

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting:	Wednesday 13 March 2024
Classification:	General Release
Title:	Westminster After Dark – Progress Update and Next Steps
Report of:	Parveen Akhtar, Executive Director Corporate Services. Debbie Jackson, Executive Director of Regeneration, Economy, and Planning, and, Frances Martin, Executive Director for Environment, Climate and Public Protection,
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Cabinet Member for Communities and Public Protection, and, Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development.
Wards Involved:	All
Policy Context:	Fairer Westminster
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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report presents the Committee with an update on the current progress of Westminster After Dark, while also highlighting actions taken in response to recommendations from the previous hearing.
- 1.2 Since the inception of Westminster After Dark, the Council has initiated engagement efforts using its Common Place Platform. With over 10,000 visitors and more than 500 specific contributions since its launch, the platform has facilitated significant participation. An assessment of the current survey responses via the Common Place platform is provided in Appendix 1. The Council has further conducted targeted engagement exercises with numerous stakeholders to gather their perspectives on the key issues and opportunities within Westminster's evening and night-time environment. Additionally, a

Stakeholder Assembly convened with 46 participants representing residents, businesses, visitors, and night-workers has recently concluded. The report associated with the Stakeholder Assembly findings will be published later in the year.

- 1.3 The project is now transitioning into its subsequent phases, which entail detailed analysis of the received responses, Stakeholder Assembly findings, relevant research, and other pertinent information. Workshops will soon be established with stakeholder representatives to review the findings and explore potential options that could be further developed into a mission-oriented strategy.

2. Key Matters for the Committee's Consideration

- 2.1 The Committee is invited to consider:

- 2.1.1 the balance between the globally renowned night-time economy and everyone's, particularly residents', right to quality of life.

- 2.1.2 the current challenge of the competing pressures on the night-time environment including crime, ASB, light and noise disturbances, the environment and ecology.

- 2.1.3 the current engagement approach for Westminster After Dark and the overall engagement process, including the Stakeholder Assembly, surveys and online map tool comments.

- 2.1.4 the needs of stakeholders including those who work, visit and own businesses and the wide variety of activities and functions across the evening and night-time that enable the wider West End economy.

- 2.1.5 the opportunities for the night-time environment in terms of employment and skills.

3. Background

- 3.1 At the Committee's previous meeting, held on the 14th December 2023 a report on Westminster After Dark was provided explaining the approach to developing the Council's first evening and night-time strategy and the approaches being taken to enable engagement on this subject.

- 3.2 To assist the Committee in comprehending the broader benefits that an evening and night-time strategy can offer to the city, along with the current challenges and opportunities faced by Westminster's evening and night-time environment, several witnesses provided their perspectives on these matters. The presentation included examples of nighttime strategies and stakeholder engagement from local, regional, and international viewpoints, emphasising challenges, outcomes, and lessons learned.

- 3.3 During the discussion, the Committee raised important questions concerning collaboration challenges among stakeholders, emphasising the need to manage diverse interests effectively. Trust-building emerged as a crucial aspect, particularly in ensuring residents' confidence in the engagement process. The necessity of honest brokers to facilitate meetings and gather feedback was also emphasised, aiming for representation from a majority of stakeholders to ensure inclusivity.
- 3.4 Furthermore, the Committee delved into topics such as fostering inclusive engagement with diverse stakeholders, enhancing the diversity of evening offerings while addressing associated regulatory burdens, and avoiding assumptions about economic homogeneity within Westminster. They also stressed the significance of evidence-based policymaking beyond COVID-19 impacts and Cumulative Impact Assessments, ensuring a broad range of data informs decision-making. Additionally, attention was drawn to balancing residents' and non-residents' perspectives and actively engaging marginalised voices, including the LGBTQ+ community.

4. Committee Recommendations and council response

- 4.1 The Committee at its last hearing outlined several actions and recommendations for officers associated with engagement around the Westminster After Dark programme. These recommendations are listed in the below along with the response in terms to addressing them.
- 4.2 The Committee recommended that targeted outreach efforts to sectors that may not have been adequately engaged, including marginalised voices, should be considered. The council has actively targeted marginalised voices through our outreach efforts including through paid ads, engagement sessions and the make-up of the participants and experts. We have worked with BIDs and other partners such as the NHS to identify opportunities to engage with businesses and night-workers and have worked with organisations such as the Residents Associations, the London Chinese Community Association and local schools and universities to engage a wide range of residents.
- 4.4 The Committee recommended that a wide range of stakeholders should be actively sought and involved to ensure they are well-represented. The Westminster After Dark programme's different strands of engagement are all targeting a wide range of stakeholders. The Stakeholder Assembly has drawn from residents, businesses, workers and visitors and the experts have included LGBTQ+ and disability advocates. Discussion groups and other engagement sessions have been held with a wide range of stakeholders.
- 4.4 The Committee recommended that communication during the process should be considered in-depth. The programme's communications plan is extensive to try and generate as much engagement as possible. A number of different communication methods have been utilised to date, including:
- Commonplace platform serves as the primary hub for all online interactions within the Westminster After Dark program. Designed for

