

3.2 MODERN CONTROLS FOR VENUES 2

PROVIDING PUBLIC LEISURE AND HOSPITALITY 2

2

General

16. This White Paper concerns premises of all kinds. This chapter considers pubs, nightclubs, restaurants, bars, cafes, theatres, cinemas and other venues – where alcohol is served for immediate consumption, public entertainment provided or refreshments sold at night. It recognises that it is now increasingly difficult to categorise certain venues which are, for example, a pub, disco and restaurant combined. Chapter 4 addresses the position of shops, stores and supermarkets where alcohol is sold for consumption elsewhere. Chapter 7 discusses the conditions that would be attached to the sale of alcohol and provision of entertainment and refreshment, and the hours at which trading would be permitted.

17. Our goal is a single scheme that can be tailored to all types of public premises. There are about 111,000 venues that are now licensed to sell alcohol for consumption on those premises. Under the current laws, assessment of the licence holder and the suitability of the premises is a single but complex process, and once a licence holder leaves the premises, the entire process must begin again. A key area of change should therefore be to split the licensing arrangements between personal licences and premises licences. Different considerations apply to each.



18. There are separate statutory licensing schemes affecting theatres; cinemas; night cafes; late night refreshment houses; and a large number of venues providing public entertainment but where alcohol is not sold. Reliable figures for the number of licences issued are not available. We do not consider that the personal licence is necessary where alcohol is not involved. However, all these premises should be brought within one category of premises licence.

19. With regard to “night cafes” and “late night refreshment houses” there are currently considerable differences in regulation between London and the rest of England and Wales. The reason for these differences is not obvious. The differences extend to the actual premises encompassed by the legislation. For example, take-aways opening in the early hours of the morning may be licensed in parts of London, but not outside London; with regard to hours, for example, cafes opening after 10pm must be licensed outside London, but only those opening after 11pm in London; and there are differences in respect of enforcement powers. The proposals which we set out bring the rest of England and Wales into line with London and sharpen the focus of the necessary controls on to a single issue – the avoidance of unreasonable

annoyance, disturbance and nuisance for local people living in the vicinity of such premises.

20. In Chapters 5 and 6 respectively, we describe the personal and the premises licences we envisage.
21. Special considerations apply to private non-profit making clubs run for their members. These are discussed in Chapter 9.