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By email

30th October 2025

Dear Chair,

Licensing Law

Thank you for your letter of 9th October, in which you ask a number of questions regarding the changes to the Island's Alcohol Licensing Legislation. I have set out answers to each of these below:

At the outset I should note that the proposed changes will come in the form of a new Primary Law, the *Draft Alcohol Licensing (Jersey) Law 202-* ('the draft Law') which builds on previous attempts at reforming the Licensing Law.

This new piece of legislation will see responsibility for licensing move away from the current Licensing Assembly and to the Jersey Gambling Commission ('the Commission') which will be appropriately renamed the Alcohol and Gambling Commission.

A public consultation on the proposed changes was undertaken between December 2024 and January 2025, receiving a total of 103 responses from individuals, organisations and businesses.

This consultation noted broad agreement in the need to update the existing Licensing (Jersey) Law 1974 ('the existing Law') with 89% of respondents agreeing that the Law required updating.

A further 74% of respondents agreed that the licensing process should be run by a Regulatory Authority, noting that this would speed up the process and allow for more agile enforcement of the Law. 65% of respondents agreed with the proposals to retain a role for the Parishes.

1. How will the proposed changes to the Licensing Law affect the current role of parishes and Connétables in the licensing process?

The draft Law will not impact upon the existing powers of Parishes but will add new powers for enforcement and be included in shaping the Government's policies towards the sale and consumption of alcohol. These are outlined below:

Applications

The Commission will, in the same way as the current Licensing Assembly, be required to consult with the relevant Parish as part of any application for a licence.

Connétables will continue to be required to call Parish Assemblies for each licence application (as they do now).

Enforcement

Under the existing Law, enforcement is limited to the suspension or revocation of an alcohol licence by the Licensing Assembly which meets quarterly.

Under the draft Law, this power will be retained by the Commission who will be able to respond more rapidly should the need arise.

The draft Law would also allow for issues to be dealt with at an earlier stage in the enforcement process, either via a formal request for the Commission to review or vary the conditions of a licence which could be made by the Parish or via a Direction issued by the Commission to request a licensee undertakes a specific action by a particular date.

In particularly extreme situations, the Parish will also be empowered, alongside the States of Jersey Police, to issue a 'Temporary Closure Order' to close a premise if there is a risk of significant disorder or a significant public nuisance. This would have the effect of closing a premise for up to 72 hours and could be extended, at the Parishes' request via an application to the Magistrate's Court.

Parishes are also listed as parties who must be notified of any 'relevant decision' made by the Commission, meaning they are required to be notified of any decision by the Commission to:

- a) grant a licence
- b) to refuse to grant a licence
- c) to impose or vary a condition on a licence
- d) to give a direction
- e) to register a licence manager or deputy licence manager, or revoke their registration
- f) to suspend or revoke a licence
- g) to serve a final notice imposing a civil financial penalty;

Policy

An Alcohol Policy Ministerial Group will be established to oversee the work of the Alcohol and Gambling Commission and to issue general guidance on the sale of alcohol in Jersey. This group will include a representative from the Comité des Connétables (and the Attorney General).

The Comité des Connétables will also be listed as a statutory consultee who must be asked for feedback on any draft guidance or policy. The Policy or guidance itself would then also be subject to the approval of the States Assembly.

Guidance issued by this group will allow the States Assembly to alter the restrictions on the sale of alcohol, marketing and price promotions depending on policy.

For example, a future States Assembly could wish to restrict the visibility of alcohol within off-licences in the same way as tobacco products. Alternatively, a new Assembly could propose extending opening hours for nightclubs. Neither example would be possible under existing Law but would be available levers under the new Draft Law.

2. Will parishes retain any formal responsibilities for commenting on or managing licensing matters?

Yes, as noted above, Parishes will need to be consulted as part of any application process and, for the first time, will have a clear route by which to request variations to existing licences.

3. *How will the proposed changes align with the Government's stated aim of reducing bureaucracy and simplifying regulatory processes?*

By moving licensing decisions from the Royal Court's Licensing Assembly to the Alcohol and Gambling Commission, it is hoped that decisions can be more responsive and expeditious.

The Draft Law will also remove the need for multiple licences being held for the same premises and instead allow a single category of On-Licence (rather than the current six) with bespoke conditions designed by the business, Parish and Commission in accordance with policy approved by the States Assembly. Fees will similarly be simplified and be set by Ministerial Order.

Licensees will also no longer be required to renew their permits annually (though will still be subject to inspections) and premises will no longer be required to hold a physical printed copy of the *Licensing (Jersey) Law 1974* on their premises for inspectors to consult.

There will also be a clear appeals mechanism established, something which is absent from the current Law.

4. *In what ways will the new system reduce administrative burden for applicants and officials?*

As noted above, annual renewals will no longer be required and during the transition phase the Island's existing licensees will be moved onto the new system without the need to re-apply for their existing premises (unless they wish to seek a variation of their licence conditions).

For new licences, the draft Law should speed up the application process while preserving the requirement for consultation with the States of Jersey Police, Fire and Rescue Service and the relevant Parish.

Applications will be submitted to the Commission who will then be responsible for liaising with the relevant consultees and providing a report for consideration by the Parish concerned in the same way as the current Law.

I hope the above information provides clarity to the areas you have raised. My officers have provided a briefing and copy of the draft Law to the Economic and International Affairs Panel as part of the law drafting process and I would be pleased to provide a briefing to your Panel should this be of assistance.

Yours sincerely,



Deputy Kirsten Morel
Minister for Sustainable Economic Development