



Home Office

Public Safety Group
Neighbourhood Crime Unit
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

26 May 2022

Dear Mr Davies,

I am writing to you about the regulatory easement made in 2020 in respect of off-sales of alcohol. Section 11 of the Business and Planning Act 2020 modified provisions in the Licensing Act 2003 to provide automatic extensions to premises licences that only permitted sales of alcohol for consumption on the premises ("on-sales") to allow sales of alcohol for consumption off the premises ("off-sales").

This was a temporary measure to boost the economy in response to the Covid 19 pandemic and was due to expire on 30 September 2021. Given the continuing prevalence of Covid 19, this measure was extended by the Alcohol Licensing (Coronavirus) (Regulatory Easements) (Amendment) Regulations 2021 (1049/2021).

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that, given the absence of Covid restrictions in England and Wales, there is no legal basis for a further extension and, accordingly, the measure will lapse on 30 September 2022.

Any premises licence holder who wishes to continue to benefit from the changes that the easements allowed will need to apply for an off-sales licence. Whilst they are not obliged, licensing committees might decide to consider whether any such applications could be decided via the minor variations process, in particular for premises licence holders who are currently taking advantage of the easements.

Given that a number of premises have benefitted from the easement, we will shortly be seeking the views of the licensed sector, local authorities and other interested parties to understand whether there would be support for a streamlined process for alcohol licences, which would be a permanent alternative to the current alcohol licensing easements.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Regan
Neighbourhood Crime Unit