening activity or event to take place from 7-9pm, a further 25% would be looking for the activity to take place at 25%.

## 7 - Focus Groups with Visitors and Residents of York

### Yorkshire Tourist Board, September 2006

The Yorkshire Tourist Board was commissioned to conduct a series of focus groups with both visitors and residents of York to explore the current perceptions and attitudes toward York as an evening destination, to gauge people's experiences of York and to test a number of possible evening scenarios.

The visitor focus groups took place in Nottingham, as the city contains a high concentration of people who match the visitor profile of York and obviously York was location for the resident groups.

Although the discussions within each focus group did differ, particularly between residents and visitors, there were a number of similar themes which emerged, a summary of the discussions from the groups is outlined below. A copy of the full report, including the full transcription of the groups is available.

#### Current Perceptions of York in the Evening

- Can be difficult to find way around.
- Plenty of interesting pubs and restaurants.
- Friendly, relaxed, with a feeling of safety.
- Some really good attractions including; museums, galleries and historical buildings
- Through the day there is plenty on offer, but has a severe lull in the early evening.
- 5 – 7 pm period a problem, city shuts at 5.30pm.
- Parking is a deterrent to using the city centre in the evening.
- Need for café culture and shops opening later.
- It lacks in things for young children to do on an evening.
- Pubs and bars only source of evening entertainment.
- Good theatres and city screen, has the right type of atmosphere.
- Need to utilise open spaces, public seating.
- Hen and Stags parties – threatening environment not for families.
- Problem with hotels not accepting one night bookings.

#### Popular Evening Activities in Other Locations

- Going out for something to eat and drink is a popular activity, particularly local, original restaurants.
- Going for a walk around the place and along the waterfront
- Continental style eating and drinking popular, alfresco dining with family on an evening.
- Looking for some type of entertainment, such as music.
- Many enjoyed the animated city squares, with street entertainers as found in continental cities and Edinburgh
- Outdoor seating.
- Evening markets.

#### York's Current Evening Product

- The majority of respondents feel that York is pleasant and relaxing place.

- They feel there is plenty in the way of pubs and restaurants, but other than that not a great deal to do in the evening.
- City closes at 6.30pm, when the shops shut it feels like the city is shutting down, need to fill this early evening slot.
- Cafes and markets need to open later.
- Visitor attractions are generally considered not to be open late enough.
- Need for more variety and diversity in the current evening offer.
- Need to use public spaces for entertainment, seating etc.
- Many respondents would be deterred from coming into York because of the perceived poor transport and parking in the centre.
- All groups felt that York at night is not very accommodating for children.
- Many thought that more could be made of the waterfronts and the wall as attractions in the evening. Illumination of both and other attractions would be attractive.
- All groups believe the city has a great deal of potential for the evening, and if what is delivered well through the day can be delivered in the evening or at least early evening, then it could be more of a success.
- Those who had experienced the specialist markets and festivals, really enjoyed them and thought these and the shops open later would increase activity in the centre on the evening.

### Possible Evening Scenarios:

- An outdoor cinema was very well accepted with 3 out of 4 of the groups thinking it was a great idea.
- The children's playground idea was generally not very appealing because of concerns with safety and supervision. Although one group suggested it would work in the day based on the one in Nottingham.
- A very positive response from all groups for the play in the park idea, everyone said they liked the idea and the only concern was the VIP area.
- Following on from this Street entertainment was suggested as a popular theme that was experienced in other cities and helped create a good atmosphere and fill the streets on an evening.
- Although considered a great way to see the city, access to the city walls on an evening was also considered, mainly with regards to safety.
- Shops and Markets open later was considered a great idea by all groups. It would fill the lull period and in the early evening and allow residents to make use of these facilities after work.
- Again very positive reactions from the respondents for the attractions to be open later to fill the early evening lull for visitors and allow residents to enjoy them after work.
- After dinner and late night ghost walks were well accepted, with the suggestion of a midnight one, like in Edinburgh.
- Better lit walkways, illumination of the main buildings and the river were commonly suggested throughout the groups.
- Better linkage between attractions would also be appreciated – in terms of a clear routes, signage and mapping in the city.
- More effort into making the river sides more of a feature.

## **8 - Discussion Groups with Evening Economy Stakeholders**

### **Economic Development Unit, City of York Council, October 2006**

On the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> October, two discussion groups took place with key stakeholders involved in the evening economy and evening experience in York, this included hoteliers, pubs and bars, restaurants, police, theatres, providers of evening entertainment and retailers. The groups involved a discussion of a number of central questions to the evening economy, which can be used to establish the strengths, weaknesses and possible improvements which could be made to current evening economy experience.

The following section outlines each of the key questions which were asked along with the issues raised by the participants in the discussion groups, when an issue is repeated this signifies that it was mentioned by both groups on both days.

