**Appendix A) Responses from BIDs and Businesses**

We asked Westminster’s Business Improvement Districts and their members for their experience and concerns around the 10pm curfew. We also offered a set of questions to help guide responses; these questions were:

1. What are your main concerns about the 10pm curfew and the impact on businesses within the hospitality sector?
2. Have you or your businesses been disproportionately affected? What impacts have businesses felt?
3. Do you think highlighting the late-night Christmas shopping/ hospitality package around the December period would be a viable reason to end the curfew?
4. What would be your priority asks of government around this curfew or what other measures would you want to see in place?

Businesses (apart from the BIDs) have been anonymised but categorised according to type of business.

Please note: the responses recorded have been taken verbatim.

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| ***Business Improvement Districts*** | |
| *BID 1* | The BID contacted their members and collated their feedback.  A lot of [BID member] pubs were uncontactable as they are closed and managers furloughed, but we did get several good responses from Pubs in Paddington. Some quotes below:   * “Our trade is down by 40% since we reopened. This is not all down to the restricted hours. I would estimate we are losing about 10% from the curfew but I would happily adhere to the curfew if we could reopen with the rule of six allowed inside as well as outside.” * “Our business is not sustainable with the reduction in hours as 30% of our trade occurs later in the evening, if the curfew remains in place, we will not be able to reopen as we will be at a larger loss than to remain closed, this will of course result in redundancies because although furlough is in place until the end of March, we still have National Insurance contributions and pension contributions to cover”. * “Our regulars and locals leave around 9/10pm anyway. We would perhaps prefer last orders to be 10pm with a half hour drink up time. The biggest issue is the loss of tourists.”   Hotels with restaurants have reported the following:   * + Whilst room service can continue, the 10pm curfew has had a massive impact on bar sales, where bars are open to the public.   + Feel that the curfew has had an impact on both the hotel and restaurant. How people feel means they are much less likely to book a weekend away or go out for dinner with a 10pm curfew in place.   + Every time a new restriction comes in place, people feel less comfortable and are therefore less likely to go out or come to London for the weekend.   + The biggest impact curfew wise is on weekends, not as much on weekdays. 20% decline in sales coming through on the weekends with the 10pm curfew, compared to pre-curfew / post lockdown (the first one).   + Every time an announcement is made business is affected. Official announcements, as well as rumours, are as harmful as policies and restrictions, and affect confidence. It takes a week to ten days after an announcement for confidence to recover and for people to start eating out again.   + The 10pm curfew creates a 'crunch'. The restaurant was operating at maximum capacity (within Covid guidelines) by 8.30pm, with more people coming in at the same time than when there wasn't a curfew. It was more spread out without the curfew, which meant they had less people at any one time in the restaurant.   Restaurants reported the following:   * + One restaurant reported that they had to open the kitchen an hour earlier (5pm) to encourage an earlier sitting which meant they had to pay staff for that hour. But the income remained the same.   + They also had to offer early dinner deals they may not have otherwise offered.   One 24/7 casino on Edgware Road compared two weeks:   * + A week’s revenue when they were open 24/7 during the pandemic versus a week’s revenue after the 10pm curfew came into effect:     - Open 24/7 during pandemic: Revenue down 43% year on year.     - With 10pm curfew: Revenue down 77% YoY.   + They feel lifting the curfew is critical for London. They’ve invested a lot in making the venue Covid-secure so they’re struggling to understand how this curfew makes sense.   Private Members’ Clubs in the area reported the following:   * + These are now entirely Covid-secure locations and provide Covid-secure overnight accommodation, restaurants, and meeting space.   + As they are not open to the general public they can safely control numbers through booking systems and their membership list, and provide safe environments for members and staff. There is no reason for the curfew to be in place in these venues.   + Our members clubs across both Paddington and Marble Arch (Home Grown, Victory Services Club, Frontline Club) report losing at least two membership subscriptions each week. |
