

PALMERSTON NORTH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Extraordinary Community Development Committee Meeting Part I Public, held in the Council Chamber, First Floor, Civic Administration Building, 32 The Square, Palmerston North on 25 February 2020, commencing at 1.00pm

Members Present: Councillor Lorna Johnson (in the Chair), The Mayor (Grant Smith) and Councillors Rachel Bowen, Brent Barrett, Zulfiqar Butt, Renee Dingwall, Lew Findlay QSM, Patrick Handcock ONZM, Billy Meehan, Karen Naylor, Bruno Petrenas and Aleisha Rutherford.

Apologies: Councillors Susan Baty, Leonie Hapeta, Tangi Utikere and Ms Danielle Harris.

Councillor Findlay left the meeting at 3.48pm during consideration of clause 13. He was not present for clauses 13 and 14.

11-20 **Apologies**

Moved Lorna Johnson, seconded Rachel Bowen.

The **COMMITTEE RESOLVED**

1. To receive the apologies.

Clause 11-20 above was carried 12 votes to 0, the voting being as follows:

For:

The Mayor (Grant Smith) and Councillors Lorna Johnson, Rachel Bowen, Brent Barrett, Zulfiqar Butt, Renee Dingwall, Lew Findlay QSM, Patrick Handcock ONZM, Billy Meehan, Karen Naylor, Bruno Petrenas and Aleisha Rutherford.

12-20 **Draft Local Alcohol Policy - Submissions**

Moved Lorna Johnson, seconded Rachel Bowen.

The **COMMITTEE RESOLVED**

1. To hear submissions from presenters who indicated their wish to be heard in support of their submission.
2. To note the Procedure for Hearing of Submissions, as described in the procedure sheet.
3. That the submissions on the Draft Alcohol Policy be received, and referred to the Community Development Committee on 6 May 2020 for consideration

Clause 12-20 above was carried 12 votes to 0, the voting being as follows:

For:

The Mayor (Grant Smith) and Councillors Lorna Johnson, Rachel Bowen, Brent Barrett, Zulfiqar Butt, Renee Dingwall, Lew Findlay QSM, Patrick Handcock ONZM, Billy Meehan, Karen Naylor, Bruno Petrenas and Aleisha Rutherford.

The Committee considered submissions on the Draft Local Alcohol Policy 2020 together with supporting oral statements including additional tabled material.

The following people appeared before the Committee and made oral statements in support of their submissions and replied to questions from Elected Members.

Jazz Rawiri, Albert Sports Bar, Royal Hotel (40)

Jazz Rawiri spoke to his submission and made the following comments:

- There is a huge regulatory burden for on-licence premises compared to off-licences.
- On-licence premises are important to encourage safe drinking in Palmerston North.
- If the Albert Bar had to close at midnight, it would be detrimental to business as the majority of bars are empty during the day and are active at night.
- What happened to the data from the 2am closing trial in 2017?
- The proposed reduced hours for off-licensed premises isn't going to affect their trade or change people's behaviour.
- It would be better to consider bars in the industrial zones on a case by case basis rather than implementing a blanket midnight close.
- Bars that have not breached their license should not be penalised by early closure.
- There has been a lack of publication about the proposed changes. He said he hadn't directly been notified about it. The majority of patrons know nothing about this proposal, there is nothing on social media and it has fallen short of being properly advertised to patrons.
- The 2017 early closure trial was not advertised to patrons before the trial started. He asked what sort of measures were taken to consult people?
- The price disparity between off and on licenses needs to be addressed.

Ian McQueen – BAS (PN) Ltd TA Brewers Apprentice (43)

Ian McQueen spoke to his submission and made the following comments:

- The 2am closing trial in 2017 didn't work as it meant everyone was on the streets at the same time rather than a natural drop off between 2-3am. This caused a shortage of taxis available which resulted in more street violence.
- It had a detrimental effect on the hospitality industry as income halved and staff worked fewer hours.
- People didn't come into town earlier – but drank more at home.

- Sydney is not a good example to follow, when they reduced their opening hours, the late night economy shrank and there was no change in the levels of violence.
- We held a 24 hour licence which worked well as people come in at all times of day and night. However we were quite often falsely accused by the media for incidents that had occurred near our premises, even though we might have been closed when the incident happened.
- Since supermarkets started selling alcohol, the problem with preloading has increased as they often sell alcohol as loss leaders. Prices have continued to drop in off-licenses compared to on-licence premises.
- Alcohol consumption went down last year.

