

Pilot Review with the Hospitality Sector

1. Introduction

This report is the outcome of a short review on three specific regulatory issues impacting on the hospitality sector in Northern Ireland. The Review is a pilot as part of the Review of Business Red Tape, taken forward by the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Investment, supported by both the NI Executive and UK Government. The Pilot is designed to test a new model for undertaking sector or business specific regulatory issues identified by industry which could potentially be improved to lessen the burden on business while continuing to meet the policy intent.

This Review focused on Food Hygiene, Liquor Licensing and Entertainment Licensing. These issues were identified by industry representatives who volunteered to work with the Department in undertaking this pilot review. The industry representative organisations which played an active role in this review are Pubs of Ulster (lead organisation), Federation of Small Business and NI Hotels Federation.

While industry representatives identified liquor licensing as one of the areas to focus on in this pilot review they are in agreement that there is no desire to revisit those issues which have been considered and consulted on by officials in DSD as part of its Liquor Licensing Review, which is resulting in a Bill being introduced to the Assembly in 2015. Furthermore the industry recognises that there are a few policy issues identified in this pilot review, however once again recognise that DSD cannot give due consideration to this while their focus is on the Bill.

A Terms of Reference was agreed between industry and DETI (attached at Annex A). The Terms of Reference set out the approach and methodology to be adopted for this pilot review. It was agreed that the value of this process would be to secure a valid evidential base to present to relevant Departments and Regulators which could be a catalyst for change in the regulatory regime of the particular issues identified.

2. Background

The Department of Enterprise, Trade & Investment was tasked with leading on a Review of Business Red Tape, an action included in the joint NI Executive/UK Government initiative – Building a Prosperous and United Community.

The Review was announced by the Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Investment in December 2013 and guided by an Advisory Panel of high calibre people involved in public and private sector.

A key aim of the Review of Business Red Tape was to consider UK Government policies and assess their potential applicability in Northern Ireland. Two high profile initiatives of the UK Government are Red Tape Challenge and Focus on Enforcement.

The Red Tape Challenge afforded an open call to comment and consider regulation on the Statute Book with the view to seeing what could be repealed, revised, consolidated or kept. A thematic and

sectoral approach was taken with a rolling series of open calls for comment and evidence to support action by the Government.

Focus on Enforcement was designed to undertake specific short reviews, on issue or specific sectors, to assess how improvements could be made to how regulators operate in securing compliance.

The Northern Ireland Review of Business Red Tape devised a model based on the intent and approach of both the Red Tape Challenge and Focus on Enforcement to address specific issues, sectors or themes in the regulatory landscape, looking at both the regulations and how they are delivered on the ground. The model is attached at Annex B.

3. Current Regulatory Landscape

The table below sets out the current landscape for the three identified issues for this pilot

Issue	Policy Lead	Delivery	Comment
Food Hygiene & Food Hygiene Rating Scheme	Food Standards Agency – non Ministerial National organisation operating on a devolved matter. All Regulations are devolved to the NI Assembly and DHSSPS is the NI Department sponsoring the legislation on behalf of the FSA	Food hygiene and food standards are delivered through the Environmental Health Service on behalf of the Food Standards Agency. The Environmental Health Service operates through local authority structures (currently 26 Councils)	Food Hygiene is delivered solely through the 26 Environmental Health Service organisations in the local Councils in Northern Ireland. They operate under a Framework Agreement for Delivery of Official Feed and Food Controls agreed with the Food Standards Agency. A Food Hygiene Rating Bill is being introduced to the NI Assembly by the DHSSPS Minister in autumn 2014 to place the current voluntary Food Hygiene Rating Scheme on a statutory basis.
Liquor Licensing	Department for Social Development. DSD is currently working through a policy review of liquor licensing and is bringing forward	NI Courts & Tribunal Service issue Liquor Licenses and maintain a register of information as required under the legislation.	Industry representatives agreed that they did not wish to revisit the work undertaken by DSD in the liquor licensing review,

	legislation as the outworkings of this review.		however feel that there are related matters and issues that could be addressed to lessen the burden on business.
Entertainment Licensing	Department of the Environment. DOE Minister announced a review of entertainment licensing in May 2014 with a view to improving the entertainment licensing regime in Northern Ireland which supports business, and protects citizens.	Local councils are responsible for the awarding of entertainment licenses as required under the legislation	Industry representatives are involved directly in the entertainment licensing review working group set up by DOE and DOE officials welcome the evidence that this pilot review will provide to support their work.

