

Government proposals proof they do not trust publicans, pub staff or pub customers

The measures being put forward by Government are proof they do not trust publicans, pub staff or pub customers, according to the Licensed Vintners Association (LVA). Following suggestions the Government is to block the reopening of 'wet' pubs next month while also making it more difficult for pubs who serve food to reopen, the LVA say such measures have nothing to do with public safety and amount to a political decision being taken by the Government.

"Where is the evidence that 'wet' pubs pose a greater risk than restaurants or food pubs?" said Donall O'Keeffe, Chief Executive of the LVA. "Where is the evidence that people are more likely to catch Covid-19 if they don't have a €9 meal? Where is the evidence that people are less likely to be infected if the meal they have was prepared in a dedicated kitchen rather than coming from a nearby pizzeria? There is no data to support these measures, this is a political decision with the Government showing they are happy to destroy the pubs of this country.

"The Government's own guidelines have the same social distancing measures and time limits in place for 'wet' pubs, food pubs and restaurants. Yet they are pursuing policies which will only keep the 'wet' pubs closed and ensure that more venues are classified as 'wet' pubs. If all these different types of venue have to have the same social distancing, time limits and implement table service only how is one more dangerous than the other?

"This is the Government formally saying they don't trust the publicans of this country to follow the guidelines, they don't trust pub staff to implement them and they don't trust pub customers to behave themselves. The Government is pushing a message of "individual responsibility" but when it comes to pubs and pub customers it seems they are quite happy to deny us such rights and freedoms.

"Our industry has been hit extremely hard during this pandemic. Instead of trying to protect the 50,000 people and their families who depend on this industry they are almost vindictive in their desire to keep us closed. Well trust is a two way street. Trust in this Government has been eroding for some time and it will be interesting to see what their lack of trust in the pub sector and our customers will mean in the weeks ahead," Mr. O'Keeffe concluded.

250 'wet' pubs in Dublin will have been kept shut by the Government for 260 consecutive days by the 1st December. More than half the pubs in the country are 'wet' pubs. Most were only allowed to open for two weeks from the end of September, long after the current rise in infections began.