

22 May 2019

Dear Members,

I am contacting every Assembly Member and Welsh Member of Parliament in the hope that they can see the unnecessary application of the law requiring a Licence for Child Performers to brass bands.

The bands present public concerts on stage or in parks which last at most for 2 hours, with a 15 minute break. They play in a brass band competition for about a maximum of 20 minutes and for an Entertainment contest they play for a maximum of 25 minutes. According to the law a child under 16 needs a license to participate in any of the above events and also needs a qualified chaperone. Why?

Very often the young players in the band would be a child of one of the band members and the absurdity of the Act is that the child will still need a chaperone because the parent is disqualified from looking after their child because they are playing in the band even though they are on the stage together!

Another absurd situation is that a child can go into a public house with an adult and that is okay, but if that child plays with a brass band in a rehearsal for a performance and it is taking place in licensed premises where the bar is closed, a Licence is required. Why?

I am the Chairman of a band and we have one child who is just under 16, but will be leaving school at the end of the summer holidays. The licences for children will not be required after June 30th.i.e. in the final year at school. So after June I will be proposing to the band that we do not encourage children to join our band to have the advantage of learning to play percussion or /and a brass instrument because if we are found lacking in any of the stringent rules re licensing of Child Performers, the band could be heavily fined and/or officials of the band could be imprisoned.! We have a priority to safeguard our band officials and I feel that the different way that local councils are interpreting the Act could easily place the band officials in jeopardy.

This is absolutely ridiculous. The whole issue is nonsense and the Act does not make children in bands any safer in any way, but just makes matters a lot more complicated.

Children learning instruments are being penalised when they should be encouraged to join a band and be able to enjoy the musical experience.

This Act has been necessary for the benefit of young professional actors and performers like dancers where they are getting paid and often required to work for hours during the day or evening. I certainly think that legislation is required for these young performers, but to use the Act as an umbrella for children in brass bands has been ill considered, poorly thought out and lacking in knowledge about how brass bands operate.

All bands have Child Safety policies in place and children in bands are probably better protected in a band than they would be in most other places.

I urge you to look at this legislation and to allow brass bands exemption from this legislation, otherwise we will see the demise of youth bands and brass bands in the future.

Sincerely,



Chairman Crosskeys Silver Band