

Licensing Policy **Consultation Response Report**

Produced by Consultation and Engagement Team
for Dorset Council

November 2023

Consultation Response Report

<p>What was the consultation about?</p>	<p>The Council, as Licensing Authority under the Licensing Act 2003, is required to publish a Licensing Policy at least every five years. The purpose of the policy statement is to define how the Council will exercise its responsibilities under the Act: Statement of Licensing Policy 2021-2026.</p> <p>The Statutory Guidance issued under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003 advises however that any Cumulative Impact Area(s) are reviewed every three years.</p> <p>The Dorset Licensing Policy contains one Cumulative Impact Area in Weymouth Town Centre. Officers have reviewed the evidence base for the Weymouth Cumulative Impact Area and a report has been made for consideration.</p> <p>It is proposed to undertake a public consultation regarding the retention of the Cumulative Impact Area, with the results of the consultation being considered by the Licensing Committee and a recommendation made to Full Council.</p>
<p>Over what period did the consultation run?</p>	<p>The consultation ran for 4 weeks finishing on Thursday 9 November 2023.</p>
<p>What consultation methods were used?</p>	<p>The consultation was available both electronically online and in paper form via post upon request.</p> <p>The consultation was promoted widely through both the local press and social media. The consultation had a separate communications plan and consultation plan prepared beforehand.</p>
<p>How many responses were received overall?</p>	<p>37 overall responses were received.</p>
<p>How representative is the response to the wider population?</p>	<p>It is worth noting that the number of responses is low – meaning it is difficult to draw firm conclusions.</p> <p>From those that answered the demographic questions, 61.1% of responses were from members of the public, 19.4% from businesses, 5.6% from both elected members and those responding on behalf of an organisation, and 8.3% identified as ‘other’.</p> <p>From the respondents that identified as a ‘member of the public’ (22 respondents), there were considerably more male respondents (68.2%) than female (31.8%), with a fairly wide set of responses from a</p>

	<p>variety of different ages. However, 68.2% of respondents were between the ages of 45 to 64.</p> <p>95.5% of residents/members of the public that answered this question stated their ethnic group was White British.</p> <p>Responses from disabled people were quite high at 19.1% compared to an approximate Dorset figure of 4.6% based on those claiming either Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payments or Attendance Allowance.</p>
Where will the results be published?	Results will be published on the council's website www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk
How will the results be used?	Results from this survey will be used to inform any revisions to the Cumulative Impact Area.
Who has produced this report?	Consultation Team, Dorset Council, November 2023.

Background

The Council, as Licensing Authority under the Licensing Act 2003, is required to publish a Licensing Policy at least every five years. The purpose of the policy statement is to define how the Council will exercise its responsibilities under the Act: Statement of Licensing Policy 2021-2026.

The Statutory Guidance issued under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003 advises however that any Cumulative Impact Area(s) are reviewed every three years.

The Dorset Licensing Policy contains one Cumulative Impact Area in Weymouth Town Centre. Officers have reviewed the evidence base for the Weymouth Cumulative Impact Area and a report has been made for consideration.

It is proposed to undertake a public consultation regarding the retention of the Cumulative Impact Area, with the results of the consultation being considered by the Licensing Committee and a recommendation made to Full Council.

A Cumulative Impact Area can be integrated within a Council's Statement of Licensing Policy if it can be shown that the number or type of licence applications granted in a particular area are having a cumulative impact and this is leading to problems which are undermining the licensing objectives. There is a rebuttable presumption that any new applications, or applications to substantially alter existing permissions, will be refused unless the applicant can demonstrate to the Authority that the proposals will not add to the existing problems in the area.

