

City Cllr Christopher Smowton:

Firstly, thanks for deferring this — I think there's both considerable confusion, as well as material problems with the policy, so I think it's right to take a step back and consider.

Secondly, we should consider the budgetary matters here: those councillors calling for the policy to be completely scrapped should bear in mind that £400,000 a year would need to be cut from somewhere else, and there are no "good" cuts available in the County's revenue budget.

With that said, there are both good things in the paper that are under-communicated, and things that need changing. For example, the paper talks about retaining lighting near licensed premises and on isolated pathways. Those are good things, but they're not at all recognised by the public presently and that's because they haven't been communicated: in whatever version of this comes back, please make sure to highlight these necessary carve-outs.

When it comes to things to change, firstly there's the hours of operation: I noted in Cllr Sudbury's email he expressed that the hours would vary across the county depending on local circumstances. The paper didn't give that impression at all, so if that is the intention please communicate it clearly. There are places like rural hamlets without licensed premises where an 11pm switch-off might be appropriate, but that's very different to a city where there's a lot of licensed premises, a lot of nighttime activity and a lot of people working shifts.

Finally, there's already excellent coverage in the paper about the actual crime impact when other councils have implemented part-night lighting, but I would want us to also address the issue of dissuasion: when lighting regimes change, are people less inclined to go out at night, less inclined to take late shifts, and similar issues. This is an impact that I expect will be most impactful on women and older people in particular, since they may be more reticent to go out in darkness.