

Chancellor's Autumn Statement announces a single online licensing application process by 2018

At paragraph 1.184 of his Autumn Statement delivered on 3 December 2014, the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that: *"The government believes that local authorities have an important role to play in reducing the administrative costs of their local licensing regime on small business. The government will work with local authorities and businesses on a simplification programme, with an expectation that, by 2018, every local authority will offer a single online application process where businesses only need register their details once."*

In response to this, the Local Government Association issued a press release quoting Councillor Ann Lucas, Chair of the LGA's Safer and Stronger Communities Board, as saying:

- *"It is pleasing that the Government has recognised the LGA's call for reform of our outdated licensing system by proposing a single online application process. This will free businesses from some of the endless red tape they face when trying to set up in their community"*
- *"Local growth is a key priority for councils and we share the frustration of local businesses who are trapped in a maze of needless and costly bureaucracy before they can start trading"*
- *"Today's announcement is a step in the right direction but, since licensing frameworks are set by inflexible national legislation spread across different Whitehall departments, it is imperative that the Government moves quickly to remove the barriers and costs this creates, if councils are to be able to meet the 2018 target"*
- *"Businesses – and councils – will only truly be freed from the burden of countless licences and unnecessary costs if government commits to scrapping nationally prescribed forms for individual licences and allows more flexibility to also create a single business licence"*
- *"The whole of government must follow the clear lead set out today and be prepared to tackle these barriers to enable councils to make a real a real difference to local businesses".*

More information is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/making-licensing-simpler-for-business>

David Clifton & Suzanne Davies

Clifton Davies Consultancy Limited

www.cliftondavies.com

dc@cliftondavies.com

sd@cliftondavies.com