The Consultation

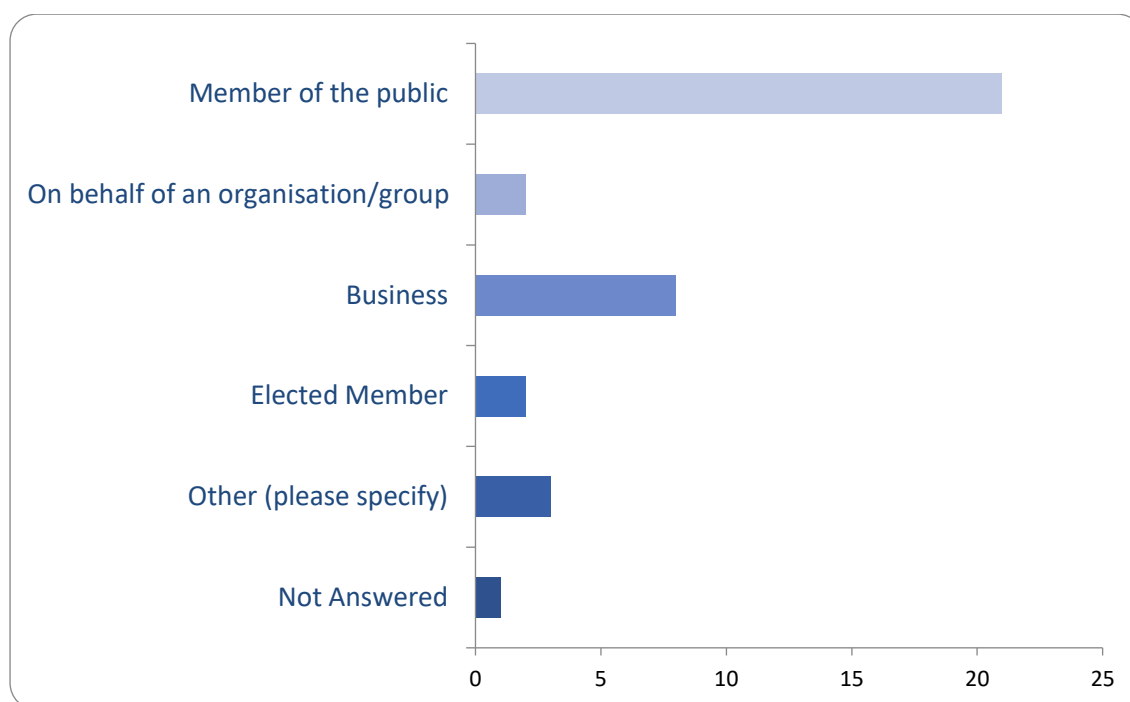
This consultation survey was directed at organisations and residents of Dorset Council. It asked for their thoughts on the Cumulative Impact area and any additional comments.

Analysis Method

Again, it is worth noting the low number of responses for this consultation. Typically, open text comments would be coded and themed, but this was not possible in this case due to the small base size. Therefore, all the comments have been left verbatim. Note: some figures may not sum due to rounding.

I am responding as a:

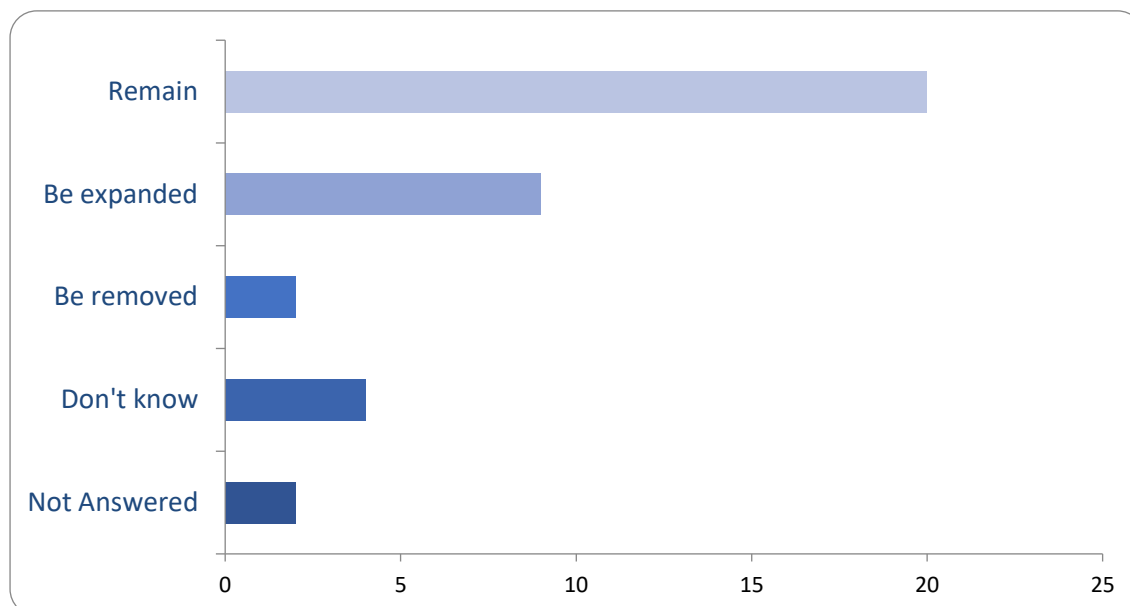
There were 36 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Member of the public	22	61.1%
On behalf of an organisation/group	2	5.6%
Business	7	19.4%
Parish Council	0	0.0%
Elected Member	2	5.6%
Other (please specify)	3	8.3%

