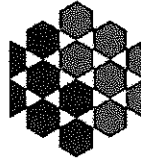


From the office of the  
Minister of the Environment



Department of the  
**Environment**

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Your reference: CSD/013/2011/SK

Our reference: COR/650/2013

05 August 2013

Dear Alex

Thank you for your letter of 1 July 2013 to my predecessor Alex Attwood inviting my Department to make a written submission on the Licensing of Pavement Cafés Bill as part of the Social Development Committee's call for evidence.

I am aware of the details of the Bill from my previous membership of the Social Development Committee and at second stage debate recently I had raised a concern regarding the removal of a statutory obligation on councils to consult with DOE Planning. However, I am now satisfied that the arrangements being put in place by DSD, informed by my officials, should ensure proper consideration of planning issues both before and after the transfer of planning functions to the new district councils.

Consequently, I can confirm that I have no concerns regarding the Bill as introduced and welcome the opportunities it may bring for small businesses and the benefits to the local economy within a properly regulated system.

Yours sincerely

**MARK H DURKAN MLA**  
**Minister of the Environment**

**Copied to:**

Anna Lo, MLA – Chairperson of the Environment Committee  
Helen Richmond – DOE DALO