

**United Voices of the World (UVW) Union Statement to the Bristol City Council's
Consultation in support of the continued Licensing of Sexual Entertainment Venues
(SEVs)**

United Voices of the World (UVW) are submitting this statement in support of the continued licensing of sexual entertainment venues in Bristol. As a union representing strippers in clubs across the United Kingdom, including those in Bristol, we are concerned that implementing a nil cap will only serve to undermine the Council's aims to preserve public safety and the prevention of crime and disorder, by forcing workers into unsafe and unregulated spaces.

Policy actors are well aware of structural inequities, unjust labour market conditions, the impacts of austerity, the cut to Universal Credit, the housing crisis, insufficient statutory sick pay, the burden of childcare and education, and COVID-19 poverty; all of which may preclude strippers from quitting the industry despite being unable to access safe workspaces if the nil cap is implemented. A nil cap policy will only end safe employment opportunities for those workers within the council's boundaries.

At United Voices of the World, we feel that one of the most effective ways of reducing harm in the workplace is the right for workers to organise collectively, access trade union representation and enter collective bargaining conversations with their bosses. By implementing a nil cap SEV policy, Bristol City Council would be effectively forcing workers into private spaces without the protection of those rights offered within the existing strip clubs.

We question why Bristol City Council are hosting another public consultation on SEV policy in the name of public safety, when there is no empirical evidence which proves a correlation between strip clubs and sexual violence against women in Bristol, and Bristol's strip clubs are in good standing with Avon and Somerset Police. We also question why new legislation is being proposed without specific targeted consultation with the workers most affected by these policy decisions.

The strippers working within the clubs, the majority of whom are women, are a community of interest and should be an asset in drafting subsequent SEV policy. If Bristol City Council are committed to the safety of its residents and precluding any potential threat of exploitation, they should recognise this unique opportunity to enshrine workers rights in their SEV policy, and to give worker safety equal importance within the drafting of this policy.

We would welcome the opportunity to speak with members of the council to ensure any future SEV Policy considers the rights of the workers, as well the safety of members of the public - which we feel is one and the same.

United Voices of the World
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