

## Southports Night Time Economy

Sunday, 09 March 2008

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Raising concerns with David Davis MP Shadow Home Secretary on the night time economy in Southport due to the introduction of the Licensing Act 2003 which opened the door for 24 hour drinking laws to be implemented.

Government legislation enabled licensed premises to extend their hours of opening with strict guide lines that initially gave little opportunity to oppose by the general public.

The extended hours was not supported by full police presence in the area. Previous opening times

2am/3am were extended to 4am/6am with the allocation of police reduced at 3am by half and having to cover a wider area.

The recent visit of Merseyside Chief Constable to Southport town centre to assess the situation failed to inspect the area after 12 midnight when he would have been aware that at 4am the town was still buzzing with few police in the area. I am advised that a further visit is to be made to the area by the Chief Constable and this will be welcomed.

Other than private transport the only means of leaving the town centre is by taxi and for this reason support has been given to them, and those of the local community using this service, by providing Taxi Marshalls, who are located at the main Hackney Carriage Rank on Lord Street, are Sefton Security Officers being supported by the Police who provide them with headcams and a radio connected to the police within the area.

Private hire also offer a valuable service but as they do not have a "rank" the taxi marshalls are not relevant to them.

On going concerns are associated with late night drinking including the provision of cheap drink being advertised throughout the area and noise after 3am affecting local hotels.

David Davis has asked to be kept informed on issues covering Southport.