

Q1. In the commercial arena, businesses already have licences so there would be little effect. It is unlikely that there would be significantly more events held under a revised regime, as they nearly all entail the sale of alcohol. Removing the need for temporary event notices altogether for low risk activities would provide a small financial benefit to community organisations. The primary block to community activity is fear of the various copyright agencies. Reform of the Licensing Act will have no effect unless that is addressed.

Q2.

Q3. The cost of obtaining and maintaining an authorisation for alcohol and entertainment is the same as that for an authorisation for alcohol only, so most of the alleged savings to business are illusory. The cost of defending actions in the courts will hugely increase costs for the businesses concerned. The formal enforcement route advocated would place substantial cost pressures on local authorities, the Police and the courts.

Q4. The proposals would lead to a sharp increase in enforcement costs. Licensing hearings are cheap to run and quickly concluded. Specialist legal services are rarely necessary. Litigation is protracted and legal costs can quickly become prohibitive. The proposals would be very expensive indeed. Cost savings are an illusion.

Q5. Enforcement through the courts is slow, happens after the event and does not engage residents. The proposals would boost the number of noise complaints dramatically, by undermining public confidence and delaying remedy.

Q6. The belief that the changes would have any significant impact on numbers of events is unfounded, so the assumptions made are unsafe, for the reasons stated above. The 'per annum' comment in relation to community premises which do not attract a fee is somewhat misleading, as on an 'annual' basis they entail no work at all.

Q7.

Q8. The much higher cost of litigation versus administrative control has not been accounted for.

Q9.

Q10. The meaning of the question is unclear.

Q11 and Q12. Events at 10,000 attendance and above are mostly organised by reputable, experienced operators. The biggest risk area is in the band between 1000 and 5000 because those attract amateur organisers. The cut-off point should be 500, in line with the temporary event notice rules.

Q13. There is a strong argument for taking the demographic into account. Events which attract whole families have a built in authority structure at a micro level so they are more stable and pose less risk. That is not about size of event as such.

Q14. Only a handful of premises would fall between the continuing need for an alcohol licence and a reliance on temporary event notices rather than a licence. Locally, they could be counted on the fingers of one hand but they pose low risk. Terraced pubs and some 1970's estate pubs would take

advantage of relaxation to provide live music, karaoke and discos so there would be surge of noise complaints.

Q15. The cut-off point for events outdoors should be 999, with the 499 indoor limit left as it is. In a field, the physical risks are of a much lower order and moving to a place of safety is a simple matter.

Q16. Most authorities recognise that 23:00hrs is a critical time in terms of noise impact on households. Live music and karaoke is less controllable and can have an intrusive character (screeching voices, poor tuning, bass penetration etc.) so the cut-off should be 10:00hrs.

Q17. Noise tolerance is related to community engagement and frequency. It is not absolute. Different rules are needed for one event per year and six events a year. Different rules are need for the local carnival and an invasion of bikers.

Q18. The existing regime works well in most cases.

Q19. A code of practice would be followed by good operators and ignored by bad. It would achieve nothing whatever.

Q20. This operates on a false premise. Licensing is an efficient, responsive and preventative mechanism. Prosecution is slow, expensive and remote.

Q21. An increase in the duration of events from one day to two or three might be expected.

Q22. The Licensing Act is a regulatory regime which compels a joined up partnership approach between agencies. Intervention using narrow statutes encourages silo working, so the proposals would undermine partnership.

Q23. In the outdoor events industry, someone with no competence or experience is permitted to organise a complicated, high risk event of any size. Driving an HGV, a fork lift truck or installing electrical wiring require a statutory proof of competence. Appropriate training, an individual licence to practice and an event passport are essential but absent controls.

Q24. Brass bands or bag-pipes are not amplified but they are far louder than much amplified music. The distinction is arbitrary and meaningless in public nuisance terms.

Q25. Opportunities to provide live music were boosted substantially by the Licensing Act 2003. The facility was added at no cost by premises which had to apply for a drinks licence. There are far more authorisations than under the old public entertainment regime. The proposals disenfranchise local communities. They have been promised more of a say in the licensing regime but if the changes are implemented, they will lose their existing say over regulated entertainment. The proposals run sharply counter to the Localism agenda.

Q26. In general, plays and films present minimal risks. Fire safety is catered for separately. Unusual stage structures or special effects still warrant prior authorisation.

Q27. In some cases, audiences move around a site as the action progresses. The issue is not whether the event is indoor or outdoor but whether performers and audience move together from place to place.

Q28. It should be made clear that Licensing does not include any elements of fire safety.

Q29. In simple settings such as a school stage and two or three performers with a painted backdrop and minimal furniture there is no strong case for regulation. Theatrical performances with revolves, special effects and mass casts should still be regulated.

Q30. The consultation implies that participation in dance is a licensable activity, which is not the case. Considerations are just as for theatre.

Q31.

Q32. We agree that a formal age classification system should remain.

Q33. BBFC would have to expand to become an enforcement body.

Q34. The obstacle to community and small business use is the copyright regime. The impact of the Licensing Act is insignificant or nil. Unless copyright agencies are required to streamline and become more transparent, community groups will not show DVDs. The consultation paper is addressing the wrong target. When community groups talk about 'licensing' they mean the copyright agencies.

Q35.

Q36. Combat sports involving children in cages, with an adult audience.

Q37.

Q38. Boxing and wrestling should remain but scope should be extended to cover all contact sports in a ring, on a mat or in a cage.

Q39. If the sport governing bodies had statutory powers and an active enforcement arm, there might be a case for a transfer of powers, as in motorsport.

Q40. As above, all contact sports carry similar risks and should be regulated in the same manner.