

# Public Forum

Full Licensing Committee

25 January 2024



Statements	
Number	Name
PS01	Councillor Marley Bennett
PS02	Piers Warne, TLT

## Statements

### PS01 – Councillor Marley Bennett

As a former chair of the Licensing Committee, I support the officers' recommendation to remove the Cumulative Impact Area.

Around 32,000 jobs in Bristol, 30% of the total, rely on our night time economy. Hospitality has struggled since Covid, economic growth remains sluggish, and pubs, clubs and restaurants are closing down at a worrying rate across the UK.

Through many initiatives including the establishment of a Bristol @ Nights Board and the appointment of a night-time economy advisor, Bristol City Council is already working to support our night time economy.

The Licensing Committee can and should play its part in ensuring that Bristol has a diverse and vibrant night time economy too. It should be noted that the night time economy provides safe spaces for Bristol's LGBTQ+ community – this is echoed in the Equalities Impact Assessment – and that in 2010, Bristol was one of the first cities to be awarded a Purple Flag by the Association of Town Centre Managers, recognising our city as a safe, vibrant night time economy.

The reasoning for a Cumulative Impact Area (CIA) is that the police are oversaturated; there is not enough evidence in favour of this to retain it, as stated in the report. It should also be acknowledged that almost all public services are overstretched, however the hospitality sector should not be stifled due to underinvestment in public services.



Officer's view is that there is not enough evidence to retain the CIA – I hope you place significant weight to their expertise. Likewise, I have concerns that the CIA is too broad a brush for it to be appropriate. Avon and Somerset Police's report show that the vast majority of incidents come from nightclubs (with a single nightclub, that has recently called in administrators so may not be operating in the not-too-distant future, accounting for 21% of incidents).

I trust that should a nightclub apply to open in the city centre, councillors would be mindful of this and judge the application on its merits. I doubt that any new pubs or small bars would be a significant contributor to crime and antisocial behaviour, yet the CIA treats the applications the same as it would for a new nightclub, bringing in a presumption to refuse.

I am sympathetic to residents' concerns regarding noise and litter, but these are issues that can be mitigated, and do not alone justify the retention of the CIA. The city centre is an asset for the whole of Bristol, not just those who live near it.

Most will appreciate that when deciding to live in the centre of town, there will be nightlife – which can sometimes have adverse consequences. 191 responded to the consultation, yet over 30,000 people are regularly in the city centre at weekends. I urge councillors to support Bristol's hospitality, cultural scene, and night time economy and vote for the officers' recommendations.

## **PS02 – Piers Warne, TLT**

BCC Statutory Cumulative Impact Assessment:

As the Licensing Committee will be aware TLT is a large and growing commercial law practice, founded and headquartered in Bristol.

Prior to the implementation of the Licensing Act 2003, in 2005, TLT has had a highly respected licensing practice providing licensing advice to client throughout England and Wales. In 2014, this was expanded to provide Scottish licensing advice to clients north of the border from our Glasgow office.

Today, TLT is rated in the legal directories as the one of only 3 tier 1 nationwide licensing practices. As such we are ideally placed to assist the Licensing Committee in relation to the current cumulative impact statement. TLT's written response can be found at pages 256-262 of the committee papers. In short, TLT's position supports the removal of CIZ's from Bristol for the reasons set out therein.

We are requesting a short period of time to address the committee at the hearing to draw out some of the key points raised in our response.

