



Chief Executive of District Council

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Dear Chief Executive

REVIEW OF REDUCED FEES FOR ENTERTAINMENTS LICENCES

As you know with effect from 6 April 2021 the Minister for Communities introduced a nominal fee of £1 for renewal applications only, for all categories of entertainments licence to alleviate the hardship being experienced by the hospitality industry as a result of COVID-19 restrictions, the reduction to remain in place for the duration of the 2021/2022 financial year.

In January this year we sought councils' views on whether or not there was a need to extend this easement beyond the end of the 2021/2022 financial year. Views received were mixed but the majority of councils favoured extending the reduction on condition that the Department provided additional funding to cover the resulting loss of income.

Having considered the councils' views, and given that the Health Minister has only very recently lifted all remaining COVID-19 restrictions on hospitality venues, meaning businesses have still some way to go to get back to normal operation, the Minister has decided to continue with this easement for a further year.

The nominal fee of £1 for renewal applications only, for all categories of entertainments licence will therefore remain as set out in Local Government Circular 4/2021 for the 2022/2023 financial year, subject to a further review later this year.

The continuation of this measure will result in further loss of income for councils during the year to come. However, additional funding of some £17m provided by the Executive for council losses incurred as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic is to be allocated to local councils by this Department as announced by the Minister today. This funding includes provision to cover any loss of income resulting from the reduction in fees for the renewal of entertainment licences for 2022/23.

Yours sincerely

Liam Quinn
Assistant Director of Local Government and Housing Regulation