

Bridgend Town Centre

Background

The Council area contains a mix of urban and rural communities, and has a population of approximately 139,178. (Source data: ONS website Table KSI01UK 2011 Census).

The main towns are Bridgend, Maesteg and Porthcawl. The population of Bridgend is approximately 15,000 living within a two mile distance of the town (source: Bridgend Town Council).

Some town centre streets are pedestrianised. Since the inception of the Licensing Act 2003 in November 2005, Derwen Road, Market Street, Wyndham Street and Nolton Street have been the subject of a special policy to mitigate the cumulative impact of licensed premises.

Reasons for the Policy

The cumulative impact of large numbers of licensed premises undermines the licensing objectives of:

- The prevention of crime and disorder
- Prevention of Public Nuisance
- Public Safety

Evidence

The main factor in formulating the assessment is the evidence submitted by the South Wales Police. The SWP report identifies that

“It remains that there is still a saturation of licensed premises in this relatively small geographical area, within this area there are two premises licensed until 4am and one premise licensed until 4.30am which provides a high level of footfall at this early hour.”

For information only, the following is a list of premises in the four streets mentioned, showing the latest time for the licensable activity shown (late night refreshment or sale of alcohol). It is a summary only and the premises are not all open or able to trade as indicated in the SWP report. The two premises mentioned in the report are highlighted:

Latest time for licensable activity (source Council Licensing database) in named town centre streets

Late Night Refreshment	Nolton Street	0300
Sale of alcohol (tables and chairs) small venue	Nolton Street	0200

Late Night Refreshment	Wyndham Street	0100
Late Night Refreshment and alcohol (restaurant)	Market Street	0100
Nightclub (closed)	Wyndham Street	0200
Nightclub	Market Street	0400
Late Night Refreshment	Wyndham Street	0400
Night Club	Market Street	0300
Takeaway	Wyndham Street	0230
Bar	Nolton Street	0130
Pub	Nolton Street	0200
Late Night Refreshment (restaurant)	Wyndham Street	0200
Music Venue	Queen Street	0400
Late Night Refreshment (Restaurant)	Nolton Street	0100
Late Night Refreshment	Derwen Road	0300
Late Night Refreshment and alcohol (restaurant)	Nolton Street	0200
Late Night Refreshment	Nolton Street	0100
Bar	Dunraven Place	0100
Pub	Nolton Street	0100
Nightclub	Derwen Road	0430
Pub	Dunraven Place	0100
Pub	Market Street	0100
Nightclub	Market Street	0400
Pub	Nolton Street	0100
Pub	Queen Street	0200

The South Wales Police state within the report that the Cumulative Impact Policy has had a direct bearing on the reduction of recorded crime within the town centre and reported anti-social behaviour.

Other evidence considered

The statutory consultation also included a questionnaire to help identify additional issues which could impact on the retention of the Cumulative Impact Policy.

Regard should be given to the very small sample replies – fifteen but the summary of responses is as follows:

Who replied

Members of the public – 50%

Other interested parties – 43% (Includes elected representatives at County, town and community level)

Licence holders – 7%

Issues identified

93 % of respondents stated that the Council should retain the Cumulative Impact Policy for Bridgend town centre.

The top issues of concern by response in the town centre:

- Anti social behaviour (12)/92%
- Littering (12)/92%
- On street drinking (7)/54%
- Violent behaviour (7)/54%
- Street fouling/lavatory provision (6)/46%
- Concentration of drinkers (6)/46%
- Criminal activities (3)/23%
- Street cleansing (1)/8%

69% said that this affected them in the day and night time economies whilst 31% said that it applied to the night time economy only.

Takeaways were said to be the most problematic premises followed by pubs and clubs, whilst off licences and restaurants were said to be causing the least problem.

Narrative responses on the negative impact of licensed premises included the following:

- The licensed hours are too late into the evening which adds risks to public due to lower police numbers and more time to drink
- No physical evidence however it was heard recently that it is safer to go to Cardiff on a night out than Bridgend. About 2 years ago a friend was attacked when trying to get into a taxi.
- Congregations of drunks and drug takers near the *****especially during the daytime.
- Take aways in town have always a problem with revellers late at night buying food and disposing of empty wrappers and containers after eating contents. Another problem has been people leaving licensed premises carrying either full or half full beer glasses. You often see a number of empty glasses left on the pavement, walls etc. these are a hazard and could be fatal for anyone who may come into contact them.
- littering outside of the pubs and clubs. On street drinking during the day with cans bought from the off licence.

Other measures considered

- Pubwatch Scheme
- Public Space Protection Order under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 which provides the Police with the power to require a person in the designated area not to drink alcohol or to surrender any alcohol or alcohol containers (other than sealed containers) in their possession.
- Provision of CCTV in public areas
- Enforcement powers available to the Police, Licensing Officers and Trading Standards Officers under the Licensing Act 2003

Conclusion

The Licensing Authority is satisfied that in the Cumulative Impact Area there is evidence to support the continuation of the Cumulative Impact Policy and, after taking into consideration other existing initiatives, that it is proportionate and the most effective measure to address the problems identified.

Application of the policy

Having regard to the Guidance issued by the Secretary of State under Section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003, Bridgend Council has consulted upon the issue of cumulative impact in Bridgend Town Centre. It has taken into account the views of the South Wales Police and other respondents and has adopted a Cumulative Impact Policy in respect of Derwen Road, Market Street, Wyndham Street, and Nolton Street (from its junction with Ewenny Road, to its junction with Merthyr Mawr Road, but not the area between Merthyr Mawr Road and the junction with Court Road Bridgend).

Regard will also be given that where relevant representations are received for a premises adjoining or in close proximity to the Cumulative Impact Policy area, and where those representations raise a material impact on the area then the policy will be applied if the Licensing Authority reasonably judges that to grant the particular application would add to the cumulative impact being suffered in the defined area.

This document should be read in conjunction with Bridgend County Borough Council's Statement of Licensing Policy 2019-2024.

The Cumulative Impact Policy applies to applications for the grant and full variation of Premises Licences. It does not apply to Club Premises Certificates or Temporary Event Notices.

When the policy applies it creates a rebuttable presumption that where relevant representations have been received the application will be refused or subject to certain limitations unless the applicant can successfully demonstrate that the premises will not add to the negative cumulative impact on one or more of the licensing objectives.

Applicants are expected to address the effects of the Cumulative Impact Policy within the Operating Schedule. They are expected to clearly demonstrate how the operation of the premises would not add to the negative cumulative impact being experienced in the area.

The Cumulative Impact Policy is not absolute. The circumstances of each application will be considered on its merits and the Licensing Authority will grant licences that are unlikely to add to the negative cumulative impact on the licensing objectives.