4. Evidence and Emerging Findings

It was evident through the discussions with businesses, regulators and departments that there is an openness to listen and indeed an appetite to improve the regulatory regime to be more efficient effective and deliver something for businesses, by reducing the burden and impact they experience.

The pilot review benefited from engagement directly with businesses, and afforded the opportunity to have roundtable discussions with regulators, departments and delivery organisations. Industry representatives organised a series of workshops – two on each issue – with three held in Belfast and three in Londonderry. An additional meeting was held with businesses in the off-sales industry which is also impacted by liquor licensing.

As the agreed lead organisation, Colin Neill, Chief Executive of Pubs of Ulster chaired each of the workshop meetings which were well attended. A good cross section of the hospitality sector which are impacted by the issues under review were present at each meeting. The meetings were purposefully designed to secure feedback and evidence directly from businesses on what concerns them most, or indeed what they consider works well, for each of the three issues. There was in the region of 10 people at each meeting. A list of all businesses represented at the workshop meetings is listed at Annex C

All those who have participated in this review welcome the value attached to good regulation, which is implemented in an effective and efficient manner, and the important part they play in supporting legitimate business. They recognise the value of protecting citizen safety and public health. There are concerns however on the increasing regulatory demands being placed on businesses in the hospitality sector and the lack of available information, advice, guidance and planning time to

prepare for new requirements scheduled to come in. There is an acceptance however that while government has a key role to play in helping businesses, equally trade associations, business bodies and businesses themselves have a responsibility to take necessary action to know about the regulatory requirements imposed on them.

There was also considerable interest shown in the GB 'Primary Authority' initiative and the possibility of introducing this to Northern Ireland, especially if trade bodies could establish primary authority status with one of the new super councils on behalf of their members.

Food Hygiene

1. Engagement and communication
 - a. Businesses believe the FHRS scheme has not been properly communicated to customers what the hygiene ratings mean, and fear they may think it relates to food quality. FDA advised that their research indicates a good understanding of the scheme amongst customers
 - b. Businesses are keen to engage on these issues and early engagement with the industry is needed, but to avoid consultation fatigue better and more effective alternatives are required
 - c. A range of communication activities are required outside of letters and email. Greater use of social media and other technologies to communicate new initiatives and activities would be useful to business. An alerts based system would also be useful
 - d. Allergen events have taken place but many businesses have not been made aware of these. Guidance on this upcoming requirement would be useful to businesses, who are unsure as to what this means for them
 - e. There is some confusion as to what constitutes the best single online source for businesses to get information on this area
 - f. Suggestion that FSA works with industry bodies to undertake some pilot exercises to assist implementation for the new allergen requirements. Such piloting could afford evidence for case study material to support information, guidance and advice to businesses, along with helping raise awareness with industry. This planned pilot approach could be adopted for other measures in the future if deemed successful.
 - g. The industry would like pilot schemes for any future initiatives to be set up in order to assess the full cost to business involved
2. Implementation and Enforcement (including Food Hygiene Rating System)
 - a. Lack of distinction between different types of business, for example a restaurant and a shop selling pre-packed, is an issue for the industry who would like to see some sort of distinction added, such as colour-coding – for example a 5 rating can be afforded to a fine dining restaurant, a convenience store or a public sector school canteen – all stickers look the same and therefore don't help to differentiate between the various business types
 - b. Some businesses have been advised they can never achieve the top rating due to limitations of the building they occupy, despite caring about this issue and

wanting to be seen as a top business in this area. FSA stated that achievement of a 5 should be possible for all businesses as it simply requires compliance with legal requirement and involves no gold-plating. Concerns therefore with the implementation and advice being carried out through the Environmental Health Service isn't consistent.

