

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

First Delegated Legislation Committee

DRAFT LICENSING ACT 2003 (ROYAL WEDDING
LICENSING HOURS) ORDER 2018

Monday 30 April 2018

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The Committee consisted of the following Members:

Chair: ALBERT OWEN

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| † Adams, Nigel (<i>Lord Commissioner of Her Majesty's Treasury</i>) | † Hayes, Mr John (<i>South Holland and The Deepings</i>) (Con) |
| † Afolami, Bim (<i>Hitchin and Harpenden</i>) (Con) | † Keegan, Gillian (<i>Chichester</i>) (Con) |
| † Atkins, Victoria (<i>Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department</i>) | Lammy, Mr David (<i>Tottenham</i>) (Lab) |
| Beckett, Margaret (<i>Derby South</i>) (Lab) | † Maclean, Rachel (<i>Redditch</i>) (Con) |
| Burden, Richard (<i>Birmingham, Northfield</i>) (Lab) | † Smith, Eleanor (<i>Wolverhampton South West</i>) (Lab) |
| † Creasy, Stella (<i>Walthamstow</i>) (Lab/Co-op) | † Thomas, Derek (<i>St Ives</i>) (Con) |
| † Dakin, Nic (<i>Scunthorpe</i>) (Lab) | Zeichner, Daniel (<i>Cambridge</i>) (Lab) |
| † Goldsmith, Zac (<i>Richmond Park</i>) (Con) | Sarah Rees, <i>Committee Clerk</i> |
| † Harper, Mr Mark (<i>Forest of Dean</i>) (Con) | |
| † Harris, Carolyn (<i>Swansea East</i>) (Lab) | † attended the Committee |

First Delegated Legislation Committee

Monday 30 April 2018

[ALBERT OWEN *in the Chair*]

Draft Licensing Act 2003 (Royal Wedding Licensing Hours) Order 2018

6 pm

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Victoria Atkins): I beg to move,

That the Committee has considered the draft Licensing Act 2003 (Royal Wedding Licensing Hours) Order 2018.

It is a pleasure to serve under your chairmanship, Mr Owen. The draft order was laid before Parliament on 21 March. Prince Harry will celebrate his wedding to Ms Meghan Markle on Saturday 19 May. The Government consider that a nationally significant event, and many people will wish to celebrate the occasion. The order therefore makes provision, under section 172 of the Licensing Act 2003, to relax licensing arrangements and allow licensed premises to extend their opening hours, on Friday 18 and Saturday 19 May, from 11 pm until 1 am the following mornings to mark the occasion of the royal wedding. This provision relates to premises licences and club premises certificates. It will mean that premises that have licences for the sale of alcohol will just be able to carry on selling alcohol, without having to fill in extra paperwork for a temporary events notice. Premises licensed to provide regulated entertainment or music may do so until 1 am on the nights covered by the order, even if the premises are not licensed to sell alcohol.

However, premises that sell alcohol for consumption off the premises, such as off-licences and supermarkets, are not covered by the order and nor are premises that provide late-night refreshment but do not sell alcohol; they will be able to provide late-night refreshment until 1 am only if their existing licence already permits that.

Licensing hours have previously been extended for Her Majesty the Queen's 90th birthday celebrations in 2016, for the FIFA World cup in 2014, for the Queen's diamond jubilee in 2012 and for the royal wedding of Prince William and Catherine Middleton in 2011. I hope that the Committee will agree with the Government that the licensing hours order is an appropriate use of the powers conferred on the Home Secretary by the 2003 Act. Some have said that the passing of this order is conditional on members of the Committee being invited to the royal wedding—I am just floating that, so that the powers that be hear it. I commend the order to the Committee.

6.2 pm

Carolyn Harris (Swansea East) (Lab): It is a pleasure to serve under your wonderful chairmanship, Mr Owen. The wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle on Saturday 19 May promises to be a wonderful occasion and an opportunity for the country to celebrate. I welcome the announcement that, during the celebration period, licensing hours will be extended. This is in line

with similar extensions for other royal events, such as the wedding of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and the Queen's diamond jubilee and 90th birthday.

My only concern—apart from the lack of an invitation—is the fact that the wedding coincides with the FA cup final between Manchester United and Chelsea. Although that will allow supporters to extend their celebrations or commiserations, consideration must be given to the problems that can arise in licensed venues and city centres throughout the country following such events, even with unextended licensing hours. We must therefore ensure that additional resources from our emergency services are employed on these days. We will need extra police, paramedics and first aid services to be available around the country to ensure that the festivities associated with both events can be enjoyed by everyone everywhere.

Although it would have been fantastic for us all to have received an invitation—I am keeping a beady eye on the post just in case—I am sure that we would all like to join together from afar in wishing Harry and Meghan a perfect day and a happy life together. We can do that by using the extended licensing hours to celebrate their marriage sensibly and safely, with the support of our amazing emergency services.

6.4 pm

Victoria Atkins: I am extremely grateful to the hon. Lady for responding in her usual stylish and thoughtful way. The Government share the hope that the football-related celebrations will not spill over into anything other than good cheer and good will. We take some comfort from the fact that Her Majesty's 90th birthday coincided with two Euro 2016 matches involving England and Wales and there were no reports on that occasion, or during the extension of licensing hours for the 2014 World cup, of increased disorder as a result of the extensions. We have looked carefully at the responses in the surveys. No evidence was received from the police or other respondents to the consultation demonstrating that there would be any increase in football-related disorder as a result of the extension, but of course our very responsible chief constables, police and crime commissioners and, indeed, all people concerned in the emergency services will be taking that into account. I hope that they have a chance to celebrate, along with the rest of the country.

Mr John Hayes (South Holland and The Deepings) (Con): Will my hon. Friend give way before she concludes her remarks?

Victoria Atkins: How could I resist!

Mr Hayes: I will not comment on that. My hon. Friend is making a compelling case, which is clearly supported on both sides of the Committee. I wonder whether she might explore whether there are other occasions on which this exceptional extension of licensing might prevail. Her Majesty is now a great age, and it seems to me that her birthday might be celebrated each and every year; and there might be occasions—Trafalgar day, for example, and other great national days—for which an extension of licensing, in a modest and considered way, could be taken into account. I am sure that my hon. Friend has the information at her fingertips, but if not, she might write to the members of the Committee.

The Chair: Order. I am sure the intervention is now finished.

Victoria Atkins: I note that the provision in the 2003 Act refers to a nationally significant event and I can only think that my right hon. Friend has omitted one important occasion from the list that he has outlined—his own birthday! I will very happily take his thoughtful

suggestion and look into whether there are other occasions on which extensions should be granted, and will of course communicate to him my thoughts on that in due course.

Question put and agreed to.

6.7 pm

Committee rose.

