

Dear Stewart,

As requested, I have looked through the changes to the LA03 document.

I have no comments on any of the changes, with the exception of paragraph 1.99 (and the related 1.100).

Paragraph 1.99 can be broken down into 3 parts. The first part is simply introduction and gives no useful information:

"The Licensing Authority recognises the valuable cultural, social and business importance that premises and events requiring a licence under the Licensing Act 2003 provide, and welcomes the diversity of activities that are provided by licence holders."

The second part states that pre-application help will be provided "as resources permit":

*"... pre-application discussions will be encouraged to assist applicants to develop their operating schedule. The Licensing Authority and the Responsible Authorities of the Council will offer as much advice and guidance to applicants **as resources permit.**"*

The third part then gives some information on what will happen in the cases where resources do not permit sufficient guidance.

My concern is that there is a conflict between parts 2 & 3. Who has the authority to decide that sufficient resources have been provided to solving a problem, before the applicant is encouraged to pay **the same people** for further help? My experience recently with Trading Standards suggests that little-to-no help is given freely, as my question was immediately deemed to be one requiring payment before I would receive an answer.

Therefore, if it is the case that (for example) 30 minutes of consultation is the maximum that will be provided freely, or (again, for example), certain questions will always require payment before being answered, then I think that this should be stated clearly. This will help to avoid the "judge and jury" situation that may occur deciding when further assistance will incur payment.

Best regards,

The Ely Gin Company Ltd. is registered in England and Wales, company registration number 07846289.

Registered office: 83 St Johns Road, Ely, CB6 3BW, U.K.

Find out more at: www.ElyGin.co.uk