- c. A 'grace' period after assessment rather than an appeal system would allow businesses to rectify any issues identified during inspection would be helpful to business and deliver the same result
- d. Self assessment and online recording of some information in advance would be useful and allow for more effective use of inspection time, business time and wider regulator time.
- e. Businesses have experienced a lack of consistency between council boundaries and individual officers from the same council area.
- f. Businesses are reluctant to use the appeals process for fear of being penalised at a later date and are generally unaware that regulators are supposed to take a graduated approach to enforcement in order to work with and advise businesses to help them become compliant – Businesses need to be assured that an appeals system is there to support them and not to go against them, when they have a legitimate complaint or issue.
- g. Inspection of premises should avoid service times unless it is actually to inspect the actual operation and not paperwork.
- h. The establishment of a primary authority scheme in NI where trade bodies could select a primary authority for its members would be a significant move in standardising requirements and enforcement.

Liquor Licensing

2. Concern that there are sectors in the licensed trade which are under less scrutiny, accountability and inspection and therefore are able to make more commercial gain than other businesses, for example:
 - a. Registered clubs openly operate as pubs and host functions operating outside the law (open to non members which is counter to their original remit).
 - b. Irresponsible restaurants operating outside their licence category and selling alcohol without the need to purchase food. A practice that creates unfair trading conditions as they have not had to invest in purchasing a liquor licence and pay substantially less in rates. This practice also allows irresponsible restaurants to subsidise food process and undercut responsible restaurants who operate within the law.
3. Enforcement powers not fit for purpose. Would like to see:
 - a. Ability for immediate fines to be issued for non compliance with licence requirements. Lengthy drawn out Court hearings are costly and ineffective and not a deterrent.
 - b. More active involvement by PSNI in actively pursuing non compliant offenders
 - c. Service Level Agreements between PSNI and Environmental Health Service to undertake some inspection powers

- d. Awareness raising with enforcement bodies (PSNI) on the detail of liquor licensing legislation and the economic impact on responsible businesses of allowing illegal trading
 - e. Consistency of approach to enforcement across Northern Ireland – both on a geographical basis but also fairness in treatment of different licensed categories – some are more visible and publicly accessible than others and therefore attract more inspections than others, however this doesn't mean there is more misuse of licence conditions with these categories.
4. Licensing categories and definitions
- a. Would like to see the introduction of personal licences for people managed licensed premises – to improve accountability for the businesses which would support legitimate business and allow more effective action to be taken against non compliant businesses. This could be introduced with 'grandfather rights' to minimise any financial impact.
 - b. Would like to see additional licence controls introduced to tackle consumption/distribution of alcohol by unlicensed persons/premises and illegal sales in restaurants and 'bring your own' establishments. Currently premises operating a 'bring your own' policy can allow alcohol consumption 24/7, whilst licensed premises have controlled hours of consumption.
 - c. Licensees would welcome clarification on their legal responsibilities when alcohol is taken off their premises in unsealed containers
 - d. Licensees raised the above of Article 30 and would welcome greater clarification on the definition it can be used for – its use varies from cultural one off events through to small local events in a marquee and there is room for potential misuse of this licence to the detriment of legitimate business.
5. Application, Amendment and Renewal Process
- a. Establishment of a single NI Liquor Court would allow for a more efficient and specialist approach to licensing and potentially save the Court Service money.
 - b. With 5 year renewals some premises forget to renew their licence on time. This genuine mistake was made more complex and expensive as the courts cannot accept a renewal after it has lapsed by one year. Could the current one year time limit for renewal of liquor licences be removed as this would resolve the situation that occurred earlier this year, or indeed consideration be given to a reminder system for licensees so that their renewals are dealt with in a timely manner.
 - c. Licensees could spend in region of £5k in securing an amendment to the licence as a result of quite often small alterations to the premises (e.g. moving a wall to facilitate alterations to toilets). This is a significant expense and would welcome consideration of an initiative introducing flexibility to when an amendment is needed to the licence and less expensive conditions to satisfy the amendment requirements – for example – a certified architects drawing could suffice; could amends be done administratively instead of taking court time? Could a condition that capacity must not be increased by more than 10% floor plan in any one renewal period be permitted within existing licence conditions without the need to apply for an amended licence?