#### **What is good about York in the evening?**

- Dependant on market segment.
- Pedestrian friendly city.
- Safe in evening.
- Dependant on time of year/museum gardens.
- Good areas.
- Some shops are open late on a Thursday.
- Restaurants.
- Restaurants.
- City centre cinema.
- Park and Ride – but late night at one location should be all sites.
- Park and Ride.
- City centre is well lit.
- Ghost walks.
- Theatres.
- Atmospheric city.

The main strengths of York in the evening were felt to be that York is a pedestrian friendly city, which is safe in the evening, with good restaurants, good ghost walks, theatres and a city centre cinema. A further strength which was recognised by both groups was the Park and Ride service however this was also felt to be a weakness, due to the fact that only one service operates into the evening.

#### **What is bad about York in the evening?**

- Parking – there should be no charges.
- Car Parking – expensive, lack of availability, tend to be large car parks which feel unsafe, street parking feels more safe.
- Only 1 late night Park and Ride service which means it is difficult to link with late night shopping in terms of those who are working or those who are shopping.
- Night life out of centre.
- Weak ethnic provision of restaurants.
- Safety.
- Confusion around pedestrianisation of city centre – it ends too soon.
- Vans around the market at 4-5pm, is off-putting, signals closure of the city centre.



- Poor late night shopping – people not aware of which shops are open.
- Retailers have tried late night shopping but no success.
- People aren't staying in the city after work.
- Don't want to take children in the city at night
- Hen and Stag parties – too many, need to change customers/market
- Hen and Stag parties – debate around whether they should be contained in one area or spread across the city, should they be banned completely through a co-ordinated effort as some hotels already do?
- Lack of public toilets open in the evening.

The bad points about York which were raised by the groups were the existing parking charges, this was emphasised and discussed at length by both groups, further issues discussed were the end of pedestrianisation of the city centre with vans congesting the roads and signalling the closure of the city centre, the poor provision of late night shopping people and the fact that people are not staying in the city after work and not bringing children into the city centre. The prominence of stag and hen parties was considered as having a negative impact on York in the evening.

### **What time period is most in need of improvement?**

- 5 – 7pm.
- 5 - 7pm – this could be improved by extending retail opening hours by one hour (at least), coffee shops to open later.
- Early closure of markets.
- No after work drinks culture in York in comparison to Leeds.
- Coffee bars close at 5pm – need to develop café culture.
- Need for joined-up approach across a number of business sectors to develop this.
- What works currently in the 5 – 7pm period – riverside bars.
- Need to use public space.
- Support for Open Air Cinema
- Need for activities other than drinking.
- More family friendly environment.
- Later period needs attention too.
- Late night period (after 11) and after restaurants close.

Both groups felt that the main time period in need of improvement was the 5-7pm period, ways of improvement involved extending retail opening hours, extended opening of coffee bars and a consideration of what currently works in this period such as the bars along the river. It was also highlighted that the later period after 11 needs attention too.

### **What would make people come into York in the evening?**

- Good theatres.
- Car Parking – on street parking 6pm charges starting at 5pm.
- Cheap car parking fees.
- Co-ordinated activity towards late night shopping not isolated businesses but a wide spread take up.
- Need for promotion of late night shopping.
- Investment into city centre, music etc.
- Lighting of alleyways.
- Increased frequency of bus routes/services.
- Café culture needs to be adopted.

- Outdoor seating for cafes and bars.
- Demand for an activity to take place between 5-7pm.
- St Nicolas Fayre – good example of evening markets and getting people into the city centre.
- Ice rink.
- Chester - street entertainment until 8pm.
- Street entertainment and music would signal that the city is still open.
- Night time festivals e.g. at Halloween.
- Need for arts events for people to discover.
- Need for a widespread effort not just focusing on one area.

A number of ways of encouraging people into the city on an evening were discussed, ideas such as introducing evening parking charges starting at 5pm, the co-ordination and promotion of late night shopping, increased frequency of buses in the evening, promotion of café culture and outdoor seating, street entertainment in the evening and night time festivals.

### **What stops people from coming into York in the evening?**

- Parking.
- Lack of Park and Ride in the evening.
- Size of York – allows ease of returning home.
- Anti-social behaviour.
- Security – traffic along pedestrianised roads feels unsafe.
- Visitors – lack of information.
- Residents – information.
- People need to know what's out there.
- Lack of entertainment.
- Promotional information is costly and difficult.
- Need for regular provision of information to hotels.
- Consistency of events – need to take place at a regular date and regular time.
- Need for activities for residents.

When asked what stops people coming into York on an evening, a number of similar themes emerged which have been outlined in previous questions. Parking and the lack of Park and Ride services in the evening were highlighted. Other issues raised were security and anti-social behaviour, the lack of information about what's happening in the city centre in the evening and a consistency of events to increase awareness.

