

## **Written evidence on Licensing and Registration of Clubs (Amendment) Bill to Committee for Communities**

### **Written evidence contributor.**

David Barbour retired: 18 years as local government councillor; 42 years in the Health Service of which 36 yrs was served in the Ambulance Service. I was abroad during the formal introduction of the Bill. After a period of illness I just discovered a reminder today (18<sup>th</sup> October 2006). My evidence is not based on any particular scientifically structured research and reflects my observations during life experiences. It is also coloured by family history; religious and cultural practices and belief. My approach is to work in a world of reality but to ensure there are transparent; good and workable protections for all sections of society. I apologise for a rather rushed submission. I think that staff; working in hospital accident & emergency departments, would have a lot to contribute.

### **Bullet point (1)**

I agree with restrictions on advertising of intoxicating liquor in supermarkets and off sales premises. Such consumables are depressant drugs and should not be promoted as normal general food stuff.

### **Bullet point (2)**

Whilst it is traditional to provide additional latitude to opening hours during festive and commemorative periods and events, I am uncomfortable with descriptions such as 'modest' changes and 'certain' licensed premises without a glossary of meaning. It is needful to ensure what is meant and that it is legally and practicably deliverable. In implementing healthy discrimination; the reasons need to be clear to public and vendors. The summary of the proposal mentions Easter only. The year is littered with special and statutory periods recognised and supported by government. There is need to see the context of a full year at the beginning rather than nibble at one part and eventually use one circumstance to try and force change in others. A broader risk assessment should be more beneficial.

### **Bullet point (3)**

I disagree with a long – finger approach of the one year trial period simply because of the type of substance being consumed and its noted effects on people. We have seen T.V. reports showing the work of emergency services dealing with the unleashing of unsociable behaviour on the streets in some of the inner cities in England particularly during late hours following late closure of outlets. I have handled serious road traffic accidents where people have taken too much drink. It seemed to me that these occurred more often during late hours and particularly at weekends. Time and practice develops culture so that an almost carte blanche longer period can be an attempt by some to undo regular checking and assessment. There are also employment considerations where staff may be reporting to work in a state of reduced efficiency. It should also be seen to be enforceable to prevent the sale of such liquor at the beginning of drinking up time with regular visits by statutory officers to prevent any under – the – counter sales and rear room drinking to the small hours. When do concessions end?

### **Bullet point (4)**

I am concerned about the alignment of entertainment and trading licences during extending opening. Whilst music etc is a useful instrument to hold the attention of consumers it needs regulated in a similar way to the 'drinking up' period. The dynamics of the various proposed changes seem to propose that all aspects will suddenly and neatly cease at the same time. If this is the case, it is not realistic; any scaling down of activities should be clearly signalled by the withdrawal of weighty elements that support the impression and signal continuous services. Our road traffic light system is an example.

**Bullet point (5)**

This point is closely linked to bullet point (6) so I prefer to deal with both in this response. The sit-in intoxicating liquor trade whilst seeming to be losing to the multi-national arms - length take -away liquor trade competitors; could be seen to be understandably trying to create a normal collective 'family' atmosphere market; similar to the growing 'eating out' restaurant type outlets. Parents and children; at the table, partaking of a wide variety of drinks and creating what appears a more normal 'soft' setting would dilute an evident segregation with the more stringent legal requirements. Children saturate the habits of society and must be protected from an influence that could easily form an attitude that without the ability to discern between what is permissible and not permissible to adopt a belief that what they see and maybe want to taste is right and lawful practice. What parents and family do in private at home is difficult for government to monitor and control but it is government's responsibility where it can effectively govern to do so to safeguard against unhelpful direction and practice. I am troubled by what seems a trend to blur the lines and promote a drift toward culture and practice that over time erodes traditional efforts to protect the better interests of society.

**Bullet point (6)**

See bullet point (5).

**Bullet point (7)**

I agree that licensed premises must display their licence conditions. This should be in a prominent place and no less obscure than statements on cigarette packages. I would support warning statements that over indulging of intoxicating liquor is a drug can lead to unwanted outcomes. It would be helpful in association with this to advertise agencies that provide advice and assistance.

**Bullet point (8)**

I would encourage government to highlight that it is a criminal offence for any person to provide intoxicating liquor to someone underage. This would help convict an older person being used to make purchases for minors or any adult with questionable motives.

**Bullet point (9)**

I would like to link this with bullet point (10). Government in the governance Health and Safety legislation rightfully impose conditions on the making, storage and use of harmful substances i.e. chemicals and dangerous drugs. While wanting to encourage a conscience of reasonable behaviour I would suggest that government should not ask voluntary groups and medical doctors only to hold the torch for controlling unregulated consumption of intoxicating liquor and any harmful outcomes. Government must be seen to be consistent across the range of practices that require safeguards and warnings for the benefit of its citizens and visitors. The objective should be to promote and encourage people to assess risks in their life and to enjoy a safer lifestyle.

**Bullet point (10)**

See bullet point (9).

David Barbour

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[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Tuesday, 18 October 2016