- d. The Court Service is currently required to advertise the need to renew liquor licences every year, despite the fact that most are renewed at the same time on a five year cycle. Could this requirement be removed as it is just confusing the situation and could save Court Service money? Pubs of Ulster has offered to undertake this role free of charge if licensees register with them.
6. Creation of a licensing forum
- a. To resolve issues and clarify legislation rather than using the fall back position; of let the courts decide. Whilst it is accepted the courts authority is supreme the current process is unfair and costly to licensees and inhibiting growth, as no licensee wants to appear in the courts and risk their licence. Also it is the licensee that ends up out of pocket as the policy officer does not have to bear the cost even if the licensee is proven right.
 - b. This Forum could include policy makers, regulators, enforcement bodies and business representative bodies

Entertainment Licensing

1. Concerns over the complexity and costs of the licensing process
 - a) A licence lasts for one year – In England it is indefinite with an annual check-up. Longer licences, or lifetime licences with safeguard criteria, should be considered.
 - b) Idea that holding a liquor licence is a mark of a responsible business and that this should carry over into entertainment licensing
 - c) Many different risk assessments, certifications and other documentation is required for licensing and businesses would benefit from clarification of what is needed for an entertainment licence specifically as this varies in each local authority
 - d) The various required certificates last for different periods of time. If these could be brought into line it would help businesses keep compliant
 - e) Different council areas seem to have different criteria and this makes things more complex for business, possibly a system that can be varied for different business types and buildings would work
 - f) There would be merit in Regulators working with each other to map out what certifications are needed for each regulatory requirement and how best to have these validated for inspection purposes. Ideally the business should hold these but be able to email or upload onto a central system where regulators can take note and update records as appropriate. Attached at Annex D is the first step at listing the various certificates or registrations held by businesses in this sector, which are specifically requested or required by Regulators. In addition brief case studies are included which show some differences in requirements from a number of local Councils.
 - g) Remove the need to have separate indoor and outdoor licenses, especially considering the rise in cafe culture
 - h) The definition of what is entertainment needs revised to include new forms of entertainment and exclude things like a darts match or pool game.

- i) The establishment of a primary authority scheme in NI where trade bodies could select a primary authority for its members who be a significant move in standardising requirements and enforcement.

2. Enforcement

- a) Environmental Health Service has limited enforcement powers, generally restricted to taking court action. This usually leads to a fine which is not substantial enough to act as a true deterrent and the delay doesn't impact on the issue of concern as it happens. Would therefore like consideration of other options for sanction that might help effect change with purposefully non compliant businesses.
 - a. The responsible retail code for liquor sales should be included as a material consideration and operate on a 'three strikes' principle,
 - b. The new tobacco sales legislation, with prohibitions on selling for a certain length of time after being found to be non-compliant, was also suggested as a model
- b) Traders without licences are operating illegally, but due to not having a licence they often fall outside of the scope of the regulator – consideration needs to be given to addressing this – introduce enforcement powers for persons/premises operating without a valid licence, these powers should give the officer the power to enforce immediate termination of the entertainment.
- c) Suggestion of a 'mid-term' assessment system for entertainment licences to be introduced to allow objections to be raised at this stage

3. Costs and impacts on growth

- a) Advertising costs when applying for a licence can be significant and any way to reduce or remove this, such as through applying online, would be useful
- b) It was suggested that if costs of applying for a licence could be reduced this would increase the likelihood of those currently operating without a licence, or who are non-compliant, bringing themselves into line with the requirements
- c) Restaurants have noted an impact on tourists who complain that, after a meal, there is nowhere to go, reducing the potential for growth in both the hospitality and tourism sectors. If the licensing system does not enable legal filling of this market gap then there is a risk of losing this potential source of growth, or it being filled by rogue traders