The proposed Cumulative Impact area is shown on the map. Do you think that this should:

There were 36 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Remain	20	55.6%
Be expanded	9	25%
Be contracted	0	0.00%
Be removed	2	5.6%
Don't know	5	13.9%

55.6% of respondents feel that the current area should remain within Weymouth, with a further 25% answering that the area is not enough and should be expanded. Interestingly, no respondents chose that the area should be contracted, with 5.6% saying it should be removed altogether. 13.9% of respondents did not know.

When analysing how individual groups have responded, the picture is different across them all. For example, 63.6% (14) of those that identified as a member of the public, stated that the area should remain. 27.3% marked that it should be expanded. Coupling this together, 90.9% of members of the public either want the area to remain or be expanded.

From an organisational perspective, this number is considerably lower. 33.3% of those that are responding on behalf of an organisation/group or are responding as a business, indicated that they want the area to remain. 22.2% identified that the area should be expanded, with 11.1% saying it should be removed.

Respondents who identified as disabled were in-line with members of the public, with 62.5% answering that the area should remain.

Businesses and those representing organisations giving an official response have been listed below:

Organisation or group/business name	Do you think it should remain?
Fleetwey Limited	Remain
Abbotsbury Tourism	Remain
Royal Dorset Yacht Club	Be expanded
Public Health Dorset	Be expanded
Bulmag Ltd	Don't know
Copper Street Brewery Ltd	Be removed

Please explain why you think this

To help provide context, the respondents’ answer to ‘Do you think [the CIA] should remain?’ has been included next to their response. In total, 28 respondents chose to answer this question, and their comments can be seen below verbatim.

Type of respondent	Do you think it should remain?	Comment
Member of the public	Remain	These sorts of problems are endemic and will never be obviated
Member of the public	Be expanded	I have watched this problem evolve for over 40 years. The only viable approach remaining now, if the council is to genuinely attempt to honour it's mandated commitments, is to increase the CIA to cover all areas including Hope Square and the Chapelhay District, and the entire Park District up to the gardens near the hospital. There is clearly an ever increasing problem that requires a robust response which needs to pre-emptively set forward in advance the areas of current and future concern. It needs to make clear to any and all future licensees what is expected of them in advance. There also needs to be more robust punishments for offending premises - on the spot 1 month suspension of premises license, installation of cctv at the license holders expense, legal requirements to provide any and all footage or face on the spot four figure

		<p>finer. This is easy to implement, and makes the business do the required work as it should do in the first instance. This is how you earn the respect of the constituents.</p>
Member of the public	Remain	The impact seems minimal
Member of the public	Remain	<p>As a license holder for our business and also a person who uses TEN applications within the wider Dorset county, I believe it is the duty of all people such as myself and our businesses to support the lowering of impact to the community whenever possible.</p> <p>To this effect, given the impact to that local community, the area should remain until such times as local impact is minimal to day to day life</p>
Member of the public	Remain	I think it's working and there seems to be less incidents with it in place
Member of the public	Remain	<p>Weymouth is a holiday destination. It's clear that there are peaks in the holiday months.</p> <p>You must remember that a lot more alcohol is sold in supermarkets than other licensed premises and is probably consumed before entering into these areas. Training is needed for establishments to recognise when an individual is under a lot of alcohol and to start refusing further alcoholic drinks and offer alternatives.</p> <p>Unfortunately with the way the current processes work a licensee does not have to be on the premise. It is the duty of licensees to train their staff and have records to prove that they are acting responsibly when selling alcoholic beverages.</p>
Member of the public	Be expanded	Because you are excluding one side of the harbour, and surrounding areas where possibly more planned and calculated assaults may occur. For example rodwell trail, and radipole park, where we'll know drug dealing happens.
Member of the public	Remain	It is clear there is an issue affecting many licensed premises and the streets around them. Whilst the increase in population due to the summer holiday period can explain some of the incidents, it is clear there is an underlying problem of alcohol causing issues in a variety of ways and if the Cumulative