| *BID 2* | What are your main concerns about the 10pm curfew and the impact on businesses within the hospitality sector?   * Businesses have felt the 10pm curfew has been detrimental to the business activity and revenues. * The lack of evidence and information supporting the decision has also left businesses questioning the logic and effectiveness. * From an area management perspective, the 10pm curfew has caused crowd control issues as people all leaving at the same time and gathering in open spaces without social distancing. Crowds of people are also getting on public transport at the same time without enough space to socially distance. * The issues mentioned above have also created issues for our area management and private security teams trying to manage the surge of people as opposed to the more effective staggered closing times under normal circumstances.   Have you or your businesses been disproportionately affected? What impacts have businesses felt?   * The West End has been disproportionately affected with low footfall figures, with lack of workers and tourists both domestically and internationally. * The closure of cultural institutions and misleading information on using public transport combined with the congestion charge means people have few incentives to travel to West End. * There are very low resident numbers in the area, so the message of getting Londoners to stay local does not help the West End businesses. * Many of the night-time economy businesses earn their revenues after 10pm, which has put a halt on their recovery plans and may lose more staff with the curfew in place. * Restaurants have to take last tables earlier than ever so people can be accommodated until 10pm. * People normally attracted to the West End because of the night-life are deterred from coming with the curfew in place   Do you think highlighting the late-night Christmas shopping/ hospitality package around the December period would be a viable reason to end the curfew?   * We need to help businesses help themselves by giving them the tools, flexibility and support they need to make the most of critical Xmas period.   What would be your priority asks of government around this curfew or what other measures would you want to see in place?   * Extended Sunday trading hours * Need to promote London as open with substantially global competitive tourism budgets to get people back into the area * Need travel deals on public transport * Need an investment and bespoke support for the cultural institutions who are disproportionately impacted and are vital to the recovery of the West End due to the interdependency of businesses on the theatre industry * With the curfew ending, we need the night-time tubes to reopen which will help with capacity control and social distancing on public transport |
| ***Restaurants*** | |
| *Restaurant 1* | What are your main concerns about the 10pm curfew and the impact on businesses within the hospitality sector?   * Killed reservations in the evening by around 30 to 40% as no second sitting. * customers deeply unhappy about having to leave “all together” at a particular moment. This would avoid naturally by even an 11pm closure. * there is also existence that some consumers are ordering multiple drinks in the period leading up to the 10pm closure. This is not a healthy relationship with alcohol and most likely not helping support social distancing when they leave the establishment!   Have you or your businesses been disproportionately affected? What impacts have businesses felt?   * The few customers left working in London often making decisions to eat more local to home to avoid the congestion of the 10pm closure. * Yes 100%. Alcohol sales are a big part of an evening dinner service. So it’s impacting sales and our ability to make profit rendering hospitality a loss making business for Fortnum’s and others. * It’s another message to potential consumers to “stay at home” hence I don’t believe it’s helping the West End foot-traffic issues.   Do you think highlighting the late-night Christmas shopping/ hospitality package around the December period would be a viable reason to end the curfew?   * Yes of course but the evidence of restaurants being a hot spot of infection transmission is very, very low.   What would be your priority asks of government around this curfew or what other measures would you want to see in place?   * Allow table service restaurants and bars to operate. Potentially restrict free standing environments which are harder to control, such as classic drinking pubs. |
| *Restaurant 2* | * We do suffer enormously at the moment like every business in the globe, but the hard decision to make 10pm curfew has added to our suffer as we now only do one round of service with no middle happy hours, so it’s either early lunch or early supper if there is any. * We are a mid-market restaurant most of our trade is in the evening with 3 courses and a good wine now we have none of this as people always rushing to eat and spend the minimum and leave the area before it get crowded with commuters that leaves at the same time * We hope to share our concern with everyone in the west end, and our voice get heard somewhere. |