4. Communication

- a) Create a licensing forum to include statutory bodies and trade associations, in order to build up a better understanding of the regulation, as well as to feed back industry concerns and issues, would be useful.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

While the three issues identified were considered independently and clearly there are specific issues for each of the three areas the recommendations put forward also highlight cross cutting measures and synergies which could be achieved in addressing regulatory matters from the business perspective and experience.

Create a **Stakeholders Forum** for businesses offering a retail, consumer led service bringing together all relevant regulators, departments and business and trade associations. The evidence has shown that early engagement with industry would benefit the design and implementation of regulatory solutions required to achieve policy objectives. Industry is keen to work with officials and see opportunities for more effective working relations through such a forum. This group could cover a number of issues from:

1. Devising agreed guidance for business on new regulations coming into force
2. Undertaking pilots with industry to formulate case study material
3. Addressing inconsistency of approach by regulators
4. Improve communication from policy maker through to regulatory through to businesses and ensure this is delivered in a timely manner
5. Look for areas of duplication of information need from regulators and assess how best to minimise this. This has some synergies with the Review of Business Red Tape recommendation in relation to a NI Business Regulation Hub and indeed the Dutch have recently introduced a 'Company Dossier' online product for businesses and regulators – www.ondernemingsdossier.nl .

Address the **costs of licence applications**, in terms of the financial cost, time cost and process cost. Fees, advertising, court times and associated costs all impact significantly on businesses and there is an opportunity to review these, introduce greater transparency and identify ways of introducing efficiencies to the process which will help businesses. In addition consideration could be given to the level the fee is pitched at and the impact this has on the industry and in particular how can greater levels of compliance be achieved and a culture created whereby all legitimate business wants to work within the regulatory regime as opposed to looking for opportunities to operate outside it.

Address the **duration of licences** and the 'needs' from regulators to support applications and renewals. There is inconsistency across Northern Ireland and across the industry in what regulators request businesses have in place to support licence applications – there needs to be greater clarity and justification for this and furthermore how this information is checked or validated. Some regulators wish to inspect original certificates, others are content that the business confirms they are in place. There is an opportunity for greater collaboration across regulators and work towards a more streamlined process and information needs system. Related to this is the licence duration and this review considers that once again consideration could be given across the regulatory regime on looking at the various licence periods and see what opportunity there is for convergence for legitimate business. Clearly this would need backed up by adequate processes for revoking or penalising misuse of the licence during its period of operation.

Powers to tackle **illegal operating** is a major area of concern for legitimate business in the hospitality sector – there are two aspects to this – firstly those who misuse the licence they operate under and those who operate without a licence. It is considered by the industry that the powers of regulators to take action for misuse of a licence condition are ineffectual and not fit for purpose. To have to wait on a court hearing many months after an incident does not have the impact on the trading practice of those who are operating in such a manner. Currently powers only cover actions within

the scope of a misuse of a licence however for those who operate without a licence are deemed outside scope and as such the powers afforded to the regulator are not relevant and therefore no action can be taken.

Establish a Primary Authority Scheme in Northern Ireland and pilot it with the hospitality sector as a means to introducing consistency, collaboration, transparency and partnership working with representative bodies in the industry. This would facilitate trade bodies being able to work with a selected Primary Authority with the new Council arrangements from 2015 and progress core standards, guidance and support which would be adopted consistently with all the members of the particular trade body throughout Northern Ireland.

In addition to these key recommendations it is requested that the emerging findings be reviewed by Departments and Regulators and consideration given to specific issues which would also be appropriate for improvements to the regulatory regimes in the hospitality sector.

Businesses in the hospitality sector respect the value of good regulation and good delivery and enforcement of regulation. They support this, however believe improvements can be made to the existing regulatory processes to make life easier for them, address inappropriate misuse of the legislation and support economic growth in local communities across Northern Ireland.