		Impact area designation can help to identify, analyse and hopefully reduce these incidents it should e continued.
Member of the public	Remain	In my opinion there are enough pubs in the town centre. There is no need for any more
Member of the public	Remain	There does seem to be some improvement in anti social behaviour since the introduction
Member of the public	Be removed	Each pub having 1 incident a year , maximum of two . Stop trying to surpress people freedom . The majority should not be punished the for the minority . Same as these stupid speed limit changes . [redacted] do something constructive with schools or hospitals or get some more dentists available.
Member of the public	Be expanded	Street drinkers are all over the esplanade and gather also in the back streets, they cause a considerable amount of ASB and are continuously drinking day after day all day in these areas, they get so drunk they end up fighting with each other, police are constantly trying to deal with these issues whereas if dorset council got more involved and banned excessive sheet drinking, police would then get more time to deal with other crimes in the areas. Why has dorset council not got more support to get these individuaks off the daily alcohol intake, why are they allowed to just sit all day everyday drinking?, how is this helping them with the addiction to get control back over theor lives? By allowing them to drink exessivly day afer day these continued trouble makers make lives of businesses in the areas and residents and visitors passing by nightmare.
Member of the public	Be expanded	There are other nearby areas, and licensed premises, that should be taken int account. What about the shops that sell alochol and through such sales contribute to street level crime and public disorder.
Member of the public	Be expanded	Having walks along the sea front through out the summer there are occasions when groups gather between the Memorial clock and the pier band stand drinking and generally being a nuisance.
Member of the public	Remain	I think it works as intended. The area is already fairly large and encompasses a large portion of the area where people congrehate to drink in crowds.

<p>Member of the public</p>	<p>Remain</p>	<p>The crime, licensing and alcohol related statistics make it obvious.</p>
<p>Member of the public</p>	<p>Don't know</p>	<p>The Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA) was proposed in 2013 and has been in force since 2014. Weymouth Town Centre’s late-night economy has changed significantly in the last decade (also the pandemic caused a significant shift too):</p> <p>No longer trading late night:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dusk (Boombox) -> now a restaurant - Dorothy Inn -> now Rockfish restaurant - Aura -> now Barao restaurant - Que Pasa/Dolce Vita -> Now “Hardys Hop House” pub - Orange Cider Bar (Batida) -> closed - Clipper -> closed - Rumshack -> closed - Malibu (Banus/Weymouth Bars/Kasbar) -> closed - Twenty Twelve -> closed - Lounge Bar (Colwell Shopping Centre) -> closed <p>Terminal hour between midnight and 2am:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Edinburgh House of Sounds (1am) - Slug and Lettuce (1am formerly Yates) - The Swan (1am) - Duke of Cornwall (1am) - Finns (2am) - Playyard (2am formerly BoHo) <p>There are now only a handful places still trading as late night bars:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chic (3am formerly Harry’s/Actors) - Rendezvous (4am) - The Closet (4am formerly T-Bar/314) - The Nook Cocktail Club (4am) - Kika Beach (5am formerly Lazy Lizard)