user-friendliness, it offers comprehensive insights into the engagement process across its different phases.

- Promoting Westminster After Dark through the council's usual channels as well as paid targeted ads for key groups including young people, visitors from other London boroughs and local businesses, with a focus on sectors and industries that operate between 6pm and 6am. We are also promoting our survey through including a competition with West End tickets as a prize.
- Posters in libraries, leisure centres, community centres and family hubs to promote the programme to digitally excluded individuals.
- Westminster After Dark was also featured in a number of newsletters including Housing, MyWestminster, Faith Exchange, Active Westminster, Licencing and Business Network Newsletter.
- Westminster After Dark team attended in-person groups such as Kulan Somali Organisation, Mosaic Trust, the Tuesday Club, Pimlico Women's Group, Marylebone Library Coffee Morning to make sure that harder to reach voices are engaged in the programme and all voices are heard.
- We also engaged with stakeholders through other council initiatives such as Cycleway Consultation and North Paddington Programme to target residents in north of the borough.

5. Online evening and night-time engagement survey

5.1 When the council initiated the engagement and consultation process for Westminster After Dark, we launched an online survey to solicit feedback and perspectives on the evening and night-time experience. The survey was actively promoted to residents, businesses, workers, visitors, and other stakeholders who frequent Westminster after dark.

5.2 As of the drafting date of this report (16th February), we have received 376 responses to the survey. Among these, 248 responses were from residents, 80 from visitors, and the remaining 48 from workers or other stakeholders. The council continues its efforts to promote the survey, particularly targeting underrepresented stakeholders such as businesses, to gather further responses.

5.3 A detailed analysis of the consultation survey responses received thus far has been conducted. Given the relatively small sample size of responses from visitors and those representing the global majority, their findings should be considered indicative. Additionally, responses from daytime workers and other stakeholders were not included in the analysis due to the limited number of responses received.

5.4 Appendix 1 of this report provides a detailed analysis of the survey responses for residents and visitors. However, some key findings from the analysis are highlighted below:

Key findings to date from survey responses (Residents and Visitors)

1.	Residents and visitors are generally positive about Westminster after dark and appreciate the wide range of things to do.
2.	Around a third (3 in 5) residents go out in Westminster in the evening and night-time at least once a week. Visitors mostly visit at least once a month.
3.	Just under two thirds of respondents have reduced their evening and night-time activities due to cost-of-living pressures, mostly by a small amount. Over a third have made no changes.
4.	Residents and visitors are attracted to similar activities in Westminster in the evening and night-time, with restaurants, theatres, cultural activities, and pubs/bars the most popular activities. Visitors are more likely than residents to go to pubs/bars, listen to live music, or go clubbing.
5.	Cost of activities, booking activities and personal safety are most important considerations for going out after dark in Westminster. Personal safety is significantly more important a consideration for residents than for visitors.
6.	People would like to see more arts and cultural activities in Westminster in the evening and night-time, followed by places to eat and live music. Compared to residents, visitors see more restaurants, live music, pubs/bars, and clubs as an attractive proposition. On the other hand, residents are more likely than visitors to want more educational classes at night.
7.	Overall, greater safety would most encourage people to stay and go out in Westminster after dark, followed by cheaper activities and places to wait before performances or for transport home. Residents and visitor's priorities differ in some areas, better late-night transport is more important to visitors whilst residents are more considered about improving street lighting.
8.	Matching the findings contained within the Council's Cumulative Impact Assessment for licensed alcohol, entertainment and late-night refreshment premises under the Licensing Act 2003 anti-social behaviour is the biggest safety issue in Westminster in the evening and night-time, followed by theft and robbery. Visitors are less concerned than residents about a range of issues, such as anti-social behaviour, drug dealing/misuse, and violence and disorder.
9.	Just over 1 in 4 do not feel safe after dark in Westminster, residents are more likely to feel unsafe in the evening and night-time than visitors. Within the responses there is no significant different in how safe men and women feel in the evening and night-time in Westminster.

