

Consultation: late night levy

Institute of Alcohol Studies response, February 2023

The Institute of Alcohol Studies (IAS) is an independent institute bringing together evidence, policy and practice from home and abroad to promote an informed debate on alcohol's impact on society. Our purpose is to advance the use of the best available evidence in public policy decisions on alcohol.

We welcome the opportunity to respond to this consultation on the charge to be applicable to late night refreshment premises. IAS is grateful to Dr Phil Hadfield for his support on this response.

IAS choice: Option 1

'LNR premises to be placed in bands based on their premises' rateable value, as for on-licensed alcohol venues, with no option for local authorities to apply a discount to LNR providers that qualify for Small Business Rate Relief (SBRR).'

Reasons:

This is because LNR premises may be 'small' in terms of their physical size, but highly impactful in terms of their contributions to negative impacts upon the night-time environment.

Patrons attracted can be high in number with rapid turnover, many LNRs attract queues late at night, a proportion of patrons are intoxicated, the presence of LNRs delays dispersals from City Centres late at night and they often show in police data as 'flashpoints' for crime and disorder. Food is often consumed on the streets and packaging and food waste ends up as litter, this places additional pressure on council over-night cleansing services. LNRs are often not as strictly or professionally controlled as alcohol venues. For these reasons, smaller LNRs can be more negatively impactful on the Licensing Objectives than small bars and pubs that operate beyond midnight, having more similarities, in terms of negative impacts on communities, to late-night alcohol off-sales premises.

General Comment:

IAS suggests a further review of LNL fees in terms of how the fees generated from locally-adopted LNL schemes are distributed amongst the Responsible Authorities.

Health and Emergency services pick up a proportion of the impact burden on public services of late-night licensed activity in areas where LNLs have been adopted, yet receive no contribution from the distribution of LNL fees amongst partner agencies. This appears to be an unjustified anomaly. IAS recommends a further consultation on the amendment of LNL fee distributions to address this issue.