

Submission on Liquor Laws from Tamworth Regional Council

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Thu 17/03/2016 2:51 PM

To: Liquor Law Review <liquorlawreview@justice.nsw.gov.au>;

Tamworth Regional Council at its Meeting held 8 March 2016 resolved the following Mayoral Minute:
That in relation to the report "Liquor Law Review – Takeaway Liquor Closing Hours", Council:

- (i) *endorse and support the current arrangement and local conditions of the Tamworth and District Liquor Accord; and*
- (ii) *make a submission to the NSW Government regarding the Liquor Law Review calling for the retention of the current 10.00pm closing time for bottleshops and over-the-bar takeaway sales.*

The Councillor Members of the Crime Prevention Working Group (CPWG) held a special meeting to consider the review of liquor licensing laws, particularly in relation to the closing time for takeaway liquor outlets. A petition was recently lodged in the NSW Parliament by the Australian Hoteliers Association seeking an extension of the current 10.00pm closing time for bottle shops and over-the-bar takeaway sales to revert to midnight, being the closing time prior to the change of legislation two years ago.

Councillor Members of the CPWG stated that any increase in the takeaway closing time would have a negative effect on the local community and would undo the strategies that have been put in place by the local Accord with the support of the Police and Tamworth Regional Council's Crime Prevention Working Group.

Council, the Police and the Accord researched the working models in Newcastle and other areas, which have been successfully implemented in Tamworth. There are many benefits to these conditions and closing times, which are working as evidenced by the reduction in crime. It was noted that the conditions of the Tamworth & District Liquor Accord (Accord) include an earlier lockout time of 12.30am and there is no intention to alter these local conditions. The success of the local Accord conditions over the past two years has been acknowledged by the NSW Police Oxley Local Area Command, and is evidenced by the reduction in alcohol-related street violence, property damage, break and enter and stealing offences (up to 40% in some categories).

The reduction in these offences has enabled Police resources to be directed to more proactive policing in other areas. The massive reduction in street violence and property damage, as well as assault and domestic violence offences has also reduced the impact on the Accident and Emergency department at the Hospital, Ambulance and other services and agencies who deal with the victims of these crimes.

Councillors have received feedback from the community in relation to the review of closing time for takeaway liquor outlets, and the view expressed has been for Council to oppose any extension in trading hours past 10.00pm for takeaway sales.

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Tamworth Regional Council

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