

Appendix 4

Response from Council's Environmental Protection and Community Safety Manager

CIP

As you know a licensing authority can state in its "licensing policy statement" whether it thinks that a concentration of licensed premises in a particular area is considered to be already causing a cumulative impact on one or more of the licensing objectives. There needs to be clear evidence of exceptional issues to allow the issue to be considered.

One area of concern for me would be the Prevention of Public Nuisance, in relation to noise. The WLBC policy states that "The Authority is committed to ensuring that the operation of licensed premises does not unreasonably interfere with the personal comfort or amenity of immediate neighbours or the nearby community". In addition, my role as the Community Safety manager and manager of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP), I would also have an interest in relation to the Prevention of Crime and Disorder. For this the policy states "The Authority is therefore committed to supporting its Partnership (CSP) work in the fight against crime and disorder in West Lancashire". I can also provide comments in relation to CCTV in the Town Centre as the Contract Manager for this service.

Clearly any cumulative impact issues would relate to Ormskirk, with its concentration of licensed premises. Between 1st April 2014 and 20th October 2015 the Council logged 15 noise complaints which related to pubs or bars in Ormskirk. These 15 complaints related to 8 separate premises. In this time period, none of those required either a legal notice or a review of their licence. In comparison 27 complaints were received about similar premises in Skelmersdale, again concerning 8 premises. I would struggle to say the Ormskirk figures were exceptional or highlighted a problem.

The Environmental Protection and Community Safety team does not have the powers to deal with the perpetrators of "street noise", the powers available to them relate to noise from premises. As a result, these complaints are rarely logged and such complainants are referred to the Police.

The CCTV operators have a good working relationship with the local Police and are also in contact with them via the Police radio. Where a matter which requires Police assistance or looks like it could do, the operators will alert the Police. They will also assist in directing the Police to the event and following suspects/perpetrators. Ormskirk Town Centre is well covered by cameras and the images are excellent. The operators do refer issues to the Police on a regular basis, but the frequency and content of these referrals could not be classed as "exceptional". In a recent Lancaster University study into Ormskirk Town Centre's Night Time Economy following numerous interviews with relevant parties and individuals (including CCTV staff), they stated "Not one highlighted violence as a disproportionate problem". They also described the incidents of violence that do arise as "relatively rare and minor". Despite witnessing a serious incident, they still detailed that "incidences of violence at

this level were extremely rare". The study highlights a "persistent problem of lower level behaviour that disturbs local residents", however I do not think this is an exceptional issue and is likely in close proximity to most Town Centres, with a busy Night Time Economy.