### **What source of information would people use to find out about evening activities?**

- Weekly e-mail updates, whats on listings – possibly in different languages.
- E-mail updates to be sent to hotels, accommodation providers with info about daily events and activities.
- Could be sent to retailers too – also involved in promoting events and attractions.
- Co-ordination of information.
- Need for display units in the city centre to promote events.
- Central shelter with advertising space.
- Central information point – screens and banners.
- Need for an evening information point – currently City Screen.
- Notice boards, plasma screens.
- Use of Banners?

- Non-permanent displays of information e.g. projected info.
- Use of digital screens – fixed point where people go to find about what's on in the evening.
- Daily listings provided by PLAY
- Car Parks – use blank space available.
- Use of the electronic signs at bus stops, could be introduced at car parks too.
- Digital signs as entering the city.
- Need for restaurant guide.
- Hotels – need a complete listing of restaurants and attractions.
- Restaurant guide – however businesses unable to fund this publication themselves.
- Unhappy with mini-guide – promotion of Russells.
- Need for an independent guide.
- Changes in restaurants v quick difficult to keep up to date.
- Residents how to target them.

The groups discussed what sources of information could be used for people to find out about evening activities and events in York. A popular idea was a daily or weekly e-mail update of events and activities taking place, which could be sent to hoteliers, pubs and retailers, other ideas involved an evening information point which could use a screen, banners or a non-permanent display of information e.g. a projection to display the evening's events, electronic signs at bus stops could also be utilised. It was felt that the information in whichever format would need to be at a fixed point in the city. The need for a restaurant guide was also suggested.

### **What improvements could your business sector make to enhance the evening economy experience in York?**

- Live music in pubs/restaurants.
- More child friendly restaurants – this is difficult.
- Difficult to exclude Stag and Hen parties.
- No Stag and Hen parties.
- Hotels – promote entertainment but need more information.
- Hotels detailed provision of information
- Ambassador at each hotel with an in-depth knowledge of the city and what is taking place – difficulty with high staff turnover.
- Weekly bulletin – including listings, interviews for staff to read.
- Daily information sheet – could include entertainment in pubs.
- TVs in pubs/hotels to display info.
- Need for investment.
- Later opening of attractions.
- Later opening of shops in the evening.
- Staggered opening hours of shops – an extra hour longer.
- Free parking in exchange for later opening hours.
- Build on success of Petergate Party Nights.
- Changes in performance times, family performances to start at 6pm to fill the 5-7pm period.
- Need for specific focus on one night e.g. Thursday.
- Need for co-ordinated action and effort, all shops not just one.
- PLAY – organising a series of activities and events to take place on a Thursday night in the early evening.

- Extend Residents 1<sup>st</sup> weekend to include evening activities and to last longer than the weekend to further involve hotels.

A number of improvements were suggested by the groups as to how their business sectors could enhance the evening economy experience such as live music in pubs and restaurants, increased provision of information by hotels, extended opening hours for both attractions and shops and changes in performance times to fill the 5-7pm gap. Overall it was recognised that there is a need for co-ordinated effort and action not isolated events and activities.

### **What improvements/changes to York in the evening would benefit your business?**

- Opening of walls on an evening.
- Survey of visitors and residents via hotels, pubs and restaurants.
- Late night opening of toilets.
- Free parking every Thursday to coincide with late night shopping.
- Need for resources.
- Free overnight coach parking.
- Outdoor seating – makes the city more inviting, provides continental culture – currently not permitted by council.
- Smoking ban – will there be smoking bins provided by the council outside establishments?
- Increased footfall at the end of the day.
- Public place to be made available for resident activities e.g. music performances.
- Located across the city similar to the one in Rowntree's Park – fixed venue with seating.
- Utilise existing areas in York e.g. The Minster.
- Street entertainment at a regular location not Parliament St.
- Late opening of attractions – Yorkshire Wheel open until 9pm during the summer but no promotion.
- Hotels suffering because of redundancies.
- Culture of residents – no after work drinks, late night shopping would help.
- Need for buy-in from everyone.
- Need for quality of product.

Finally the groups were asked to outline what improvements and changes to York in the evening would improve business. The main suggestions were that the city walls should be opened in the evening as should all public toilets, that there should be free parking on a Thursday to coincide with late night shopping and outdoor seating and public areas where entertainment can take place.

## 9 - Lighting, Crime and Security

**Compiled by the Economic Development Unit, City of York Council, January 2007  
Including excerpts from York:Light – the Lighting Masterplan for the City of York  
prepared by the Urban Lighting Group, April 2004.**

The following section looks at lighting and the important role which it can play in the evening economy, summarising research about the effects of lighting upon usage of city centres and crime. Also included are comments from the Safer York Partnership in reference to specific light installations which have taken place in York.