| *Restaurant 3* | What are your main concerns about the 10pm curfew and the impact on businesses within the hospitality sector?   * My main concerns around the 10pm curfew is firstly that all guests are leaving all restaurants at the same time meaning a night of social distancing is out the window as soon as they venture outside. Either walking down the street or on public transport they will be surrounded by people with minimal distancing. Also reduced time we have to look after guests rushes our service delivery and COVID process. If you add in reduced spending due to lack of time its a bad choice for the businesses   Have you or your businesses been disproportionately affected? What impacts have businesses felt?   * Most hospitality businesses feel the same as above. It negatively impacts compliance, service quality and earnings * Late Night bars and venues, but also restaurants with extended openings * Sales dropped down by 45% on pre curfew sales. Its impact has been worse than social distancing measures   Do you think highlighting the late-night Christmas shopping/ hospitality package around the December period would be a viable reason to end the curfew?   * There is no reason we cannot operate the businesses safely, socially distanced and profitable past 10pm. Looking past the need for revenue, it is safer for guests and staff as we are not trying to drive too much volume in a shorter period and have time to follow all processes.   What would be your priority asks of government around this curfew or what other measures would you want to see in place?   * Staggered closing times based on current opening times. There are simply no good reasons to close us all at the same time. No late night, but pubs at 11pm, restaurants at midnight and bars at 1am |
| *Restaurant 4* | What are your main concerns about the 10pm curfew and the impact on businesses within the hospitality sector?   * The nature of the curfew for all businesses leads to an exit from premises at the same time leading to chaos on public transport / taxis and close contact. It also encourages people to drink earlier and harder. In terms of the impact on the business, this including other measures have sales drop by 60% on LY and also, job loses due to poor trading.   Have you or your businesses been disproportionately affected? What impacts have businesses felt?   * Doesn’t make sense, restaurant and bars/pubs provide a controlled environment and the impact of the curfew is leading to job losses and businesses closures. * We have lost 10-15% of sales since the curfew was introduced. * Redundancies and considered closing the restaurant on a few occasions.   Do you think highlighting the late-night Christmas shopping/ hospitality package around the December period would be a viable reason to end the curfew?   * Yes, it will hopefully give us an opportunity to maximise sales to finish on a high. Hospitality businesses have complied with all regulations and will also adhere to any new changes going forward.   What would be your priority asks of government around this curfew or what other measures would you want to see in place?   * If a curfew must remain in place - either way - restaurants or bar/pubs need to close at different times to avoid the current issue. Also, the key consideration is why would anyone come into London, if their night will be cut short? |
| *Restaurant 5* | What are your main concerns about the 10pm curfew and the impact on businesses within the hospitality sector?   * It’s unnecessary as established Covid protocols in place in hospitality venues to protect staff and customers does not warrant a curfew. * Due to the curfew there is huge congestion outside venues as customers leave en masse so infection risk is higher. Same on tubes etc. * Curfew is counter-productive. * Evening trading levels have been hit incurring a 50% drop on what were already struggling trading levels   Have you or your businesses been disproportionately affected? What impacts have businesses felt?   * That it is frustrating, a waste of time, operationally tough to coordinate – a lot of additional stress for staff and customers, ineffective in the Covid fight, hospitality being unfairly seen as risky environments * Evening sales are 50% down on what were already low base figures. You can only do one dinner sitting where as before you could do two.   Do you think highlighting the late-night Christmas shopping/ hospitality package around the December period would be a viable reason to end the curfew?   * Yes definitely   What would be your priority asks of government around this curfew or what other measures would you want to see in place?   * Listen to the hospitality leaders, make sensible decisions as a result not just veer towards science data that can be interpreted in many different ways. Loose the curfew – even 11pm with 30 minute finishing up time would work and help stagger departures and allow businesses to have a chance to continue to trade in the evenings. |