The recommendations resulting from this pilot review are simply a basis for moving forward and can make valid contributions to reducing the burden and impact on business and making this sector fairer, more competitive and be more effective at protecting society and the environment.

Review of Business Red Tape: Pilot review in Hospitality Sector.

The Hospitality Industry is working with the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Investment and other NI Departments and Regulators on a pilot review on three specific regulatory issues impacting on the industry.

The Department of Enterprise, Trade & Investment is leading on a Review of Business Red Tape, a key action in an Economic Pact between the UK Government and NI Executive. A work strand in the Review is to devise a model for undertaking specific issue or themed reviews and piloting it in three industry sectors to assess its viability for extending to other specific issue or themed reviews in the future.

Legitimate businesses recognise the need and value of good regulations and regulatory activity and the purpose of this pilot review is to home in on 3 specific issues in the hospitality sector to ascertain how the burdens on business could be reduced while affording the NI Executive and Regulators to maintain a fair and competitive marketplace which protects the local environment, employees and NI society and supports economic growth.

Representatives of the hospitality sector offered to participate in a sector review pilot and Pubs of Ulster, NI Hotels Federation and Federation of Small Businesses have participated in discussions with DETI officials to agree a methodology for this pilot review.

Three specific and related issues have been identified for consideration:

- Liquor Licensing – (This does not include hours etc)
- Entertainment Licensing
- Food Hygiene

DETI Review Team officials have worked with NI Departments and Regulators to prepare information on the current legislation and delivery approaches adopted in Northern Ireland and this is published on the Review of Business Red Tape website - <http://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/node/15288>.

It is proposed that a small series of workshop sessions will be held, along with a number of exploratory meetings with NI Departments/Regulators and other regulatory functions involved in licensing/permitting. The Chief Executive of Pubs of Ulster will play a lead role in this pilot review and will be supported by the DETI Review Team.

Those invited to participate in the workshops will endeavour to review the information on legislation and regulatory delivery posted on the Red Tape NI website prior to attending the workshops.

Workshops

- Total of 6 will be organised - two each for each of the three issues identified above;

- DETI will agree the locations and timing of the 6 focus groups with the industry bodies and organise the venue, refreshments etc.
- Each of the three lead industry bodies referenced above will secure businesses from the wider hospitality industry and or associated services to attend each working group to contribute to the specific issue for that workshop;
- The workshops will consist of approximately 8-10 members participating in each;
- There will be a geographical spread across NI for the 6 workshops being held;
- A representative of the DETI review team will attend each workshop and record the outcomes from the group;
- Where possible a representative of a key Regulator and NI Department will attend also to provide more indepth knowledge of the current legislation and operational processes
- DETI will contribute to the costs of hospitality refreshments at each workshop;
- Where possible the workshops element of this review will be organised and held before the end of August.

Structure and Purpose of Workshops

This pilot review with the hospitality sector is to consider the legislation and delivery approach adopted by the Regulators and to gather hard evidence to support the opportunity to reform the approaches being used with the aim of reducing the burden on business. The workshops outlined above are designed to secure meaningful evidence from businesses as to their experiences and views on the regulatory requirements and for comment on possible options for improvement.

Those attending the workshops at the invitation of the industry representative body will be knowledgeable of operating a business within the legislation and regulatory delivery approach used and be in a position to provide evidence on issues which they consider could be done better or achieved in a better way, which would contribute to securing compliance while reducing the burden on business.

The workshops will be chaired by the CEO of Pubs of Ulster and will be conducted in a constructive and cohesive manner to ensure a meaningful contribution and a realistic outcome is achieved.