10.	Despite no significant difference in how safe women and men feel in the evening and night-time in Westminster, women are more concerned about a range of safety concerns than men, particularly anti-social behaviour, theft and robbery, gender-based violence and drink spiking.
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5.5 Residents and visitors experience a range of issues in Westminster after dark that they would like addressed:

What do residents and visitors dislike about Westminster after dark	Changes that would improve resident and visitor experience.
<p>Safety Concerns: Despite many people saying they feel safe after dark in Westminster, many people feel unsafe, particularly women.</p> <p>Anti-Social Behaviour: Concerns about anti-social behaviour, rowdy patrons, noise, and the impact of alcohol-led venues on the streets are often mentioned. Issues include harassment, aggression, and feeling unsafe.</p>	<p>Safety and Security: Desire for increased police presence, better lighting, and measures to address anti-social behaviour, drug use, and crime. Concerns about feeling unsafe, particularly for women, are noted.</p>
<p>Traffic and Congestion: Many respondents express frustration with traffic congestion, unsafe driving practices, and a lack of pedestrian-friendly areas. Some suggest pedestrianising certain streets, particularly in Soho.</p>	<p>Transportation: Requests for better and more frequent night bus services. Desire for the night tube to operate beyond Fridays and Saturdays. Concerns about the availability and cost of late-night transportation, including taxis.</p>
<p>Early Closing Times: People complain about early closing times for pubs, bars, and other venues. Uniform closing times seen as contributing to congestion and limiting late-night options. Some feel that there is a limited variety of late-night options for entertainment, food, and activities.</p>	<p>Extended Opening Hours: Requests for businesses, including pubs, bars, and restaurants, to have extended opening hours.</p>
<p>Pedicabs and Noise Pollution: Pedicabs are a source of annoyance, with mentions of noise</p>	<p>Reduced Noise and Crowds: People emphasise the need for reduced noise, both from traffic and late-night activities. Complaints</p>

pollution, aggressive behaviour, and the need for stricter regulations.	about crowded streets, especially in areas like Soho, are frequent.
Dirty and Unkempt Streets: The cleanliness of streets is an issue, with complaints about rubbish, graffiti, and an overall sense of neglect. The smell of urine in certain places is also noted with people mentioning insufficient availability of public toilets as an issue contributing to this problem.	Public Facilities: Requests for more public toilets, especially during the night. Suggestions for creating safe spaces and facilities for women, families, and vulnerable individuals.
	Affordability: Some respondents mention the cost of going out as a consideration, suggesting more affordable options.

6. Online engagement mapping tool

- 6.1 Over the past six months, Westminster After Dark Common Place received over 10,000 visits to the website and nearly 500 contributions, including approximately 300 individual comments. The feedback came from a diverse range of stakeholders across the borough, including residents, visitors, business owners, and individuals working in the area. Here's a breakdown of the main themes and concerns expressed by each group.

Residents

- 6.2 Residents expressed a predominant concern for safety, citing crime and anti-social behaviour as significant issues. Many feel unsafe due to the lack of lighting, which increases feelings of intimidation, especially for those walking alone or with children. Additionally, residents raised concerns about the misuse of pavements by bars and pedicabs, leading to difficulties for pedestrians, particularly wheelchair users. The ambiance of some area such as Soho, was noted to be negatively affected by disturbances at night, driven in part by commercial interests, and exacerbated by unclean streets and littering. Residents proposed diversifying nighttime activities, improving street cleanliness, and reducing noise pollution from vehicles and pedicabs.

Visitors

- 6.3 Visitors provided a mixed perspective on Soho, with many appreciating its vibrant atmosphere but expressing concerns about safety, cleanliness, and overcrowding. Safety emerged as a primary issue, with visitors citing instances of drug use, gangs, and homelessness, decreasing the overall feeling of safety. Infrastructure deficiencies, such as a lack of lighting and inadequate pedestrian space due to vehicle congestion, were also highlighted. Some visitors highlighted the commercialisation of Soho, noting

its transformation from an LGBTQ hub to a tourist attraction. Calls for pedestrianisation, increased safety measures, and diversification of nighttime activities were common among visitor feedback.

Businesses

- 6.4 Business owners echoed sentiments about Soho's vibrant atmosphere but emphasised the need for cleaner spaces and pedestrian-friendly initiatives. Meanwhile, individuals working in Westminster raised similar concerns regarding safety highlighting anti-social behaviour as the most important issues, infrastructure, and availability of evening activities across the borough.