| *Restaurant 6* | What are your main concerns about the 10pm curfew and the impact on businesses within the hospitality sector?   * There are many impacts on the sector, with the 10pm curfew this does of course limit the number of sittings, it also means we have to rush people out but it also means you have a large number of people leaving at the same time where as it would be much better to have the finish time later which means that this would be more staggered.   Have you or your businesses been disproportionately affected? What impacts have businesses felt?   * Many business and customers do not agree with this – as it is pushing the problem on to the streets. People are carrying on elsewhere and you are pushing them out of a controlled environment which has checks and measures in place to perhaps to prevent the spread of COVID and remind people of the precautions in to peoples homes or congregating on the street which is happening. * It has affected our revenue as we have to shut early   Do you think highlighting the late-night Christmas shopping/ hospitality package around the December period would be a viable reason to end the curfew?   * Yes – if we are all able to open to be open later would help to manage footfall and the volume of people   What would be your priority asks of government around this curfew or what other measures would you want to see in place?   * The Hospitality Industry are all united that the 10pm curfew is a nonsense. If it is to remain then a staggered approach must be considered and moving the time to 11pm would help as customers would not be rushing as much to complete their meal and are more likely to go straight home. |
| *Restaurant 7* | What are your main concerns about the 10pm curfew and the impact on businesses within the hospitality sector?   * Concerns are that it’s having a huge impact on business as we are now running on even more reduced capacity compared to when we first opened. It’s of no benefit to anyone as we kick everyone out at the same time from a Covid secure venue to put on the street where they all congregate together. It’s feels like something if it were continue so would the spread of the virus. Our covers in particular have gone from being around 50% reduced initially before the curfew, and now they’ve reduced by about another 20% on top of that.   Have you or your businesses been disproportionately affected? What impacts have businesses felt?   * Aside from what’s mentioned above the 10pm curfew really doesn’t make sense. Especially when you take into account health and transmission. A staggered approach would make much more sense than kicking out every paying guest we have, and then collectively across a densely populated area such as central London and Soho, all at the same time and then all they can do is here together on public transport. I see little to no evidence of how this curfew helps anyone. * I don’t think it disproportionally affects businesses - it is a poorly thought out decision that affects us all the same. In all hospitality, people squeeze in as much as possible before they have to go at 10pm. * The curfew affects all business in different ways. We have to consider the guest experience and when we do, that means no one can relax and enjoy their visit post 8pm. Aside from the levels of business being even more reduced in a time when we need it go the other way, this curfew has a detrimental effect on all areas of the business with no evidence to suggest its doing anything to suppress the spread of Covid.   Do you think highlighting the late-night Christmas shopping/ hospitality package around the December period would be a viable reason to end the curfew?   * I think the curfew needs to end because there is no evidence for it - regardless of time of year. We all know what will happen in December should the lockdown be lifted when expected - streets will be packed, and hospitality could and should benefit from that. We’ve proven we’re safe environments and with reduced capacity we can’t have the strains associated with a “usual” Christmas period.   What would be your priority asks of government around this curfew or what other measures would you want to see in place?   * My main asks would be that burden on proof needs to be on the government to provide actual evidence for a curfew if they insist on keeping it - and if they can’t they need to provide further business support. The alternative is to let restaurants and bars operate as they had done before. We are fully conversant in how to keep people as safe as possible on our venues - let us continue to do that. People naturally leave across staggered times in the evening, especially in restaurants. If they insist on controlling guest movements, then why can’t bars and restaurants operate later but have last entry times and then carry on operating for 1/2 hours after that time? |
