

Response ID ANON-GXRH-UWGC-F

Submitted to **CALL FOR EVIDENCE AND VIEWS ON THE LICENSING AND REGISTRATION OF CLUBS (AMENDMENT) BILL**
Submitted on **2020-12-18 20:41:22**

Introduction

What is your name?

Name:
[REDACTED]

What is your email address?

Email:
[REDACTED]

What is your organisation?

Organisation:

Please indicate if you are providing a submission:

as an individual

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation or business please tell us briefly how it relates to the subject matter of the Bill:

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

1. The Policy Objectives of the Bill

What are your views on the overall policy objectives? Do you think that the Bill will meet those objectives? If not, why not?

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

I think relaxation of the current draconian law is long overdue.

Our alcohol laws should provide for the requirements of tourists coming here.

It is not wise, nor is it our place, to be telling responsible tourists when they may imbibe some alcohol.

As regards the local misuse of alcohol, the costs of treatment of addicts or those who are problematic drinkers should be paid for from a levy on alcohol sales, in the same way as states in the US provide for the treatment of people who may abuse legally-available cannabis. The public purse is not raided to pay for it. Since we're trying to attract and provide services to tourists, and in dealing with alcohol misuse and its attendant social ills locally, we should also consider legalising the purchase and consumption of cannabis in registered coffeeshops.

Cannabis users do not start street brawls, damage property, or use the public realm as an open-air lavatory. Nor do they put heavy pressures on the local Emergency departments. It would generate significant income for the local economy and taxes on its sale would bring in a lot of money to be spent on other services in the city. It would also help lift the impression of Belfast as a strict theocratic place and show that some of us are decent, welcoming, people who have no desire to ram our religious beliefs or lack thereof down anyone else's throat while they do us the courtesy of visiting us, spending in our economy and, hopefully, having a good time.

The current law is overly moralistic and Victorian in ethos.

It is not suited to the world in which we currently live.

Therefore, while making the necessary provisions for helping out those who misuse alcohol, our laws should be as tourist-friendly as possible.

Belfast needs to modernise.

Every other major city in Ireland, the UK and abroad is 24/7/365.

We need a city that is 24/7/365.

Not a city which shuts down at the end of office hours every day.

Modernised alcohol regulations will help in changing the city to serve tourists better and thereby, hopefully, help address the problems of boarded up shops because people have switched to shopping online.

2. Easter Opening Hours and Additional Permitted Opening Hours

The removal of restrictions at Easter [Clauses 1 & 23]?

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

I concur.

Additional permitted hours for certain licensed premises [Clause 2]?

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

I concur.

PSNI authorisation for additional permitted hours for smaller pubs [Clause 4]?

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

I concur.

“Drinking-up Time” and the Alignment of Alcohol and Entertainment Licences

What are your views on the extension of “drinking-up” time?

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

It's a sensible means to stagger the emptying of licensed premises, so that everyone isn't all thrown out at the same time.

What impact do you think it would have on alcohol consumption towards closing time and during ‘drinking up’ time?

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

The current law encourages over-buying before last orders. It's more difficult to shift customers with unfinished drinks on the table. The new proposals should calm that down somewhat and make customer exit more orderly.

What impact do you think it would have on issues such as anti-social behaviour and crowd dispersal?

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

If people are leaving at different times, crowds should be less of a problem. The police should be visibly present to quietly manage any crowds which may occur, as they do in Amsterdam, for example.

Do you have any comments on the proposals to align closing time for liquor and entertainment licences [Clause 3]?

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

I believe it makes sense.

4. Supporting Tourism, Special Events and Small Producers

Do you think that the provisions contained within the Bill will have a positive impact on hospitality and/or tourism and in Northern Ireland? If so, how?

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

We currently tell tourists what they cannot do while here.

That's marketing madness.

They come here, spend money here, and within the usual reasonable requirements, should be able to decide for themselves when they wish to drink alcohol and our night life would be boosted, I believe, once Covid is no longer a health emergency.