Outline model for Regulatory Reform

Sector Issue Reviews



Annex C

Businesses (and industry associations) that participated in the workshops

The Derg Arms, Castlederg
GH Hospitality Services
Encore Cake An Roll Bakery, Omagh
City Hotel, Londonderry
Da Vinci Ramada Hotel, Londonderry
The Park & Phoenix, Londonderry
The Downey Group
The Best Western White Horse Hotel, Londonderry
James Street South, Belfast
Beanchor
Shu, Belfast
Hudson, Belfast
Fitzwilliam Hotel, Belfast
ASDA
Winemark
Wineflair
MTB Solicitors
Haratio Inns Limited
The Merchant Hotel
The Coachman, Magherafelt
Badgers Bar, Londonderry
John Hewitt, Belfast
Pubs of Ulster
Federation of Small Businesses
NI Retail Consortium
NI Hotels Federation

In addition public sector officials from the following organisations participated in the workshops

Environmental Health Service
Licensing Forum NI
Belfast City Council
Derry City Council
Stabane District Council
Newtownabbey Borough Council
Craigavon Borough Council
Food Standards Agency
NI Courts & Tribunal Service
Department for Social Development
Department of the Environment
Department of Enterprise, Trade & Investment

Annex D

An example of some of the information required to be held by hospitality establishments/businesses (this is not a comprehensive list)

Information held
Staff - list of staff by department. ICE contacts if required.
Staff training log book
Alarm testing
Fire Safety Legislation/Assembly points
Fire Drills - list of dates and times - log book on these if required
Risk Assessment - Fire Authority & Action Plan
Certificates
Fire Detection and Alarm System
Gas (several areas)
Kitchen Canopy clean cert
Fire equipment certificate of maintenance
Emergency lighting periodic inspection
Lift maintenance report
Periodic inspection report for electrical installation
PAT testing appliances
Legionnaires inspection & Management Details
Air conditioning certificate.
TV Licences
Hotel Certification
Licences
Copy of Liquor licence
Entertainment licence
Children's Certificate
Risk Assessments
Health and Safety risk assessments
list of directors
annual return and going concern report

Applying for an Entertainment Licence – brief case studies

Process

While there may be some differences in individual Council procedures for applying for an entertainment licence, this brief outline of the process covers most key points in the process.

- Minimum of 28 days from the date of receipt process application.
- Consult with the Police Service of Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service when considering entertainment licensing applications and take any observations they make into account. Also give other interested parties the chance to express their views before we make our final decision.
- The licensing surveyor will inspect premises.
- Within seven days of submitting application, legal notice must be placed in two local newspapers.
- Repairs and maintenance may need to be carried out before licence issued.
- Fees range from £100 to £1000 and are non refundable even if licence application is unsuccessful.

Belfast City Council

Documents Required

Online or postal application form plus three copies of the floor plan of the premises (at a scale of 1:100) and all of the documents below:

Document	Duration
Public liability insurance declaration	One year
Entertainment licence advertisements	One year
Fire extinguisher certificate	One year
Emergency lighting certificate	One year
Fire alarm certificate	One year
Electrical certificate	Maximum of three years
Heating certificate	Two years
Ventilation certificate	Two years
Ceiling certificate	Four years
Structural floor certificate	Indefinite - this will then only be needed if the premises are altered or extended
Fire risk Assessment	One year

Only original documents may be submitted - no photocopies or faxes.

Down District Council

Documents Required

3 x Postal application forms plus three copies of the floor plan of the premises (only if changes from last application) and all of the documents below:

Document	Duration
Public liability insurance declaration	One year
Entertainment licence advertisement	One year
Emergency lighting certificate	One year
Fire alarm certificate	One year
Electrical certificate	Maximum of three years

No specification that they must be original documents.

Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council

Documents Required

3 x Postal application forms plus three copies of the floor plan of the premises (only if changes from last application) and all of the documents below:

Document	Duration
Public liability insurance declaration	One year
Entertainment licence advertisements	One year
Fire extinguisher certificate	One year
Emergency lighting certificate	One year
Fire alarm certificate	One year
Certificates in relation to the flammability of curtains, drapes, carpets, seat and floor coverings etc.	Various
Fire risk Assessment	One year

No specification that they must be original documents.