| *Restaurant 8* | * We are deeply concerned about the curfew as we have to close the bar and restaurant at 9.30 in order for everyone to leave by 10, sometimes guests can't even have coffee or dessert and it goes against our hospitality training! * The main problem is lack of takings to pay our extortionate rents, most income is taken between 21.30 – 23:00 and we can rarely have two sittings in the restaurant particularly with the loss of pre theatre. There does not really seem to be a great need for a curfew as all bars and restaurants practice distancing. Our guests and staff are then forced onto packed transport to get home. * There is a very human element here too as everyone's lives have been turned upside down many people are suffering incredible stress and depression, there is an enormous case to reopen shops and bars, cancel the curfew and give people Christmas with all the other restrictions in place. * Venues like [redacted] have spent thousands on COVID proofing, you couldn't feel safer anywhere and have to clear by 10 Does it really help the fight against the disease? |
| ***Pubs/ Bars*** | |
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| ***Casinos*** | |
| *Casino 1* | What are your main concerns about the 10pm curfew and the impact on businesses within the hospitality sector?   * The 10pm curfew is unnecessary, ill thought out and counterproductive both to how best to contain transmission of the virus, but also to the wider economy. * The initial UK lockdown and similar worldwide restrictions on travel and social interaction had a devastating effect on central London businesses, reducing visitor traffic by up to 75% in the key West End districts. * The impact on the Casino at this time was to reduce our revenue by 50%, and the soul-destroying need to make 220 of the 760 full time staff redundant. * However, the imposition of the 10pm curfew was a quite unnecessary coup de grace, as more than half of our revenue is earned after 10pm as a world-renowned 24-hour business in the West End. This reduced our business and income to 25% of our pre-COVID income, which, even with the cuts we have made, is not sustainable. * The impact of the curfew on the wider hospitality businesses in central London is well known, with tens of thousands of redundancies already seen, with the prospect, due to closure of local independents and national chains, of tens of thousands more. * The West End has suffered particularly badly as the London Mayor has actively encouraged Londoners to ‘stay local’ thus actively discouraging visits to the centre and introduced measures like extended congestion charging which has made it worse.   Have you or your businesses been disproportionately affected? What impacts have businesses felt?   * The business community has approached this as ONE VOICE rejecting the curfew itself and the spurious reasons outlined for it. * The Government’s own data supports the fact that the hospitality industry has implemented safety and hygiene protocols more effectively than any other, with less than 5% of infection cases registered to this sector. * Besides unnecessarily damaging businesses, turfing all the customers onto the streets at 10pm has caused major crowding issues in streets throughout the West End and overloaded public transportation. This will inevitably have exacerbated the problem of infection. * The only explanation for the curfew is that other countries were doing it, but few, if any, brought it in so early and nationally. * All businesses have been disproportionately affected, given the expense and care taken to abide by the Government safety protocols. However, the 24-hour businesses who have been encouraged time and again by local and national Government to make London a bustling, cosmopolitan 24-hour city have suffered most – having scaled back their night-time operations to nothing. * All hospitality businesses have been affected. Bars have lost an important hour of trading, Restaurants have been affected more, losing a whole sitting at dinner, and casinos the most affected with the 50% of their trade normally happening after 10pm, completely lost. The hospitality ecosystem is affected because people cannot now enjoy an evening’s entertainment. They only have time to do one small part of it.   Do you think highlighting the late-night Christmas shopping/ hospitality package around the December period would be a viable reason to end the curfew?   * No. The reason to end the curfew is because it is wrong. We believe highlighting the long term effect of not lifting the 10pm curfew would have more impact, with some solid research on income, jobs, health and London’s reputation. * The general public is not stupid, and if the curfew is still in place, they will think twice about heading into the West End for a pre-Christmas night out – the time of year where late-night enjoyment is the norm, not the exception. They are also not stupid on their health. We have had thousands of customers who have used our facilities happily and healthily, and have also had some customers who have not come back, knowing they are in the vulnerable categories who prefer to isolate themselves.   What would be your priority asks of government around this curfew or what other measures would you want to see in place?   * We would ask for an immediate removal of the 10pm curfew as it is unsupported by any data or credible argument and may even be counterproductive to health. * Or if there is evidence that there is a cost benefit advantage from any trading restrictions late in the evening, then have very limited targeted interventions, such as alcohol sales having to stop at 1am or midnight. |
