



Home Office

The Rt Hon Kit Malthouse MP
Minister of State for Crime, Policing
and Probation.

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Dear all,

Licensing Committees

The matter of drink spiking within our communities is of significant concern – both to Government and the public. Everyone has a right to feel safe on the streets and whilst out in the night time economy (NTE) and they – quite rightly - expect Government, law enforcement, and the private sector to ensure that safety.

The Home Office is working closely with colleagues across Government and law enforcement to understand and tackle this issue. We recognise that spiking, particularly facilitated by a needle, can be a very distressing and frightening experience for victims and we want to ensure that those reporting these incidents have access to the right support.

Although we know that not all cases of spiking occur in licensed premises, we understand that these settings might be specifically targeted by offenders. I am therefore writing to licensing committees to encourage you to continue to work with local partners - particularly the police - to make sure this concern is highlighted and addressed appropriately and collaboratively. We also encourage premises to assess what steps they think are needed for their particular venue to ensure their patrons are safe and protected.

I am confident that the Licensing Act 2003 already allows local licensing authorities to take a tailored approach to granting premises licences and impose conditions on any business that wants to sell alcohol, in order to reduce crime – including incidents of spiking. These can include requiring the presence of suitably trained and accredited door staff, CCTV, or to introduce entry searches for example.

The police also have considerable powers to take action where they think there is a problem – these include temporary closure powers. They can call for a review of the premises licence and work with the management and the licensing authority to introduce new conditions to allow the premises to operate more safely.

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