Kerry Hocquard – Cancer Society of New Zealand – Manawatū Centre Ltd (51)

Kerry Hocquard spoke to the submission made by the Cancer Society of New Zealand, she made the following comments:

- There is a link between excess alcohol consumption and an increased risk of cancer.
- There is no safe level of drinking.
- Disappointing council hasn't used all of its powers to limit alcohol consumption.
- Council needs to reduce the saturation of alcohol outlets near sensitive areas ie schools, playgrounds, places of worship. Many supermarkets and liquor outlets are at most 10 mins to nearest school.
- Alcohol outlets in our most highly deprived areas are causing the most harm.
- Council needs to advocate to central government measures that reduce alcohol consumption.
- Children are heavily exposed to alcohol advertising.
- There needs to be more restrictions on alcohol sponsorship and age limits.
- Although there is a difference between off-licence and on-licence alcohol consumption, our commitment is to reduce consumption everywhere.

Lourie Family – Orlando Country (55)

Angus Lourie spoke to his submission and made the following comments:

- As an event and conference centre the proposal to close at midnight would require us ending events at 11pm and sending people to town to carry on partying.
- It takes an hour to close the venue, we want people to be able to leave in a reasonable manner and not feel pressured to finish their drinks quickly.
- We would rather people stay with us where we can guarantee their

safety.

- The proposal is going to discourage people from coming to Palmerston North. As a conference centre we are competing regionally so putting local restrictions on trading hours will mean people choose venues elsewhere.
- Unfortunately the safe thing (i.e. to buy alcohol at a pub) is too expensive for most people so they end up pre-loading before going into town. The government need to encourage pubs to drop their prices so they are competitive with off-licences.

Jules Grace (56)

Jules Grace spoke to his submission made the following comments:

- Licenced premises are the safest place to consume alcohol. The current 3am closing time works well and there is no need to change it.
- Reducing on-licence hours won't reduce harm but will push people to go elsewhere to drink.
- Alcohol harm is mostly due to pre-loading and happens outside of the bars on the streets because drunk people are not let into the bars.
- There is a lack of police presence which means people get away with consuming alcohol on the streets which can lead to street violence.
- The city's reputation will be harmed if Council goes ahead with the proposal, as our vibrant nightlife will die. Alcohol is not the element that makes a vibrant night life, but is a contributing factor.

Reuben Takara (62)

Reuben Takara spoke to his submission made the following comments:

- Experience as a bouncer in Palmerston North:
 - Preloading has become more of a problem since the supermarkets have been allowed to sell alcohol. They often sell it cheaply or as a loss leader, which has meant the availability of alcohol has expanded in society.
 - There seems to be a much lower responsibility to minimise harm for off-licences than for on-licences. This has enabled underage drinking and excessive drinking to prosper.
 - The Police commissioned early closing trial in 2017 failed miserably. Violence increased which put more pressure on police. Bars felt pressure to participate in the trial but once we'd agree, no additional support was given. Patrons came into town at the same time but they had been drinking more.
- Things that do work to reduce alcohol harm include:
 - A one-way door policy at 2.30am.
 - Increase pressure of police on the streets.
 - Angels on the streets (need to reinstated) to help drunk people get

- home or sober them up.
- Massey University Student Association needs to be more involved in working with student hotspots in the city.

Audrey Jarvis – “Let the Children Live” Group, Wesley Broadway Methodist Church (39)

Audrey Jarvis spoke to the submission from the “Let the Children Live” group she made the following comments:

- Excessive alcohol consumption increases the risk of family violence.
- International research has found excessive preloading increases the risk of domestic violence.
- The group strongly support reducing the trading hours for off-licence premises.
- There is an issue of location of licenced premises, it is important that the district plan seeks consultation for all new licenced premises.
- Re-directing alcohol advertisements from young people to adults is important.
- There needs to be more legislation to reduce alcohol harm.

Giselle Barets - Health Promotion Agency Te Hiringa Hauroa (50)

Giselle Barets spoke to the submission from Te Hiringa Hauroa, she made the following comments:

- The agency supports the work the Council is doing to minimise alcohol harm. The draft policy is easy to read.
- It is recommended that the council separates the early and late hours in the policy.
- Need to include a part on limiting the growth of alcohol outlets in sensitive sites in the city and list these sites in the policy. Could also look at freezing new licences or having a cap in areas which have too many alcohol outlets.