| ***Entertainment Venues*** | |
| *Cinema 1* | What are your main concerns about the 10pm curfew and the impact on businesses within the hospitality sector?   * I think they are two-fold - one is that it is highly restrictive for a business operating with peaks mainly at evenings and weekends.  Cinemas are not so badly affected as we can continue to show films past 10pm, but not start performances or sell any food or drink past this time.  Having seen the levels of people in the area once the curfew was introduced, I am also concerned about the safety of my team and my guests as it feels like we are throwing them out into an overcrowded environment - especially on public transport.   Have you or your businesses been disproportionately affected? What impacts have businesses felt?   * I think all as we rely on each other to give people night out - film and a drink, dinner and a movie etc - plus it is the message that it sends to guests that undermines confidence * I think psychologically it cuts people's leisure time and therefore they look at other ways of utilising this time   Do you think highlighting the late-night Christmas shopping/ hospitality package around the December period would be a viable reason to end the curfew?   * I think spreading the load makes social distancing easier and so that should be the way of addressing it.  If we want people to be able to shop, eat and watch a film / other entertainment, then we need to give them enough time to do this.  If their evening is squeezed and they are already unsure about making the decision to travel into central London this is another reason for them to stay local and the West End suffers.   What would be your priority asks of government around this curfew or what other measures would you want to see in place?   * I think my answers above cover this. but just to highlight that there have been no cases of COVID related to cinema going, but the government messages reduces confidence of both consumers and therefore distributors who then choose not to release films and we find ourselves in a downward spiral. |
| ***Hotels*** | |
| *Hotel 1* | * As a Soho hotel this 10pm curfew basically means everyone has to go to their rooms at 10 pm, a bit like a school dormitory. * It adversely affects our bookings as there is basically no reason to come to the area and stay. * For our restaurant and lounge areas it has basically written off both of their incomes as what is usual if you do come to London, is a nightcap after dinner or something late to eat when you come back to your hotel. * We also do shows in our basement cinema / theatre to support the music industry and the arts and this curfew has meant no one wants to come! * To relieve this, is it really necessary to punish residents of hotels and should we not have a later terminal hour for restaurants outside and inside hotels? * In addition the congestion charge at £15 to 10pm is a double put off to potential customers. |
| ***Suppliers*** | |
| *Supplier 1* | * The counter-productive 10pm curfew, prevents restaurants from offering second sittings and removes a key trading hour for pubs, with more than 20% of sales occurring between 10pm and 11pm * The curfew is likely to devastate the pub sector during an already challenging environment for pubs. Pubs were struggling to break even before its implementation and the restriction on hours is likely to push some to breaking point. * Removing a key trading hour on top of fragile consumer confidence and the reduced capacity pubs already face will put thousands more pubs and jobs at risk. * CGA data also showed that takings at 7,000 chain restaurants, pubs and bars were slightly above 2019 levels on Monday 21st, according to CGA, as the UK enjoyed unseasonably warm weather and venues could operate normal opening hours. The next day, after Boris Johnson confirmed the 10pm curfew would be put in place, sales were 8% down, before slumping further during the week as restrictions came into force, first in England and Wales, then followed by Scotland. By Friday 25th September sales were 37% below the total for the corresponding Friday in 2019. |
| ***Business alliance/ business representatives*** | |