What are your views on the proposals relating to permitted hours for special events [Clauses 6 & 25]?

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

I concur.

What are your views on the provisions of the Bill that are aimed at supporting small local producers of beer, cider and spirits [Clause 8]? What impact do you envisage this could have on tourism? Do you feel that the regulatory framework, as outlined in the Bill, is sufficiently robust?

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

People seem to like seeing alcoholic brands made, so all we can do to add to the economy and attract the visitors to visit these local producers, we should facilitate them to do so. It should add money to the local economy.

5. Children and Young People (under the age of 18)

The removal of the requirement of a licensed premises or registered club to hold a children's certificate [Clauses 10 & 26]?

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

Permitting certain premises to hold underage functions; the conditions that must be met; the permitted opening hours; and, proposed enforcement action [Clauses 11 & 27]?

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

Permitting the attendance of young people to remain on licensed premises to attend a private function (e.g. a wedding reception) and the proposed conditions that must be met [Clauses 12 & 28]?

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

The strengthening of the current law around the delivery of alcohol [Clause 9] and the delivery of alcohol to young people [Clause 13]?

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

The prohibition on self-service and sale of alcohol by vending machines [Clauses 15 & 30]?

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

Permitting children and young people to be present in a sporting club to 11:00pm during the summer months (1 June to 31 August) [Clause 29]?

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

Permitting children and young people to attend an awards ceremony in a sporting club one night per calendar year (until 11pm) [Clause 29]?

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

Overall, do you feel the measures are adequate to protect children and young people from alcohol related harm? If not, why not?

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

6. Alcohol Consumption and Alcohol-Related Harm

What impact do you think these measures will have on reducing alcohol consumption and preventing alcohol-related harm?

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

Do you have any other comments in relation to any other aspect of the Bill in relation to alcohol consumption and alcohol-related harm?

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

7. Regulation, Enforcement, Offences and Penalties

The Bill proposes to allow statutory approval for voluntary industry-led codes of practice in relation to the sale and supply of alcohol in licensed premises and registered clubs [Clauses 19 & 32]. Do you feel these are an effective means of helping to regulate the industry? If not, what alternatives would you suggest?

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

Self-regulation is no regulation.

The Bill contains provisions to permit a court, when determining an application for an occasional licence, to impose terms and conditions on the licence with consequences for non-compliance [Clause 18]. What are your views on this?

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

I concur.

What are your views on the measures in the Bill that would require a body corporate (licensee) to notify the courts and police of any change of directorship (within 28 days) [Clause 20]?

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

I concur.

Throughout the Bill there are a number of new offences and/or penalties under The Licensing (NI) Order 1996, The Registration of Clubs (NI) Order 1996 and The Betting, Gaming, Lotteries and Amusements (NI) Order 1985. The Committee would welcome any comments you have in relation to any of these.

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

8. Resource Implications for Certain Organisations/Bodies

(a) The PSNI:

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

Police are supposed to be on public streets, ensuring public order and prevention of crime.

This may cost the PSNI more, but that's what we pay them for.

They are the only ones with the legal powers required to police such issues.

b) Health and social services:

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

I think people who attend A&E with injuries resulting from the consumption of alcohol should be required to make a payment of £100 to help recoup some of the expense involved in treating them. We withhold treatment from patients who don't stop smoking. People who get into unnecessary brawls, due to alcohol, and suffer injury as a result, should have to pay some recompense for their treatment, to deter them from doing it again.

c) Other organisations (please specify):

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

9. Registered Clubs

Do you have any additional comments on the provisions in the Bill which specifically relate to registered clubs [i.e. Clauses 22 to 32]?

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

10. Additional Information

Are there any other measures not included in the Bill that you think should be included and why?

Please provide your comments in the text box below:

Do you have any other comments you would like to make?

Please provide your comments in the text box below: