



Subject:	Motion – Industry led Initiatives to Tackle Sexual Harassment within our Night-time Economy
Date:	12th April, 2023
Reporting Officer:	Stephen Hewitt, Building Control Manager (ext: 2435)
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Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To provide the Committee with an update on a motion on industry led initiatives to tackle sexual harassment within our night-time economy.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is requested to consider the representation from Hospitality Ulster and the information provided in this report and note the initiatives that are in place or being developed to help tackle sexual harassment within our night-time economy.
3.0	Background
3.1	At the meeting on 12th December 2018, the Committee considered a motion which had been brought by former Councillor McReynolds to the Council meeting on 3rd December. The Committee agreed to amend the wording to read as follows:

3.2	<i>This Council is concerned at the number of people in Belfast that feel they have been the victim of sexual harassment. Accordingly, the Council will undertake to meet with our universities, hospitality sector and the PSNI to explore any industry led initiatives that we can support, to tackle sexual harassment within our night-time economy, keeping in mind that this is a global societal issue that needs tackled.</i>
3.3	After discussion, it was agreed that the Building Control Manager would undertake research and would bring a report back to the Committee and invite Hospitality Ulster and any other organisations who may have an interest in an industry led initiative to deter sexual harassment to the meeting.
	<u>Summary Position following the December 2018 Committee Meeting</u>
3.4	Due to resource constraints in the Service, work on this did not commence until January 2020. Meetings were then held with Councillor McReynolds, QUB and Hospitality Ulster to explore what initiatives were in progress.
3.5	With the onset of the pandemic and hospitality venues closed, no further progress was possible in 2020. Thereafter, whilst hospitality was no longer under the same restrictions because of covid the cost-of-living crisis was, and still is, having a significant impact on the sector and this led to further delays in progressing the motion.
3.6	More recently, meetings have taken place with Hospitality Ulster, QUB and the PSNI to explore initiatives aimed at creating a safer and more inclusive night-time economy and these are outlined below.
4.0	Key Issues
	<u>Police Service of Northern Ireland Initiatives</u>
4.1	The PSNI has joined with licensed venues and security staff across Northern Ireland to help keep people safe while enjoying a night out.
4.2	The safety initiative 'Ask for Angela' was launched in Northern Ireland in December 2022 and, since then, local bars, clubs and other licensed venues have been encouraged to sign up to the scheme.
4.3	Anyone who is feeling unsafe, vulnerable or threatened can discreetly seek help by approaching venue staff and asking them for 'Angela'. This code-phrase will indicate to staff they require help, and a trained member of staff will then look to support and assist them. This might be through reuniting them with a friend, seeing them to a taxi, or by calling venue security and/or Police.
4.4	Venues that support 'Ask for Angela' have been given access to a training package, giving their staff the ability to help customers who may be in a situation that makes them feel vulnerable or unsafe.
4.5	The training explores what vulnerability is, how to identify it and appropriate interventions to take. A range of online assets and further information is available from https://www.psni.police.uk/AskForAngela .
4.6	A toolkit has been developed, with key messages and graphics, to promote the scheme to local venues and the wider public on social media and beyond and is attached at Appendix 1.

4.7	<p>A representative of the PSNI will be attending the Committee meeting to provide further details of its work in this area.</p> <p><u>Hospitality Ulster Initiatives</u></p>
4.8	<p>Hospitality Ulster (HU) and the PSNI worked jointly to launch the 'Ask for Angela' initiative in N. Ireland and are working with TEO on a task force tackling sexual violence against women.</p>
4.9	<p>Ask for Angela is a support mechanism aimed at informing and educating hospitality industry staff about customer welfare and vulnerability. Through a code phrase that can be used by customers to discretely seek help, 'Ask for Angela' reassures customers that support is available. The code phrase is pointless without proper and straightforward training for staff and HU have provided guidance on this to their members.</p>
4.10	<p>HU has a variety of Safer Socialising Resources to assist their members including the planned Women's Night Safety Charter, Spiking Guidance and guidance on preventing sexual harassment which all links to the N. Ireland Ask for Angela initiative.</p>
4.11	<p>It also provides the secretariat for the Independent Panel that oversees the Joint Industry Code for the Responsible Retailing of Alcohol which, if sold irresponsibly, can lead to antisocial behaviour including sexual harassment.</p> <p><u>Women's Night Safe Charter</u></p>
4.12	<p>As part of its safer socialising initiative, Hospitality Ulster is planning to rollout the Women's Night Safety Charter (attached as Appendix 2), which is identical to the London Mayor's charter, and invites key stakeholder organisations and hospitality businesses to sign up to the charter and related actions. HU has just begun inviting key stakeholder organisations to sign the charter.</p>
4.13	<p>For the hospitality industry, the charter will be supported by Listen, Learn, Lead training provided by the charity White Ribbon (attached as Appendix 3).</p>
4.14	<p>White Ribbon NI was launched in Northern Ireland in November 2021. Through awareness raising and education, White Ribbon NI seeks to end violence against women in all its forms. White Ribbon believes that giving everyone the information they need to challenge the ideas and attitudes which have perpetuated violence against women and girls is a step we can all take towards being part of the solution.</p>
4.15	<p>As part of this initiative, HU plans to establish a steering group with senior management representation from key stakeholder organisations including TEO, PSNI, Local Authorities, Translink, TNI, etc. The steering group would meet two or three times a year to review the effectiveness of current initiatives, review emerging issues and if needed develop new initiatives to address Women's Safety at night. But to avoid duplication, HU are also exploring if there is an existing group that could fulfil this role.</p>
4.16	<p>Colin Neill, Chief Executive, Hospitality Ulster will be available to provide Members with further background information on the industry led initiatives aimed at tackling sexual harassment within our night-time economy.</p> <p><u>TEO Initiatives</u></p>
4.17	<p>The Northern Ireland Executive has directed that a Strategy to End Violence Against Women and Girls be developed and the Executive Office is leading this work across departments.</p>

4.18	A programme of engagement and research is underway to inform the co-design process, with the aim of having a draft framework for the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy ready for consultation in early 2023.
4.19	The Strategy to End Violence Against Women and Girls; the Equally Safe Strategy will identify actions to tackle all kinds of offences, ranging from micro-aggressions and misogyny, through to violent and abusive behaviour directed at women and girls precisely because they are women and girls. This includes crimes and unwanted behaviour in the physical and online world.
	<u>Summary of Initiatives by QUB</u>
4.20	QUB has a zero-tolerance policy and any form of sexual misconduct is regarded as completely unacceptable and taken very seriously by the University. A variety of guidance and support options are available to students.
4.21	<p>QUB representative Brian Horgan (Head of Campus Food and Drink; Student Plus Directorate) and QUB colleagues have provided an overview of the strategies implemented by the institution. Key aspects include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The University Conduct Regulations are published on student guidance services and clearly define to students what behaviours are deemed inappropriate and what will be considered as sexual misconduct. • Report and Support – mechanisms have been established for students to report matters of concern, such matters inclusive of sexual harassment. Additionally, the Student Wellbeing Service is positioned to provide a wide range of support services to students. • Importantly, the University recognise many of their students work in bars & nightclubs; they are seeking to inform such individuals on matters related to Zero tolerance and therefore deliver change beyond their own premises.
	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u>
5.1	None.
	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u>
6.1	None.
7.0	<u>Documents Attached</u>
	<p>Appendix 1: PSNI Ask for Angela toolkit</p> <p>Appendix 2: Women's Night Safety Charter</p> <p>Appendix 3: Listen, Learn, Lead training provided by the charity White Ribbon</p>