| *Business Representative 1* | What are your main concerns around the curfew and impact on businesses in the hospitality sector?   * Main issues are the small window that people have to have a meal and drinks. What happens is, people will either not bother going out or go out and consume as much as they can, and once curfew has arrived, they will find either an off licence or congregate outside with other people to continue their cut short evening. This brings huge issues at 10pm, all people are leaving the hospitality venues pouring onto the streets, not socially distancing or promptly leaving. Huge amounts people congregating on the streets, therefore spreading COVID-19. This also puts huge pressure on Policing too.   Have you or your businesses been disproportionately affected? What impacts have businesses felt?   * It's a terrible idea! Not one business is pro the 10pm curfew. * YES, all [businesses have been affected]. But mainly businesses like mine, members clubs, bars. Where their (our) busiest times are between 11pm -1am. * Businesses closing. Job losses. Contract losses. Not enough business to trade.   Do you think highlighting the late-night Christmas shopping/ hospitality package around the December period would be a viable reason to end the curfew?   * Yes. That would be a lifeline. The west end Economy is on its knees. No tourists, no theatre, no nightlife at all....so having a late night Christmas package would be a huge help.   What would be your priority asks of government around this curfew or what other measures would you want to see in place?   * Scrap the curfew. Have a staggered approach. People leaving at different times......you could have customers with time slots. Keeping within the guidelines and having a more productive trading day. |
| *Business Representative 2* | * I operate 10 large restaurants in the west end * The restaurants hold a 5 star food hygiene award and all of the sites have individual and site specific Covid 19 risk assessments in place. We are experts in managing customers health and safety and have received a huge amount of feedback from customers expressing how safe and secure they have felt in our restaurants during this crisis. * The Eat out to help out scheme was a massive success for us and allowed us to bring back many staff and utilised the services of subsidiary suppliers. We were trading at approx 50% of last years trade. * When the curfew launched our sales dropped to 90% of last year across all sites. Our customers became extremely unhappy as they were all trying to leave at the same time and our staff had to adopt an almost ‘military’ approach to enforce the Covid 19 regulations. * Peak dining is between 7.30 and 10.00 with a natural and staggered uptake and tail off during the evening between 5 and close. Shops closed between 7.00 - 8.00 with diners choosing to dine after shopping. Theatres (that were open) closed at 10.00pm with customers looking for a post theatre meal. All of this resulted in a higher than normal concentration of people at the restaurant entrance / exit and on public transport. * Public transport became overloaded and I have included a video taken at 10.00pm outside our restaurants on Argyl Street (next to Oxford Circus). * In the hospitality industry, particularly in London, we are well versed in managing large numbers of customers safely. The enforced curfew placed an extra strain on our teams which only resulted in our customers being put at a higher degree of risk. |
| *Business Representative 3* | What are your main concerns about the 10pm curfew and the impact on businesses within the hospitality sector?   * By all businesses being subjected to the same 10:00pm closure time it forces people out into the street and transport hubs all at the same time rather than a staggered departure. This put added pressure on High Street's and other hotspot areas where people congregate. We have seen in the media and firsthand in the West End of increased numbers heading towards transport hubs where it then becomes increasingly difficult to socially distance.   Have you or your businesses been disproportionately affected? What impacts have businesses felt?   * There does not appear to be any scientific evidence that a curfew has had any positive effect on transmission. Businesses have been required to operate a COVID secure environment and businesses have gone to great lengths to ensure the safety of our customers and staff. As mentioned above, by remaining open after 10:00pm we offer a solution to transport hubs and high streets who find themselves congested directly after 10:00pm. * Hospitality and retail businesses have been disproportionately affected. With non essential retail now being forced to close due to the lockdown and the 10pm curfew for hospitality remaining there is little desire for consumers to travel to the West End. Even during Tier 2 the footfall was significantly down as the public remained in their local borough and supported their local night time economy rather than travel into the West End. * Some businesses have been forced to close due to it not being viable to trade due to low footfall and sales. It has also created added pressure on restaurants who receive deliveries overnight (due to restrictions from WCC) and therefore have to keep staff on overnight to receive them. This adds extra labour costs when businesses are already struggling to control expenditure.   Do you think highlighting the late-night Christmas shopping/ hospitality package around the December period would be a viable reason to end the curfew?   * Yes. Much like after the first lockdown the economy in all sectors will need a boost and during a season where historically hospitality would see increased sales it's important to maximise on the opportunity. Christmas is seen as a period where hospitality businesses can recoup some of the losses from earlier in the year and it's vital that they are given the opportunity to do so.   What would be your priority asks of government around this curfew or what other measures would you want to see in place?   * To remove the 10pm curfew * To extend the freeze on business rates |
