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Dear Licensing Committee,

I write in my capacity as Chair of Nightsafe, as a Director of Citysafe and as Cabinet Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods in support of the application for the extension of opening hours for Butlers Venue in Eastgate Street.

As a rule I do not generally comment or have involvement in matters relating to licensing applications, however on this occasion after reviewing comments made by Gloucestershire Constabulary against the application I feel it is necessary and right to bring to your attention my experience and perspective after working for 4 years on improving safety and the economy of Gloucester's nightlife. I regret I did not do this letter within the 28 days, however I was not made aware that the Police had called for a hearing until last week so apologise this is late and hope all parties will agree to consider the content.

I am concerned that the representations made by the Police do not give an overall objective view of both Butlers, and in particular Justin Hudson's, contribution towards raising standards of the Night Time Economy and the reduction in crime and disorder, but rather only focuses on their capacity of resources and judgment of recorded incidents that have taken place mainly outside the venue.

During the 4 years of Nightsafe Justin Hudson has been instrumental in the delivery of a number of improvements to safety and standards in Eastgate Street and the wider City Centre.

- Winner of the "Best Independent Bar" for Best Bar None 2015
- Revitalised and Chairs the Licensed Victuallers Association (LVA) which has introduced increased minimum prices drinks amongst members and most recently the alcohol free drink driving campaign offering free soft drinks
- Helped set up and remains as a fellow director of Citysafe
- Maintained and policed Organs Alley leading to a "Gating Order"
- Campaigned and was actively involved with closure of Eastgate Street on a weekend, physically operated bollards and supported the Police and council during trial closures
- Introduced voluntary scheme for licensed premises to "clear up" after the night time economy supporting local businesses
- Active member of the "Business Improvement District" (BID) group who are looking at how the area can be improved- which includes policing.
- Active member of the "Purple Flag" working group
- Work closely with Private Hire companies to manage dispersal of customers and has strengthened relationships with Glos Uni and Hartpury to ensure their wellbeing.

All of the above demonstrates that Justin Hudson operates his venue and attitude towards ensuring the safety and enjoyment of all his customers and wider stakeholders with the utmost responsibility and therefore should not cause concern that an extension to his opening hours would mean different attitudes and behaviours would be displayed.

Bar Fever had a recent extension of opening hours which also attracted Police objections that were not upheld. I have seen no evidence presented by the Police against this application to show that the extended opening hours at Bar Fever has further impacted on the level of disorder on the street.

The evidence from the Police does not portray the occasions when venues and door staff work in partnership to detain and reduce disorder, merely focus on their own levels of capacity and resources. Nightsafe, including the Police, has recently written to door staff at a venue when they assisted the Police with a large scale disorder after an event and freely admitted that their actions prevented serious injury and further disorder.

At the most recent Night Safe meeting last week, attended by Cllr Hannah Norman, Chair of L&E, it was agreed that due to police resourcing and ongoing commitment to safety that the Chief Inspector and officers would need to work closer together in partnership in policing the Night Time Economy in Gloucester and Justin Hudson as Chair of the LVA agreed to lead at looking at how this could work with premises. This was attended and agreed by CI Smith and PC Mark Mansfield.

As a Director, I have reviewed the Citysafe system and can confirm that Butlers has actively reported incidents in the correct way and in the past 2 weeks there has been 2 yellow cards and 3 red cards submitted. Therefore the concern that Butlers does not report incidents, and hasn't done so since the 20th of June is entirely incorrect. Recent incidents outside the venue have involved individuals who have caused disorder after being refused entry because of a Citysafe ban. The PCC funded the scheme and when set up, the Police as a partner are meant to assist with venues who have problems with perpetrators trying to regain entry. The statement made on this application suggests that their attendance to such incidents is negative and therefore undermines their partnership in this scheme.

It is worth highlighting that on a Wednesday evening there is no Police presence or CCTV cover and therefore the venues effectively police the street themselves with no road closure. Wednesday night is student night and therefore arguably the most vulnerable revellers are out and there is huge potential for irresponsible drinking and increased disorder. No evidence or statement has been made about this situation and it would appear that the Police are satisfied this situation is manageable by the night time venues despite representations I have made to the Chief Inspector concerned that they should police on a Wednesday. Justin Hudson and I have met with the PCC to raise concerns that levels of resourcing of police are different in Cheltenham than in Gloucester. I understand more policing will be introduced to the NTE soon. I am not aware of any police objections to extended hours on late night venues in Cheltenham or Tewkesbury and I am sure this can be clarified by One Legal who cover all three areas.

Section 35's have been in operation at weekends over the past few months at the request of Nightsafe partners to assist with the removal of people causing disorder outside of the night time venues. These have not been exercised by the Police as requested, and often Policing teams on a weekend are unaware of them when venues ask. A matter discussed and documented at meetings of Nightsafe and very relevant given the current situation with street drinking and begging which has been at the forefront of discussions over recent months. Not all disorder reported in Eastgate Street is related to customers and often an incident happening outside is tagged against a venue when they may have come from elsewhere and be unrelated.

I do understand and empathise with the position of the Police about their capacity to police the NTE and therefore the City Council and partners are currently working through the BID process and Night Time Levy consultation looking to support how we can enhance their funding from next year.

Gloucester is working hard to enhance and improve the NTE and there is demand from revellers for increased opening hours in Eastgate Street. I have seen no actual evidence that later opening will increase disorder and I have every confidence that Butlers Venue Bar will correctly and responsibly manage dispersal of customers at the later opening time.

As part of the "Purple Flag" process, Nightsafe will be working across the City to improve dispersal and to continue to monitor the effectiveness of crime and disorder reduction initiatives.

I therefore ask the committee to consider these points, ask the relevant questions and look favourably on this application.

Kind regards



CLlr Jennie Dallimore