		<p>Back in 2013, there were more than 10 bars open into the wee hours, and it was quite possible to be served drinks on the seafront until 6am, with the earliest bars reopening at 7am. This one-hour gap was insufficient to stop (a very small minority of) people staying out all night. There was a not-insignificant level of crime associated with the number of people staying out into the small hours. These are the reasons why a CIA was needed.</p> <p>The impact of the CIA policy is that we now have far fewer late-night bars/clubs, and there is now a staggered finish, which spreads out the terminal hour of the bars, reducing pressure on taxis, takeaways and the emergency services. It's evidential that CIA has had a major impact on the late-night economy.</p> <p>Weymouth is still a major tourist destination, and both residents and visitors have an expectation of quality and varied nightlife, to complement our award-winning beach. Any policy needs to strike a balance between reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, the needs of people who live in the town centre, the expectations of visitors, and allowing our local businesses to flourish.</p> <p>Social norms have also evolved significantly over ten years, Millennial 18–19-year-olds used to “party hard”, but the Gen-Z 18–19-year-olds now, have a more restrained relationship to alcohol than the older cohort. At the same time, the traditional “high-street” has declined, leading to some high-street properties being re-developed as residential. The pandemic has also changed habits.</p> <p>Dorset Police recent statistics reported to the town council by Sargent Goom, show that reports of crime and anti-social behaviour have fallen in the town centre, compared to previous years.</p> <p>No one wants to see a return to some of the wilder elements of the late-night economy a decade ago. I think many would agree the wide aim of the policy</p>
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		<p>has succeeded over the last decade, and the less-pleasant side of late-nights has been reined-in. I would be concerned if the policy went too far, and we ended up without a night-time economy, or one that was non-viable. I think we do still need a policy, but it needs major review to ensure it's still relevant, takes into account the significant changes since 2014, and that we don't completely kill the late-night economy.</p> <p>Additional point, if you asked residents, I suspect a majority would suggest the biggest current alcohol problem is not with late night bars, but street drinkers. I would suggest that a few paragraphs could be added to the policy to provide some more control over not just the late-night bars, but also off-licenses selling high-strength cider at a low price per unit of alcohol. Crime hot spots around railway station and Lennox street are not related to late night bars, but to off-licences.</p>
Business - Abbotsbury Tourism	Remain	It has been proven that is the focal point for an issues arising from anti social behavior so must be maintained to follow on from historical data to create a correlation of information.
Business	Remain	By expanding the C.I.A I think the incidents in the streets will rise exponential. Observation will be easier if licenced premises are mostly in the same area.
Business	Don't know	I don't see any evidence to suggest wether increasing this area would make a difference
Business - Copper Street Brewery Ltd	Be removed	The number of incidents is considerably small and varied throughout the year and premises. Direct action and coaching for the individual establishments could be a more tactile approach given the current climate. Licensed premises are the backbone of a community. Drug use and other forms of ASB should be controlled via PCSOs or community enforcement teams.
Business	Don't know	I don't know the area

On behalf of an organisation/group - Royal Dorset Yacht Club	Be expanded	Street drinking in unlicensed areas
On behalf of an organisation/group - Public Health Dorset	Be expanded	<p>The heat map on the third page which shows the locations where incidents have occurred in 2022/23 where alcohol was mentioned shows a number of incidents in the area north of King Street up to Cassiobury Road. There is a hot spot at the north end of the seafront which is not covered by the existing Cumulative Impact Area.</p> <p>Whilst the density of licensed premises in this area is a lot less than in the area already covered by the existing CIA, extending the CIA would allow greater control on new premises in an area where there are already issues.</p>
Elected Member	Remain	The map covers a logical area.
Elected Member	Remain	Offer the ability to manage and control crime and ASB in the area. Ensures licensed premises are fully aware of their responsibilities and that any new entrants to the area start fully prepared to manage potential problems.
Other – DPS and brewer	Remain	Its a balance between freedom to drink outside and not too much of an impact on the bigger area.
Other - Personal licence holder	Be expanded	To include the area around St John's church and the end of Greenhill.

Additional comments

Member of the public	Remain	Retention of the cumulative impact area and related licensing policy position offers much needed support for residents and other businesses when support/challenges against licensing objectives need to be made. It is clearly a critical tool to support enforcement and perhaps future growth of a changing town centre with an inevitable growth of residential accommodation beyond an over concentration of HMOs, which bring crime and other problems of their own. The CIA will help to make town centre living more viable and attractive to other social groups in the community.
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