North of the City

- 6.5 In the North of the borough, the main concerns were around ASB, crime and lack of lighting in areas like Westbourne Park and Edgware Road and its surrounding residential areas. Residents and businesses mentioned its impact on the general feelings of safety in the area. Many individuals shared the need for an increased presence of police, which could increase the feeling of safety in the area. Comments also highlighted the need for an increased number of activities for teenagers in the north of the borough, as well as a greater variety of hot food available for night workers in the area.

The West End

- 6.6 West End received a relatively even split of positive and negative comments focusing on its history and ambiance, which is attractive for businesses and visitors to Westminster. However, concerns have been raised that the West End has become overcrowded with tourists and that there is an overabundance of candy shops. Many individuals raised the need to pedestrianise certain areas, such as Greek Street, as well as the interest in increasing number of al-fresco dining across Soho.

South of the City

- 6.7 Areas like Victoria and Pimlico have been highlighted for lacking late-night activities that would be affordable or not focused on alcohol. Comments also reported the need to focus on the issue of homelessness in the area and providing the individuals with the right support. Based on the comments around the south of Westminster, crime, ASB and noise from local establishments make the area feel intimidating. A greater police presence may reduce the feeling of being intimidating. What is more, the lack of social activities for young people as well as families has been raised as an issue further evening and night-time.

7. Stakeholder Assembly

- 7.1 The council ran the Westminster After Dark Stakeholder Assembly over three consecutive Saturdays, from 27th January to 10th February 2024, bringing together a diverse array of stakeholders including residents, workers, visitors, and business owners. Of the 50 people who were selected via the sortition

process 46 attended the assembly and were there for each of the consecutive weeks. Throughout the assembly, participants engaged in lively and productive conversations, exchanging ideas, and formulating recommendations concerning Westminster After Dark.

- 7.2 The central question driving the discussions was: "How can we transform the evening and night-time to create a more diverse and inclusive Westminster for residents, businesses, workers, and visitors alike?" Delving into this question, participants focused on four key themes:



Assembly Day One

- 7.3 The first day of the assembly, themed "Setting the Scene - Breaking Barriers, Building Bonds, and Creating Context," featured enlightening presentations and discussions on crucial topics. Representatives from various organisations, including the Greater London Authority and the Metropolitan Police, shared insights on ensuring safety and security during Westminster's night-time hours. Paraprize, the Westminster LGBTQ+ Forum, and the Westminster Youth Council contributed invaluable perspectives on inclusivity and community engagement. Additionally, industry leaders provided insights into navigating challenges and fostering sustainable growth in the night-time economy.

Assembly Day Two

- 7.4 Day Two, themed "Piecing the Jigsaw - Bringing it all Together to a Coherent Whole," saw participants engaging in thorough deliberations, synthesising information from previous sessions, and gaining a comprehensive understanding of pertinent issues. Best practices were shared, with Sam Mathys from Hackney Council offering valuable insights.

Assembly Day Three

- 7.5 On the Final Day, themed "Initial Vision - Evaluating and Constructing a Set of Fundamental Principles," participants collaborated to evaluate and refine the recommendations generated throughout the assembly, ultimately constructing a set of guiding principles to inform the Evening and Night-time Strategy. A presentation from James Hulme from the New South Wales Government at the beginning of the day provided the context on how an evening and night-time strategy, with a clear vision and recommendations guided by the community who live, work and visit it has helped shape a more diverse, enriched and successful evening and night-time environment within New South Wales cities, such as Sydney.
- 7.6 Throughout the assembly, participants had the opportunity to interact with individuals from diverse backgrounds, engage with insightful speakers, and deliberate on key topics in small groups facilitated to ensure inclusivity and equitable participation.
- 7.7 The inclusive nature of the assembly, with applications open to individuals aged 16 and above residing, working, visiting, or operating businesses in Westminster, underscored its commitment to ensuring diverse voices were heard and considered in the decision-making process.
- 7.8 The stakeholder assembly was facilitated by SixtillSix on behalf of the council. SixtillSix forthcoming report, detailing the Assembly's findings, viewpoints, vision, and recommendations, will be reviewed by the council in the spring. The intention is to release the Westminster After Dark Stakeholder Assembly report in May.