Jane Mowat Director, Safer York Partnership, writing about the light installation *Ghost Ships on the Ouse* commented,

'I was at a meeting on Wednesday at the Guildhall and afterwards walked back along the other side of the river just so I could have a look at the projections. I was amazed by the number of people on the river path looking across at them (including families) - and at nearly 8pm this is not a path even I would normally venture down at night!

I am in the process of drawing up our Crime and Disorder 3 year strategy and this is the very sort of initiative that I think will impact on fear of crime. Safer York Partnership would certainly endorse any future plans along this line. Well done.'

Commenting on Renaissance: Illuminating York and the *Breadcrumb Trail*, she said, 'The City of York Council Talkabout surveys demonstrate that the community in York has a much greater fear of crime at night time than during the day. A street survey carried out by Safer York Partnership last summer [2004] showed that the reason for this increase in fear is a perception that York is too quiet at night and does little to encourage families to come into the city during the evening.'

It is essential that we look more closely at the opportunities that exist to reduce fear of crime through innovative projects. Breadcrumbs provides us with such an opportunity. By encouraging families into the city centre, it may help to change the night-time economy from one which at present is associated with a culture of late night drinking and stag/hen parties to a more family oriented environment in where it is safe to walk about the city in the evening time.'

The following information is taken from York:Light – Lighting Masterplan for the City of York, one of the strategy's key aims is to enhance the after-dark appearance of the city's extensive architectural and heritage assets and therefore make the city more visually comfortable after dark. This improvement in the night time appearance of the city is intended to increase the number of evening & overnight visitors and thereby boost the development of the evening economy.

Various studies over the last 15 years have shown that improved lighting increases the number of people actually going about on foot at night – this growth in foot traffic in turn increases the degree of 'informal surveillance' by the general population (i.e. the chance of criminals and wrong-doers being overseen) which acts as a strong deterrent. Research studies from Hull, Cardiff, Leeds, Manchester, Strathclyde and Birmingham which took place in the early '90s highlighted a number of key findings:

### **Studies in Hull, Cardiff and Manchester showed that improved lighting:**

- Increases pedestrian numbers at night.
- Increases 'informal surveillance' of potential criminals and wrong-doers

- Acts as a strong anti-crime deterrent.

**After the installation of improved public lighting:**

- The proportion of over-'65s who feared going out after dark fell from **49% to 15%** (Cardiff)
- The number of people walking in the streets on their own rose by **26%** (Cardiff)
- The number of women who avoided going out after dark fell from **38% to 7%** (Hull)
- The number of elderly residents on the streets at night **doubled** (Hull)
- **44%** of people felt safer in the streets around their homes (Leeds)
- Night-time pedestrian flows increased by **9%**, between 20.00 and 22.00 by **23%** (Manchester)
- Female pedestrians increased by **70%** between 22.00 and midnight (Strathclyde)
- Female pedestrians in groups increased by **71%** (Manchester)
- Car crime declined from 23 incidents in three months before re-lighting to just one in the following three months (Strathclyde)

**Other studies have demonstrated the high cost-effectiveness of lighting investment.**

**In Dudley, Stoke-on-Trent and Tameside it was highlighted that:**

- In Tameside a 19:1 return on lighting investment was predicted, through reductions in the broader costs of crime, across the 25-year life of a lighting scheme.
- In Dudley investment in lighting was projected to save up to 47 times that sum in reduced crime costs over 20 years.
- In Stoke every £1 spent on lighting was estimated to save £27 in reduced crime costs, over 20 years.

The international journal 'Lighting Research & Technology, Volume 33 Number 1 (2001)' published research by Dr. Painter and David Farrington, 'The cost benefits of improved street lighting, based on crime reduction.' This paper was written to "...investigate the effects of improved street lighting on crime in Dudley and Stoke-on-Trent" and showed that "...crimes decreased by 41% in the experimental area [Dudley]...with a 15% decrease in a control area" and "In Stoke, crimes decreased by 43% in the experimental area and by 45% in two adjacent areas, compared with a decrease of only 2% in the control areas." As a result, it was concluded that the "...financial savings (from reduced crimes) exceeded the financial costs by between 2.2 and 9.4 times after one year."

**In August 2002, the Home Office produced a summary of 13 validated research studies on lighting and crime. It concluded that:**

- Improved lighting could decrease crime in selected areas by up to 30%.
- Lighting was more effective in reducing crime than CCTV systems -- CCTV had only a small effect on crime reduction (4%) and in some cases actually seemed to increase crime.

