



Subject:	Licensing and Registration of Clubs (Amendment) Act (Northern Ireland) 2021
Date:	19th October, 2022
Reporting Officer:	Stephen Hewitt, Building Control Manager (ext: 2435)
Contact Officers:	Nora Largey, Divisional Solicitor, Regulatory and Planning (ext: 6049)

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To provide an update on the trial period which the Committee, at its meeting on 13th April 2022, agreed to extend for a further six months, with authority delegated to Council officers to deal with all Article 44A extension applications both for City centre and non-City centre locations in the manner which had been previously agreed by the Committee.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The legislation to permit Article 44A extension applications and Police Service of Northern Ireland authorisations for additional hours has been in place for over a year. Given the limited uptake by businesses availing of their use, the Committee is asked to consider either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. delegating authority to officers to deal with all such applications in the manner previously agreed; orii. further extending the trial period whereby authority is delegated to officers to deal with all such applications in the manner previously agreed for a timeframe to be determined.

2.2	For either option, this would be on the proviso that such applications did not relate to premises where the provision of entertainment had been subject to significant objections or prosecution in the past.
2.3	In such instances, these applications would be presented to the Committee for consideration.
3.0	Background
3.1	<p>The Committee, at its meeting on 19th January, considered a report on the Licensing and Registration of Clubs (Amendment) Act (Northern Ireland) 2021 and agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. to delegate authority to Council officers, on a three-month trial basis, to deal with any Article 44A extension applications for non-City centre locations in a similar way to that which had been agreed for Biddy Duffy's and Horatio Todd's at the meeting on 15th December, 2021, with the proviso that such applications did not relate to premises where the provision of entertainment had been subject to significant objections or prosecution in the past. In such instances those applications will be presented to the Committee for consideration; ii. that a report on the outcome of the aforementioned trial period be presented to the Committee for consideration; and iii. that the report on pubs and hotels in City centre locations, the operation of Biddy Duffy's and Horatio Todd's and on Police Service of Northern Ireland Authorisations for Additional Hours, which was due to be presented to the meeting in February, be submitted at the same time as that relating to non-City centre premises.
3.2	<p>At the Committee meeting on 13th April, the trial period was extended for an additional 6 months in the manner previously agreed by Committee.</p> <p><u>Summary Position following the April Committee Meeting</u></p> <p>Biddy Duffy's, 133 Andersonstown Road Horatio Todd's, 406 – 408 Upper Newtownards Road</p>
3.3	<p>The Committee agreed to offer no objection to Article 44A extension applications for Biddy Duffy's and Horatio Todd's up to 19th October 2022 and that each applicant be requested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. to agree to withdraw all Article 44A extension applications beyond 19th October, to allow officers to provide at the Committee meeting in October an update on any issues which had arisen from the operation of the premises during the 9-month trial period, given that both premises were located in close proximity to residential accommodation; and ii. to agree not to provide entertainment after 2.00 a.m., unless an Entertainments Licence was in place which expressly permitted entertainment to take place beyond that time. <p><u>Pubs and Hotels – Non-City Centre Locations Generally</u></p>
3.4	<p>The Committee agreed that, should any further Article 44A extension applications for non-City centre locations be received between the April meeting and 19th October 2022, officers should deal with them in a similar way as those for Biddy Duffy's and Horatio Todd's, in that each applicant would be requested:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. to agree to withdraw all Article 44A extension applications beyond 19th October, to allow officers to provide at the Committee meeting in October an update on any issues which had arisen from the operation of the premises during the 9-month trial period, given that they were located in close proximity to residential accommodation; and ii. to agree not to provide entertainment after 2.00 a.m., unless an Entertainments Licence was in place which expressly permitted entertainment to take place beyond that time.
3.5	This was provided that the application did not relate to premises where the provision of entertainment had been subject to significant objections or prosecution in the past.
3.6	In such instances, the application would be presented to the Committee for consideration.
	<u>Pubs and Hotels – City Centre Locations</u>
3.7	<p>The Committee agreed that Article 44A extension applications for pubs and hotels in City centre locations should continue to be dealt with by Council officers under delegated authority, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. to offer no objection to Article 44A extension applications which have been received to serve alcohol to 2.00am for city centre venues where they are in possession of an entertainments licence which permits entertainment to 3.00am every night of the week, and ii. to confirm that, in principle, the Council has no objection to Article 44A extension applications which have been received to serve alcohol to 2.00 a.m. for city centre venues where they are in possession of an entertainments licence which permits entertainment to 3.00 a.m. only on specified nights of the week but advising the Court of the fact that the Entertainments Licence does not permit entertainment to 3.00am on some of the dates to which the extension applications relate.
3.8	It was noted that, in cases where Article 44A extension applications had been received for premises where the provision of entertainment had been subject to significant objections or prosecution, those would be presented to the Committee for consideration.
	<u>Police Service of Northern Ireland Authorisations for Additional Hours</u>
3.9	<p>The Committee agreed that authority be delegated to Council officers to deal with Police Service of Northern Ireland authorisations for additional hours and that no representations be made unless there is reason to do so by virtue of any:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. restrictions placed upon the Entertainment Licence (if the premises associated with the application has an Entertainments licence), b. complaints regarding the operation of, or anti-social behaviour in and around, the premises, and c. Building Regulation or other Council statutory enforcement issues.
3.10	The reports from your meeting of 19 th January and 13 th April, 2022 are attached at Appendix 1.

