

**REPORT TO:** East Lothian Licensing Board

**MEETING DATE:** 24 September 2020

**FROM:** Clerk of the Licensing Board

**SUBJECT:** Festive Hours

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## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To ask that the Board considers the festive hours and to confirm if any amendments should be made to the policy regarding festive hours this year due to the current COVID 19 pandemic.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That East Lothian Licensing Board:
- i. agrees that the existing arrangements regarding Festive Hours remains in place at present; and
  - ii. delegates to the Clerk of the Board in consultation with the Convener of the Licensing Board to make any changes to the policy relating to Festive Hours as may be required should further legislation or guidance relating to the festive period be issued by the Scottish Government.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Statement of Licencing Policy 2018-2023 approved by this licencing board provides that

*“The Board has an existing practice of allowing longer licensed hours over the festive period. This only applies to ON-SALES premises. The Board's policy is to allow an extension to 2am during the festive period on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Eve and New Year's Day.*

*The Board may also, from time to time, make other such declarations in recognition of events of local or national significance, as these arise.”*

- 3.2 The on-going COVID 19 pandemic could be deemed to be an event of national significance and as such in terms of the policy and would allow the board to

review the policy and determine whether or not this should remain in place due to the current pandemic.

- 3.3 Current government guidance provides detailed guidance to licenced premises and licensing authorities on requirements to operate, although these are predominantly directed at social distancing and face coverings. At present the Scottish Government guidance does not deal with policies on festive opening hours.
- 3.4 As Christmas falls on a Friday this year this would mean that the festive hour extensions would only result in an additional hour of opening over the relevant days.

#### **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Festive Opening Hours currently forms part of the policy approved by the Licensing Board. Any change to this would alter the terms of the policy applying to the 2020 festive period.

#### **5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1 The subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community, or have a significant impact on equality, the environment or economy.

#### **6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Financial – none.
- 6.2 Personnel – none.
- 6.3 Other – none.

#### **7 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1 None.

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