8. Next steps in developing our Westminster After Dark Strategy

- 8.1 The Common Place online platform for comments and survey responses will remain accessible until Sunday 17th March. The council will actively promote this platform through social media and other channels. Targeted social media ads, funded by dedicated resources, have proven effective in driving traffic to the Common Place Westminster After Dark webpages. These ads will specifically aim to boost engagement with underrepresented groups such as businesses, night-workers, and those from marginalised communities.
- 8.2 The Stakeholder Assembly report is scheduled to be submitted to the council in early March. Assembly members will be invited to an event in late March/early April where the findings and report will be presented for their input and feedback. Once finalised, the report's insights, vision, and recommendations, alongside other evidence streams like survey and mapping tool findings, will be thoroughly considered.
- 8.3 Moving forward, the project will transition into the next phase, which involves developing a Westminster After Dark Strategy based on the gathered findings and research. To facilitate key stakeholders' involvement in this process, the research, information, and findings will be organised into the thematic areas used during the stakeholder assembly: Safety and Security, Economic

Development and Opportunities, Community and Culture, and Accessibility and Positive Places.

- 8.4 Several workshops will be organised, inviting relevant stakeholders to participate in reviewing the information, opinions, and findings gathered throughout the Westminster After Dark engagement process. These stakeholder workshops will align with the vision and principles established during the Stakeholder Assembly and will focus on how the council can formulate a strategy to address the issues or opportunities identified during this process. These thematic workshops are currently being scheduled to take place between March and May.
- 8.5 The timeline aims to finalise the Westminster After Dark Strategy by June, with the draft Strategy set for agreement and sign-off by July, initiating a public consultation period lasting 10 weeks. Following the consultation period, the final Strategy will be ratified and published. It is anticipated that this strategy will come into effect in Autumn 2024.

9. Financial Implications

- 9.1 Funding for Westminster After Dark primarily draws from the existing budgets and resources allocated within the Council's Corporate Services, Regeneration, Economy and Planning, and Environment, Climate and Public Protection Directorates. In cases where additional financial support is required for specific activities related to public engagement, the Council has actively pursued external grants.
- 9.2 The Council has secured £20,000 through the Greater London Authority's (GLA) London Recovery Programme which has part funded the delivery of the Westminster After Dark Stakeholder Assembly. The council has further matched this grant with £40,000 sourced from the 'Thriving Economy' budget under the purview of the Economy and Skills department. This funding will ensure that the costs associated with delivering this project can be met through grant funding and existing resources budgets.

10. Legal and Governance Implications

- 10.1 There are no legal or governance implications because of this report.

11. Environmental, Ecological and Carbon Impact

- 11.1 The Council is committed to becoming a zero-carbon city by 2040 whilst also meeting the World Health Organisation levels of pollution and achieving the ecological emergency ambitions. The evening and night-time environment can significantly impact the ecological landscape, pollution, and carbon footprint. As the development of the Westminster After Dark Plan is in its preliminary stages, a specific assessment of its environmental, ecological and carbon impact is currently unfeasible due to the absence of defined measures or approaches.

11.2 However, acknowledging the potential surge in the utilisation of the evening and night-time environment by residents, visitors, workers, and businesses, it's crucial to anticipate these associated risks. The following highlights areas where extended usage of the evening and night-time environment, as integral parts of any future Westminster After Dark Plan, could pose potential carbon-related risks:

11.2.1 Transportation Emissions: Extended operating hours often lead to increased transportation activities during late hours. This can result in higher emissions from vehicles, particularly if public transport options are limited, leading to a rise in carbon emissions due to increased traffic. However, if extended operating hours evens out demand for non-public transport related vehicle movements then congestion could potentially be eased. Consideration should be given to freight, servicing and delivery movements that could change depending on the outcome of evening activity changes.

11.2.2 Energy Consumption: Extended hours of operation for businesses, entertainment venues, and nightlife establishments can lead to increased energy consumption. Cooking, lighting, heating, cooling, and other operational requirements contribute to higher energy usage, potentially increasing carbon emissions and air pollutants if not managed sustainably/offset through improving efficiency of operating systems e.g., changing from gas to electric cooking methods; servicing A/C units regularly, putting lighting and heating onto specific timers.

11.2.3 Waste Generation: An increase in evening economic activity will result in increased waste generation, including disposable packaging, food waste, and single-use items. Lack of participation in food and dry recycling schemes has a negative environmental impact and lack of storage in central areas can result in more waste being placed out on the streets for longer periods of time and risks unsightly streets as well as increased littering/dumping issues.

11.2.4 Habitat Disturbance: Extended operating hours, can disrupt natural habitats and ecosystems. Noise, light pollution, and increased human activities during late hours can disturb wildlife, affecting their behaviour, nesting patterns, and feeding habits.