Dr Rob Weir – MidCentral DHB Public Health Service (49)

A presentation was tabled at the meeting for circulation to Elected Members.

Dr Rob Weir spoke on the MidCentral DHB’s submission, he made the following comments:

- The DHB supports the proposal with a review in two years.
- Sensitive sites should be included in the draft policy.
- Support the 10pm closing time for off-licence premises.
- Research shows people are likely to consume higher quantities and drink more frequently in areas where alcohol outlets are open after 10pm, compared to areas where the off-licence closes before 10pm.

Note:

Councillors Lew Findlay and Karen Naylor declared a declaration of interest in the above submission.

Murray Cleghorn – Brew Union Brewing Co (61)

Murray Cleghorn spoke to his submission and made the following comments:

- Acknowledged the work on-licences were doing in educating the public on responsible drinking.
- Offering a selection of low/non-alcohol beverages important as an alternative.
- Concerned the proposed reduction in trading hours would lead to a loss of nightlife vibrancy, particularly for conference centres.
- Police need to enforce the alcohol bylaw (which prohibits drinking on the street) in the city centre. This would also stop side-loading (people drinking in their cars).
- Great opportunity for central govt to review the problem of low alcohol pricing in causing excessive alcohol consumption.
- Council would more likely reduce the harm of excessive drinking by encouraging the police to have a greater presence on the streets at night and by improving signage.
- The Police needs to share the data from the 2017 trial with Council.

The meeting adjourned at 2.53pm.

The meeting resumed at 3.12pm.

Gary Wright – The Fish Bar Ltd and Bubbles Bar (69 & 70)

Chris Hince – spoke on behalf of Gary Wright’s submission. He made the following comments:

- Regarding the Police initiated, 2017 early closing trial:
 - It led to a significant income reduction which caused part of the business to contract.
 - Palmerston North doesn’t have the infrastructure/ taxis available to cater for a large volume of people to leave all at once. This lead to violence and safety issues as people had to wait for taxis.
 - Police assured bar owners that patrons would change their habits and come earlier to town and spend more. This didn’t happen, patrons arrived at the normal time.
 - Individual bars collected data from the trial, no data was shared with bar-owners from the Police.
 - The current 3am closing time allows patrons to head home between 1.30 and 3am, enabling the current transport infrastructure to keep up with demand.

Julian Clark –George Hospitality Group (35)

Julian Clark spoke to his submission and made the following comments:

- Many people who preload and then come into town don't get into the bars, as they are considered too drunk at the door or are forced to leave. They are therefore left on the streets to cause problems.
- Closing early takes money out of the pocket of hospitality workers.
- The 2017 trial, encouraged everyone to drink till 2am and then everyone was kicked out (600+) at one time.
- We have a one-way door policy from 2.30am, it encourages people to either filter out slowly or stay in the bar.
- From 2am-3am most people start to leave bars and go home.
- The Red Flag Team are extremely useful at sobering people up and helping them get home safely.

Amanda Linsley - Manawātū Chamber of Commerce (48)

Amanda Linsley spoke to the submission from the Manawatu Chamber of Commerce, she made the following comments:

- Support the purpose of Local Alcohol Policy, we need a safe community with a vibrant city centre.
- Reducing trading hours will not reduce alcohol consumption, as the problem is pre-loading.
- The proposal (midnight closing) seriously disadvantages the out-of-town bars.
- Conference centres won't be as competitive if they are forced to close earlier.

Adam Parker – Hospitality New Zealand Palmerston North (46)

A presentation was tabled at the meeting for circulation to Elected Members.

Adam Parker spoke to the submission from Hospitality NZ, he made the following comments:

- There is a lack of data to suggest there is substantial alcohol related harm in Palmerston North. More data is needed to support any policy change.
- The proposed policy will influence event venues if they can't provide alcohol after midnight.
- A recent study on preloading suggested that most people get drunk to have fun. Restriction on trading hours not going to stop pre-loading.

Councillor Findlay left the meeting at 3.48pm.