4.0	Key Issues <u>Summary of 9-month Trial Period</u> Biddy Duffy's, 133 Andersonstown Road Horatio Todd's, 406 – 408 Upper Newtownards Road
4.1	To date, Biddy Duffy's has only once availed of the additional hours of operation permitted by their Article 44A applications whilst Horatio Todd's has not used any of their additional hours applications.
4.2	The licensee of Biddy Duffy's has advised that they are not using their additional hours because customers are no longer interested in late nights, post covid, whilst the licensee for Horatio Todd's will not be applying for any further additional hours claiming that they cost too much in legal fees and provide no return.
4.3	Given that the premises are close to residential properties, the intention of the extended trial period was to consider whether the premises operating to the later hours, or any period immediately following their termination, led to undue inconvenience to persons residing in the vicinity.
4.4	Despite a prolonged trial period of over 9 months, there is still no evidence to provide for Committee in relation to the impact, if any, of these bars selling alcohol to 2.00 am on their local neighbourhood.
	<u>Pubs and Hotels – Non-City Centre Locations Generally</u> 4.5 Since the Committee meetings in January and April, no other Article 44A extension applications for non-City centre locations have been received by the Council. 4.6 There is, therefore, still no evidence to provide for the Committee in relation to the impact, if any, of pubs and hotels in other non-city centre locations selling alcohol to 2.00am on their local neighbourhood. <u>Pubs and Hotels – City Centre Locations</u> 4.7 The Council has received Article 44A extension applications for 25 City centre pubs and hotels and these have been responded to, as outlined in section 3.6 above. 4.8 To date, we have not received any noise complaints in relation to any of these venues nor are we aware of any concerns that the PSNI have in relation to these properties selling alcohol to 2.00 am. <u>Police Service of Northern Ireland Authorisations for Additional Hours</u> 4.9 The Licensing and Registration of Clubs (Amendment) Act (NI) 2021 introduced new, or amended existing, powers for police authorisations for additional hours which, <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. allows pubs which have an Article 44 licence to apply to the PSNI for ad-hoc late opening (11.00 pm - 1.00 am) up to 20 times per year for a day not covered by the article 44 Order, 2. increases the number of occasions smaller pubs (which are not structurally adapted and therefore unable to apply for an Article 44 licence) can apply for late opening (11.00 pm - 1.00 am) from 20 to 104 times per year, and 3. increases the number of occasions registered clubs can apply for late opening (11.00 pm - 1.00 am) from 85 to 104 times per year.

4.10	The applicant must display notice of the application on or near their premises during the three weeks before the first occasion to which the application relates. The Council must also be served with a copy of the Notice three weeks before the first date to which the application relates.
4.11	The Council has not received notification of any applications in relation to the Police Service of Northern Ireland authorisation for additional hours since your April meeting last December.
4.12	Again, despite over 9 months of a trial period, there is still no evidence to provide for Committee in relation to the impact, if any, of any applications to the Police for authorisation for additional hours on local neighbourhoods.
	<u>Conclusions</u>
4.13	Coronavirus has had a significant impact on the licensed trade and it would seem that the introduction of new legislation to permit longer opening hours has not had the widespread uptake that might have been expected.
4.14	When reporting to the Committee in April, it was anticipated that trade in the industry and tourism generally would pick up, and that there would be greater interest from pubs and hotels in availing of the opportunity to serve alcohol until 2.00 am.
4.15	No doubt the more recent pressures that businesses are enduring due to the cost of living crisis has had a further impact on recovery and, in turn, their desire to avail of late licences.
4.16	The facility for pubs and hotels to avail of the opportunity to serve alcohol until 2.00 am was introduced on 1st October 2021 but the uptake has been limited to date.
4.17	At present, there is no evidence to suggest that the introduction of the new legislation has had any impact on local residents in terms of subjecting them to any additional unacceptable disturbance.
4.18	This situation will be kept under review and any emerging problems that may arise can be reported to the Committee in due course.
	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u>
5.1	None.
	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u>
6.1	None.
7.0	Document Attached
	Appendix 1 - Minutes of the Licensing Committee meetings of 19 th January and 13 th April, 2022.