

Richard Simpson MSP
MG.21
The Scottish
Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

19 January 2016

Duncan McNeil MSP
Convener, Health and Sport Committee
c/o Clerk to the Committee
T3.60
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Dear

Alcohol (Licensing, Public Health and Criminal Justice) (Scotland) Bill – Health and Sport Committee Stage 1 Report

I refer to your Committee's Stage 1 report in relation to the above Bill. I am obviously disappointed that the majority of the Committee does not support the general principles of the Bill. Nonetheless, I would wish to thank the Committee for its considered scrutiny at Stage 1 and I am grateful to the minority who supported eight out of the ten measures.

The report calls on the Scottish Government to carry out a number of actions.

On the proposal relating to consultation and publicity in connection with applications for premises licences, the Committee has asked the Scottish Government to provide, in advance of the Stage 1 debate, further information on the proposed timescales and approach to its consultation on the licence application notification requirements (with a view to updating the Licensing Procedure (Scotland) Regulations 2007). I would welcome sight of the Scottish Government's response to this request.

In relation to restrictions on the advertising of alcohol, I note the Committee's view that "the time is right to give further consideration to the regulation of alcohol advertising and sponsorship in Scotland", and its request that the Scottish Government consider the areas within its jurisdiction where it can make changes,

and for further information on its consideration of how sport would be affected if the ability for alcohol companies to advertise and promote their products was restricted further. Again, I would ask the Committee to share with me any such further information, including the timescales for the Scottish Government's reporting its outcomes and how this research will feed in to the alcohol framework.

Lastly, regarding drinking banning orders, I, along with the Committee, noted the commitment made by the Scottish Government to obtain from local authorities figures on the number of ASBOs which include a ban from licensed premises, so that an assessment can be made of whether the use of ASBOs is currently being deployed in the way proposed by DBOs. The Committee has asked for this information in advance of the Stage 1 debate and I would be grateful to see this data when received.

In considering the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee's report on the Bill, the Health and Sport Committee (at paragraph 242) sought clarification as to whether I would seek to amend the Bill to provide that the same maximum caffeine level must apply to premises and occasional licences. As the Health and Sport Committee noted, I had explained to the DPLR Committee that it was my expectation that regulations would set a maximum level which would apply to both types of licence. Nonetheless, I confirm that I would be content for the Bill to be amended to this effect.

I am copying this letter to the Minister, for her information.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Richard Simpson MSP