## Annex 2 Car parking background

		99/00	2000 -2001	2001- 2002	2002 - 2003	2003 - 2004	4 year %	2004 - 2005	2005 - 2006	2006 -2007	2007- 2008	4 year %
<b>a) Visitor</b>												
<b>Short Stay - Castle</b>	0.80	0.90	1.00	1.20	1.40	1.60	78%	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	25%
<b>Short Stay - Other</b>	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.10	1.30	1.50	88%	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	33%
<b>Standard Stay</b>	0.60	0.70	0.80	1.00	1.20	1.30	86%	1.30	1.30	1.30	1.30	0%
<b>On Street</b>		0.70	0.80	0.90	1.10	1.30	86%	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.40	8%
<b>Foss Bank</b>	0.60	0.70	0.80	1.00	1.20	1.20	71%	1.20	0.70	0.70	0.70	-42%
<b>Evening (14 hours)</b>		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	
<b>b) Resident</b>												
<b>Short Stay - Castle</b>	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.10	1.10	1.30	63%	1.70	1.70	1.70	1.70	31%
<b>Short Stay - Other</b>	0.60	0.70	0.80	1.00	1.00	1.20	71%	1.70	1.70	1.70	1.70	42%
<b>Standard Stay</b>	0.50	0.60	0.70	0.90	0.90	1.00	67%	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0%
<b>On Street</b>		0.70	0.80	0.90	1.10	1.30	86%	1.40	1.40	1.40	1.40	8%
<b>Foss Bank</b>	0.50	0.60	0.70	0.90	0.90	0.90	50%	0.90	0.70	0.70	0.70	-22%
<b>Evening (14 hours)</b>		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	

York's standard say car parks are now cheaper than in many other neighbouring towns and comparable City's.

	Ave cost per hour	York resident pays per hour	York cheaper by	
<b>Cambridge.</b>	<b>£1.45</b>	<b>£1.00</b>	<b>31%</b>	80p (just one car park) £1.40/£1.50 and hour - more on Saturdays and higher charges for stays of longer than 5 hours
<b>Leeds.</b>	<b>£1.35</b>	<b>£1.00</b>	<b>26%</b>	£1.20 - £1.50 an hour up to 22.00
<b>Sheffield.</b>	<b>£1.15</b>	<b>£1.00</b>	<b>13%</b>	95p/£1.15/£1.35 an hour up to 20.30. on street starts at 45p for 20 mins.
<b>Harrogate.</b>	<b>£1.05</b>	<b>£1.00</b>	<b>5%</b>	90p - £1.20 an hour. Evening charge £1.00

Initiatives taken during last 4 years to address resident and business concerns expressed about car parking rates include:

- Reduced evening parking charges to a flat rate £2 (£1 for residents) for up to 14 hours parking (6:00pm – 8:00am). Residents evening parking charge of £1 likely to be dropped altogether shortly (reducing Council income by around £75,000 a year)
- Extended the maximum stay at short stay car parks from 3 hours to 5 hours (affects 3 car parks)
- Redesignated medium and long stay car parks as “standard” stay car parks with no maximum time limit
- Introduced payment by phone option

- Froze 80% of day time parking charges (real terms reduction of about 15%) at least until April 2008. Usage of City centre car parks is now similar to the numbers of users of 5 years ago and was very buoyant during 06/07.
- 50% reduction in cost of frequent user passes for low emission vehicles in VED classes A & B.
- Substantially cut the costs of parking at Foss Bank
- Printed over 20,000 leaflets at traders request for distribution to customers (only a small number were actually used)
- Ran a trial, late night, park and ride service for a year (but with few passengers using the service)
- Halved the cost of annual season tickets (with further discounts, for low emission vehicles, bringing costs down now to only £500 pa)
- Opened additional Park and Ride site at Monks Cross. Park and Ride usage has now increased to over 3 million passenger journey's per year
- Trialled a "free parking" evening in the run up to Christmas 2005 (with no measurable affect on numbers entering the City) but at a cost of around £5000 to the Council.
- Additional, on street, evening parking spaces provided





## Economic Development Partnership Board

19 June 2007

Report of Director of City Strategy

### Christmas Lighting – Proposals for 2007

#### Summary

1. This report updates Members of the Board on a number of options for Christmas Lighting – related activities for 2007, and also reviews other festive activities proposed and committed for this year. The report also highlights the need for a long term strategy on this issue.

#### Background

2. Until 2005 a partnership working group with both retail representation and CYC officer support meet annually and implemented a plan to raise funds to ensure the 'cross-street' lighting scheme went up around the city. (Streets included in this scheme are: Goodramgate, High Petergate, Colliergate, Davygate, Parliament Street, Coney Street Fossgate and Coney Street). The 'cross-street' scheme last happened in this way in 2005 and the cost totalled approximately £51k. (This is excluding a switch on show. The show at the Minster in previous years has cost approximately an additional £20k). As reported last year, over time sponsorship was increasingly hard to secure.