Nathan Cowie – Alcohol Healthwatch Trust (52)

Nathan Cowie spoke to the submission from Alcohol Healthwatch and made the following comments:

- Support minimum unit pricing for alcohol. As prices in off-licences are too low, e.g. as low as 68c per standard drink.
- In terms of the policy:
 - Strongly support the proposed trading hour reductions, 1am closing in city centre would reduce harm further.
 - Would recommend a sensitive sites protection eg no alcohol outlets 100m from schools.
 - Would support further controls on new outlets and a cap on new licences.
 - Support review after 2 years.
 - Recommend the Council looks at the Cardiff, UK approach, which encourages shared co-ordination between council and police.

Patrick Handcock – Palmerston North Safety Advisory Board (63)

A presentation was tabled at the meeting for circulation to Elected Members.

Cllr Patrick Handcock spoke to the submission of the Safety Advisory Board, he made the following comments:

- Support the proposed changes to trading hours and the review of policy in 2 years.
- It will be a challenge for conference centres to survive, exemptions to the policy could be considered on a case by case basis. If businesses can prove a relevant reason for an exemption.

Bernice Adlam – The Palmy BID (47)

Bernice Adlam spoke to the submission from the Palmy BID, she made the following comments:

- The Council is seen as biased as the proposed changes will favour the City Council's Convention Centre (located in the city centre – 2am closing) over others venues in the city (proposed midnight closing).
- Policy changes will have a detrimental financial effect on the city's hospitality industry.
- We support leaving the trading hours as they are and reviewing them in
- two years.
- Preloading is the problem and should be addressed through educational programmes similar to the anti-smoking campaign in schools. To teach young people about the dangers of pre-loading.
- Support a minimum unit price for alcohol.
- BID Palmy would like to work with the Council to improve this policy.

Ricky Quirk - George Hospitality Group (42)

Ricky Quirk spoke to his submission and made the following comments:

- Spoke about the 2017 trial:
 - Fair bit of pressure to participate.
 - 11.30pm to midnight, influx of people in bars and then forced to close at 2am.
 - The reduced trading hours made people behave worse.
 - Everyone on streets at same time led to chaos from the first Saturday. Over the six months, things didn't improve, people pretty upset. Out-of-towners were confused the bars were shutting early.
 - Don't need a mandatory one-way door policy as bars are doing it already.

Tim Adlam – The Speights Ale House Palmerston North (54)

Tim Adlam spoke to his submission and made the following comments:

- The Speights Ale House already closes at 2am so proposal won't affect it. However would like to have the option of a temporary licence for big events.
- Suggested trailing a 4am or 5am closing time as the natural attrition rate would make the streets safer. There would be fewer people on the street to cause problems. The later bars stay open the easier it is to close.
- Bars can't stop people pre-loading but we get blamed for it.
- The proposed midnight closing of conference centres is going to impact everyone.

Colleen Maxwell – Masonic Hotel (71)

Colleen Maxwell spoke to her submission and made the following comment:

- Supports the current 3am closing time, the 2am trial caused a lot of problems. Due to the lack of infrastructure - patrons were faced with long waits for taxis.

13-20

Confirmation of Minutes

Moved Lorna Johnson, seconded Rachel Bowen.

The COMMITTEE RESOLVED

1. That the minutes of the Community Development Committee meeting of 5 February 2020 Part I Public be confirmed as a true and correct record.

Clause 13-20 above was carried 12 votes to 0, the voting being as follows:

For:

The Mayor (Grant Smith) and Councillors Lorna Johnson, Rachel Bowen, Brent Barrett, Zulfiqar Butt, Renee Dingwall, Lew Findlay QSM, Patrick Handcock ONZM, Billy Meehan, Karen Naylor, Bruno Petrenas and Aleisha Rutherford.

14-20 Draft Local Alcohol Policy 2020 - Summary of Submissions
Report, presented by Peter Ridge, Senior Policy Analyst.

Moved Lorna Johnson, seconded Rachel Bowen.

The **COMMITTEE RESOLVED**

1. That the Draft Local Alcohol Policy 2020 summary of submissions be received.

Clause 14-20 above was carried 12 votes to 0, the voting being as follows:

For:

The Mayor (Grant Smith) and Councillors Lorna Johnson, Rachel Bowen, Brent Barrett, Zulfiqar Butt, Renee Dingwall, Lew Findlay QSM, Patrick Handcock ONZM, Billy Meehan, Karen Naylor, Bruno Petrenas and Aleisha Rutherford.

The meeting finished at 4.55pm

Confirmed 1 July 2020

Chairperson