

Consultation Response

Alcohol Licensing:
Age Verification

28 March 2024



Consultation Response

Alcohol Licensing: Age Verification

28 March 2024



Introduction

The Law Society of Scotland is the professional body for over 13,000 Scottish solicitors.

We are a regulator that sets and enforces standards for the solicitor profession which helps people in need and supports business in Scotland, the UK and overseas. We support solicitors and drive change to ensure Scotland has a strong, successful and diverse legal profession. We represent our members and wider society when speaking out on human rights and the rule of law. We also seek to influence changes to legislation and the operation of our justice system as part of our work towards a fairer and more just society.

Our Licensing Law sub-committee welcomes the opportunity to consider and respond to the UK Government consultation: *Alcohol licensing: age verification*.¹ The sub-committee has the following comments to put forward for consideration.

General Comments

Although the proposals would have no direct impact on the operation of licensing or licensed premises in Scotland, it is our view that it would be preferable to have the UK nations work collectively in relation to digital ID for alcohol sales age verification, so as to avoid a two-tier system. Many operators such as large national chains of supermarkets or pubs have premises across the UK meaning they operate under the jurisdiction of the Licensing Act 2003 (England & Wales) as well as the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 (Scotland). From a consumer perspective, it would also be beneficial to have digital ID as a legal form of ID for age restricted products to be in place both in Scotland and England & Wales.

Debates over issues such as age assurance and remote sales are issues which are experienced in Scotland as well as other parts of the UK. We consider there would be merit in the UK and Scottish Governments working together to explore a collective response to legalising the introduction of digital ID, and would welcome such an approach being taken. Whilst we recognise the limitations of jurisdictional governance, we likewise consider that there would be merit in similar outcomes being pursued relating to digital ID and age assurance in tandem between the UK and Scottish Parliaments.

Questionnaire

We have no specific comments to make in response to questions 1-19, and refer to our general comments above.

¹ [Alcohol licensing: age verification](#)



For further information, please contact:

Liliana Torres Jimenez
Policy Team
Law Society of Scotland
LilianaTorresJimenez@lawscot.org.uk