Detailed costs for cross-street lights were presented last year and are repeated again for convenience.

#### **Christmas (cross street) Lights for 2006**

Installation/dismantle and hire of the lights for the festive period = £25,662.00

N.B. This figure is based on signing a 3/5 year contract with a 5% increase yearly for the duration of that contract.

Collection, storage, maintenance and delivery to York = £7030.40

N.B. This figure is based on the above 3/5 year contract with a 4% yearly increase for the duration of the contract.

Project Management = £8,000.00

Other costs (i.e. testing, electricity, sponsor boxes) £10,000.00

**Total = £50,692.40 – this is excluding a 'switch on' show. The show at the Minster in previous years has cost approximately an additional £20,000.**

3. As reported to this Board in 2006, in addition to the above officer time, CYC have always funded the following aspects of Christmas Lighting :

Storage of the cross street lights; a real 30ft Christmas Tree in St Helens Square; festive lighting around Newgate Market and Silver Street; pea lights in trees along Parliament Street, St Sampson's Square and Duncombe Place; and street light power supply and insurance. The total cost of this contribution is £8k for storage and £9k for the festive lighting, annually.

### **Review of 2006 Festive Lighting**

4. The report to the Economic Development Board meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2006 confirmed that the Council was unable to continue its current financial and administrative support for the 'cross street lighting' which has been the main feature of previous Christmas central area decoration. A range of options was discussed, with the favoured ones being to encourage the street traders to take the lead themselves on generating funding for the 'cross-street lighting' and to undertake a sponsorship/funding campaign for a single decorative illumination in the city centre, to be co-ordinated by the City Council.
5. The following streets were successful in 2006 in raising the funds needed to put up their lights – Colliergate, Goodramgate, High Petergate and Fossgate - and the City Centre Office financed the lights around Newgate Market. York Business Pride contributed half the cost per street which we estimate cost approximately £5k per street. Therefore, each street managed to raise approximately £2.5k. In addition to this the Lord Mayor lead a successful campaign in St Helen's Square where retailers all contributed towards a lighting scheme.
6. The cross street lights are currently being stored by CYC – the retailers have all contributed and covered the £800 cost of this for one year. If the retailers do not cover this cost again then CYC will have to pay for the storage or we will need to look at disposing of the lights, which will soon require maintenance and repair (at an additional cost).
7. The proposal for a single decorative illumination in the city centre focused on a "Children's Magic Christmas Tree" which was placed over the fountain in Parliament Street from November 17<sup>th</sup> 2006 to January 6<sup>th</sup> 2007. This provided an opportunity to move away from the traditional approach to street decoration over the Christmas period. The Children's Magic Christmas Tree was an opportunity for a specially designed tree, unique to York.
8. The cost of the Children's Magic Christmas Tree was £22k – Approximately £12k was raised through sponsorship and contributions by the public. CYC therefore covered the rest of the cost for the Children's Magic Christmas Tree to the tune of approximately £10k.

The table below shows the breakdown of costs.

Hire of Tree and transport	£12,850.00
Tree installation and maintenance	£8,190.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£21040.00</b>

Electricity/insurance costs (up to £1k) covered through EDU resources

### Other Festive activities

9. It is important to put Christmas lights issues into context. There are a number of other dedicated Christmas related promotions; handled by the Council or the York Tourism Partnership (Formerly First Stop York) which we are already committed to in 2007, and for which Council officer time is required.
  - **Yuletide York** The First Stop York Tourism Partnership annually works on a Christmas Marketing campaign called Yuletide York. A dedicated website and a glossy brochure bring together all Christmas activity including markets, attractions, shopping, events etc. 80,000 copies of the Yuletide York brochure are produced and are distributed through various channels to a national, as well as local audience. The total cost of this campaign is £16k and the First Stop York Executive provides £9K of funding towards this as a specific marketing priority for the city. The rest of the revenue is raised through advertising opportunities within the Yuletide York brochure. This project annually covers its own costs but no profit is generated. This marketing activity is very important to city retailers and attractions putting on special events at Christmas, and offers a great opportunity to showcase the city's specialist Christmas markets as well as the full panoply of York's Christmas offer – including details of church services and children's entertainment. As a result of this ongoing campaign the estimated economic value of Christmas in our City is £37million, this is visitor spend alone and includes shopping, accommodation, eating out etc. Residents spend in the city during this period is in addition to this figure.
  - **St Nicholas Fayre** The St Nicholas Fayre takes place annually and is always the last weekend in November (Thursday–Sunday). It essentially forms the first showpiece event of the Christmas period. Seen as our flagship Christmas Market this event attracts 400 coaches annually and approximately 64,000 visitors and 36,000 residents into the city. It is estimated that the economic value of the St Nicholas Fayre is over £5 million, and is highly valued by retailers. The CYC Markets office are responsible for this event and in 2006 had a budget set to achieve income of £13,180.00. The 2007 target is set at £14,690.00 (29<sup>th</sup> November–2<sup>nd</sup> December 2007) and the income contributes towards the overall markets budget.
  - **Coach & Traffic Management** Due to the increased popularity of the St Nicholas Fayre over recent years it has been essential to manage the amount of coach traffic entering the city over this particular weekend in order to avoid the most serious congestion which would