| *Business representative 4* | What are your main concerns about the 10pm curfew and the impact on businesses within the hospitality sector?   * The curfew has posed a devastating impact on what is already a very challenging environment. We are already struggling to break even without the curfew ( to help curb the spread of virus, we’ve invested in implementing safety measures- screens, PPE, hygiene stations, reducing capacity in each premises over 50%) but this pushes us to breaking point. * Analysis from accounts shows that sales over Thursday to Sunday when comparing the week prior to the curfew with the last week showing an overall decrease of 60% in revenue   Have you or your businesses been disproportionately affected? What impacts have businesses felt?   * It is hard to understand how the hard close time is the solution to fight the virus when government stats show just 5% of infection was related to hospitality.  The curfew only caused damage to businesses and more jobs were lost. * With a hard closing time, it poses even more problems in particular to dispersal, causing unnecessary headache to manage closing of the business. * This is the biggest H&S issue. We are providing a controlled environment where there is very little evidence of cases. When we ask everyone to leave at the same time hundreds of people are congregating on the streets and crowding onto public transport together which is where the virus is more likely to spread. They are also more likely to continue their evening at friends’ houses / in other uncontrolled places where again they are less protected. This makes no sense * Hospitality industry has been hit hard but the Late night economy has been completely destroyed. London represents up to 40% of the £66bn estimate for the total UK night-time economy. The overall contribution of London's night-time economy is just over £40 billion. This economic activity directly supports 723,000 jobs – one in eight in the capital. * As an industry we offer a very diverse set of services. Sadly that hasn’t been recognised by the government. Restaurants were supported in August by the Eat out to help out scheme -other licences premises were not. VAT has been reduced for food sales -no reduction on alcohol sales. The biggest issue right now are rents and paying rent debt that has accumulated over this year, and will continue to grow. The government has offered no support or intervention here and hence some landlords have been more supportive than others. * Nightclubs as a sector have also been very much ignored. This is an important part of our society for young people and without support these venues will all die out. We have seen first-hand how difficult this is by having a nightclub venue that has been unable to trade in any way since March but with costs still growing * We are all feeling the cumulative impact of all restrictions placed and the curfew has caused further devastation, declining in revenue has tipped many into financial unviability. * As above, the hard closing time only causes unnecessary H&S risk and burden to the operators when we try so hard to promote and adhere to the Licensing objectives. * As a business, we've done everything above and beyond to facilitate a safe working environment for our guests and our team. We have to pivot into takeaways and now during the lockdown deliveries to keep the business afloat whilst getting people to leave safely all at the same time is another extra cost to our business and creates another thing that makes our venues less viable in the mid / long term.   Do you think highlighting the late-night Christmas shopping/ hospitality package around the December period would be a viable reason to end the curfew?   * It would be tragic if retail is allowed to open later and is pushed over the Christmas period and hospitality is not given the same aid.   What would be your priority asks of government around this curfew or what other measures would you want to see in place?   * First priority would be taking the curfew away. It is shown that the cases are not linked to our industry. * If the government feels some measures are essential then asking each venue to close 1/2 hour earlier than their current licence would still limit later night drinking but allow dispersal to happen in a more controlled manner. * The biggest support that is absolutely necessary outside of this would be to; bring a support package that is fitting for nightclubs which have been closed for months with zero income. * Be involved with a plan on rent and the increasing rent debt. * Look into VAT reductions on alcohol for licenced premises -not supermarkets/ off licences who have already benefited from our loss of sales. * Allow outdoor seating to continue until at least this time next year |