11.2.5 Biodiversity Loss: Further development associated with a bustling evening and night-time environment might lead to habitat loss or fragmentation. This can result in reduced biodiversity as areas are repurposed for commercial or recreational use, impacting local flora and fauna. This should be mitigated wherever possible through improving quieter habitats elsewhere in the vicinity.

11.2.6 Pollution: Increased human activities during the evening and night-time can contribute to various types of pollution. For instance, light pollution can affect nocturnal animals and disrupt their natural rhythms. Moreover, if waste management practices are inadequate, it can lead

to littering and pollution in surrounding areas, affecting ecosystems and water bodies. Increases in indoor and outdoor pollution are a likely outcome of increased economic output and this should be offset wherever possible.

- 11.3 Though a comprehensive evaluation of carbon impact is pending, it's imperative to pre-emptively address these areas to mitigate potential environmental repercussions associated with an increased utilisation of the evening and night-time environment in the Westminster After Dark Plan's future phases. Early consideration of these issues through consultation and scrutiny gives maximum opportunity for mitigating and minimising the impacts.
- 11.4 We are committed to evaluating the environmental and ecological impacts associated with any actions within that plan as it is being developed. Removal or mitigation of increased carbon will be a priority to support our aims to become a zero-carbon city by 2040 and to meet World Health Organisation levels of pollution, as well as meeting our ecological emergency ambitions. For example, the following are areas that will be considered as part of the potential options for mitigation or removal for those impacts:
 - 11.4.1 Sustainable Practices: Encouraging businesses to adopt energy-efficient technologies, promoting sustainable transportation options, considering freight, and servicing delivery efficiencies, and implementing waste reduction and recycling programs can minimise environmental impacts. The Council supports a Westminster Sustainable City Charter which can help and support businesses participation in this agenda.
 - 11.4.2 Legislative Powers and Council Policies: Utilising existing legislative powers and utilising Council policies around noise levels, waste management, and emissions control can help mitigate the negative effects of the evening and late-night environment.
 - 11.4.3 Community Engagement: Involving local communities in decision-making processes and ensuring their concerns are addressed can help balance the economic benefits of an evening and night-time environment with social and environmental considerations.
 - 11.4.4 Innovation and Technology: Exploring innovative solutions such as smart lighting, efficient waste management systems, and alternative transportation options including low carbon servicing and delivery can help reduce the carbon impact of late-night activities.
 - 11.4.5 Green Infrastructure: Implementing and investing in additional or alternative green spaces, such as parks and gardens or on rooftops, within urban areas can offset habitat loss and provide refuges for wildlife and support wildlife corridors to help nature adapt to changing human environments.

11.4.6 Lighting and Design: Employing responsible lighting designs and technologies to minimise light pollution and its impact on nocturnal animals. This can be as simple as avoiding upwards lighting focusses.

11.5 Balancing the economic benefits of a vibrant evening and late-night environment with the need to mitigate its environmental, ecological and carbon impacts is crucial for sustainable urban development. Collaborative efforts involving the Council, businesses, residents, other stakeholders, and partners are essential to achieving a more sustainable and responsible evening and night-time environment.

12. Equalities Impact

12.1 The reach of the Westminster After Darks engagement and final plan is city-wide. It will have impacts for all residents, businesses, workers, and visitors in the city. If Westminster has a strong, sustainable, and resilient evening and night-time economy, all those who live, work, run a business or visit in the city stand to benefit. However, impacts will be differently felt by individuals and groups within Westminster's communities, depending on their needs and circumstances.

12.2 We know that Westminster has significant wealth disparities across different geographic areas and sections of the community. Indeed, Westminster is unique in that it contains LSOA's that are rated among both the most deprived and least deprived in the country. These considerable disparities in affluence relate to inequalities in opportunity, wellbeing, and quality-of-life outcomes for residents. We have completed an Equality Impact Assessment, and our understanding of these existing disparities shapes the Westminster After Dark Plan and will be the driving force behind it.

13. Consultation and Engagement

13.1 The Council's consultation and engagement approach associated with Westminster After Dark is detailed within the body of this report.

If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers, please contact Kerry Simpkin, Head of Licensing, Place and Infrastructure Policy via email: ksimpkin@westminster.gov.uk

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Analysis of the Common Place Westminster After Dark Surveys received between October 2023 and February 2024.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Westminster City Council's Fairer Economy Plan 2023