badly damage the City's reputation. Previously handled by the Tourism Team within Economic Development, this year it will transfer to the Markets Budget. Traffic Management has an expenditure of approximately £8k. Income is generated through coach parking charges but will purely cover costs.

- **Ice Rink + other city offers** The Ice Factor has been a major part of our Christmas offer for the last two years, at no net cost to the Council. An independent company called Lunchbox Theatrical Productions organise and deliver the event. For the last two years they have made no or very little profit – it is expected that long term when they begin making a profit they will award CYC a percentage.
- For the first time in 2006 a German Christmas Market was also introduced and it is planned again for 2007. Other Christmas markets include a Farmer's Market and the Children's Christmas Fayre. These enhance the offer to residents and visitors and contribute towards the overall Markets budget.

### **2007 and the future**

10. For 2007 the following activities are long-standing commitments where work has already started and will go ahead: Yuletide York Marketing Campaign, St Nicholas Fayre and other Christmas Markets. The City Centre Office will continue to provide and pay for the Christmas Tree in St Helen's Square, the Pea Lights in Duncombe Place, St Sampson's Square and Parliament Street and the Christmas lights around Newgate Market and Silver Street. See Annex 1 – table showing projects, costs, CYC contributions and 2007 commitments.

### **Consultation**

11. Consultation on the activities listed in para 9 for Christmas 2007 has taken place with the York Tourism Partnership Executive (in drawing up the tourism budget for 2007 – 08). Consultation on Festive lighting options (para 12) took place in 2006, though some of the newer ideas will be discussed further with retailers should the Economic Development Partnership Board recommend such an approach.

### **Options – Festive lighting**

12. Regarding festive lighting, the following options are presented for consideration by the Economic Development Partnership Board (in addition to the lighting commitments in 10 above).
  - Single Decorative Illumination. This could be in Parliament Street as last year, or another site. Costs depend on what is desired but could range between £20k - £45k (based on quotes for various options researched last year).
  - City Wide Cross street lighting scheme. On the basis of previous experience, this would cost approximately £40k - £50k. It is understood that this is the favoured option of many retailers. As discussed in para

2, the Board acknowledged last year that a full sponsorship of £50k is highly unlikely to be secured, but £25k of sponsorship may be a more realistic target if retailers (and York Business Pride?) could raise the remaining £25k.

- 'Best Dressed window' campaign. A competition between retailers to create spectacular Christmas window displays. Minimum costs would apply but it would need a lot of officer time – perhaps the Retail Forum or City Centre Partnership could champion this? The opportunities here are to create good PR with an emphasis on Shopping in York and it could also kick start the retail commitment to late night shopping.
- Christmas Tree campaign. Using many of the existing brackets on shop fronts to create a scheme, similar to the York in Bloom hanging baskets, where each shop can display a small tree with white fairy lights. Minimal costs as retailers would buy into the scheme but officer time could be considerable – suggest that the same organisers of York in Bloom champion?
- Creative Kids Competition. Engaging with schoolchildren of all ages, the winning designs are made into Christmas lights and installed around the town for all to see. Costs are approximately £500 per design + installation. Sponsorship could potentially be easier to find due to the nature of this scheme. Also great PR possibilities, great links with the Children's Fayre. A lot of potential for further activities – also bringing a lot of families into the City Centre to see the work. Could this be a project jointly worked through NYBEP? This would be more a community than a tourism / economic development activity.

In each case CYC officer time is an issue with all of the above options because of the commitments that the Council has already over the festive period in delivering the actions in 9 above.

### **Comment on the options**

13. Correspondence with retailers indicate that their preferred option is cross-street lighting. This is also the most expensive option and with other Council budgets on Christmas-related activity already committed for 2007 there is limited scope for a significant CYC contribution to this. A substantial contribution from retailers and sponsorship would need to be achieved, with the most appropriate lead coming through the City Centre Partnership.
14. A single decorative illumination would cost in the region of £20 - £45k. This would provide a focal point in one part of the city but arguably only limited benefits elsewhere in the city centre. Sponsorship was limited in 2006, and views are sought on the potential benefits of this compared to other projects.
15. As an alternative there are a number of low costs options (Best Dresses Window, Mini trees or Creative Kids competition) which could give much more of a community feel rather than a single showpiece. The issue with these is more about organisation than cost.

16. Opinions of Residents on Christmas lighting are currently being canvassed through the Talkabout survey panel. The result of this survey are due in July.
17. Finally the issue of a long term strategy for Christmas lighting needs to be addressed. As indicated previously it is difficult to switch resources from other areas into Christmas Lights as these activities – as well as the Lights themselves – ideally need a long lead-in period in order to offer the best promotional advantage. Promotional materials highlight tourism events and activities a year or more in advance, for example, so already decisions for 2008 and beyond are needed.

### **Corporate Priorities**

18. The schedule of Christmas 2007 activity already planned meets two corporate objectives:
  - 3.4 Create a vibrant city centre through a proactive partner approach to visitor management and by increasing investment
  - 7.1 Develop a city-wide programme of events and festivals that make the city more vibrant

It will also (in being a draw to encourage visitors and shoppers to visit the city centre during the build up to Christmas) help meet Corporate Aim 3 in the Council Plan, “Strengthen and diversify York’s economy and improve employment opportunities for residents”.

### **Implications**

19. Financial At the moment there is NO provision in CYC budgets for any contribution to Christmas Lights other than the elements listed in Paragraph 3 above. All other CYC ‘Christmas related’ budgets for 2007 are already committed and in many cases are allocated to partnerships (see paragraphs 9 and 10). Other city centre promotional funds are advertising by means of press releases with individual event organisers being responsible for their own promotion.
20. Business Improvement District. As a longer term option the funding of Christmas lights, if seen as a priority by retailers, may well be an issue to be considered in the discussions over the establishment of a future Business Improvement District in the city centre.
21. Human resources: None
22. Equalities: None
23. Legal: The council will carry out a full risk assessment of all Christmas related activities, including events, markets, and lighting or decorative installations.
24. Crime and Disorder: None

- 25. Information Technology: None
- 26. Property: None

**Risk Management**

- 27. At the moment there is no financial risk management issue to the Council as there are no specific resources for the cross-street lighting (see para 17 above). While there may be risks to the reputation of the city if there are no Christmas Lights, in the wider context there is plenty happening in York in the run up to Christmas 2007 already (see para 9) to mitigate against this. Regarding health and safety related risk assessments, the council will carry out a full risk assessment of any installation, lighting or tree display.

**Recommendations**

- 28. The Board is asked to consider and advise on the options outlined in paragraph 12 above and consider potential action in relation to:
  - i) The practical options for Christmas 2007
  - ii) Options for 2008 onwards.

Reason: To give a direction to Christmas lighting strategy for York for 2007 and the foreseeable future.

**Contact Details**

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**Chief Officer Responsible for the report:**

Bill Woolley  
Director of City Strategy

**Report Approved** ✓ **Date** 01/06/2007

**Specialist Implications Officers:** None

**Wards Affected:** *List wards or tick box to indicate all* **All** ✓

**For further information please contact the author of the report**

**Background Papers:**

- ED Board report on York Christmas lights (14 March 2006)
- Report to the Executive on the Children's Magic Christmas Tree, 12 September 2006

These reports are held on file at 20 George Hudson Street

**Annexes:** Annex 1 - table showing projects, costs, CYC contributions and 2007 commitments

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**Annex 1 - table showing projects, costs, CYC contributions and 2007 commitments**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Cost (£)</b>	<b>CYC</b>	<b>Commitment</b>
Cross Street Lighting	£51k	£0K (at moment)	No
Switch-on Show	£20k +	£0K (at moment)	No
Existing Cross Street Lights storage	£1k in 07-08	£0K (This was formerly £8K and paid for by CYC – by 07/08 the lights were moved to CYC lock up and reduced cost was financed by the retailers – needs renewing on an annual basis and there is commitment from the retailers)	Yes
30ft Tree St Helen's Square	£2k	£2K CYC – through City Centre Office	Yes
Lighting: Newgate Silver St Parliament St St Sampson's Sq Duncombe Pl	£9k	£9K CYC – through City Centre Office	Yes
Yuletide York	£16k	£9K (through CYC contribution to York Tourism Partnership)	Yes
St Nicholas Fayre	£8K (approx)	£0K net cost - £13k income goes toward the overall markets budget	Yes
Coach Management	£8K	£0K-£1K net cost - should break even – may be slight cost (£1K?) to CYC	Yes
Ice Rink	£0	£0K – in future years CYC may generate a % of the profit from the Ice Rink	Yes
German & other Markets during Festive season	£? – difficult to separate costs as these come under the specialist markets budget	£0K net cost – income goes towards overall markets budget Certainly no net cost to the Council	Yes
Best Dressed Window	£2k	?	No
Christmas tree Campaign	£5k	?	No
Creative Kids	£5k + (each motif would cost approximately £500)	?	No

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