



## Response form for consultation on devolving Sunday trading rules

There is no obligation to use this form when responding, but doing so will make your responses easier to analyse. There is also no obligation to answer all the questions. We look forward to receiving your feedback. The Department may, in accordance with the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information, make available, on public request, individual responses.

The closing date for this consultation is 16 September 2015.

Please return completed forms to:

Sunday Trading Team  
Consumer and Competition Policy  
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills  
1 Victoria Street  
London SW1H 0ET  
Tel: 020 7215 5000  
email: [sunday.trading@bis.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:sunday.trading@bis.gsi.gov.uk)

Name: **Nick Woolfenden (SEEC Head of Policy Co-ordination) on behalf of Cllr Nicolas Heslop, Chairman of SEEC and Cllr Roy Perry, Deputy Chairman of SEEC.**

Organisation (if applicable): **South East England Councils (SEEC) – SEEC is the cross tier voice of local authorities in the South East of England. We are a voluntary membership body, bringing together county, unitary and district councils.**

Address: **Room 215, County Hall, Penrhyn Road, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey, KT1 2DN. [nickwoolfenden@secouncils.gov.uk](mailto:nickwoolfenden@secouncils.gov.uk)**

Please use the tick box from the list of options that best describes you as a respondent.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Business representative organisation/trade body
<input type="checkbox"/>	Central Government
<input type="checkbox"/>	Charity or social enterprise
<input type="checkbox"/>	Individual
<input type="checkbox"/>	Large business (over 250 staff)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Legal representative
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Local Government

	Medium business (50 to 250 staff)
	Micro business (up to 9 staff)
	Religious organisation
	Small business (10 to 49 staff)
	Trade union or staff association
Y	Other (please state) <b>South East England Councils (SEEC) is the cross tier voice of local authorities in the South East of England. We are a voluntary membership body, bringing together county, unitary and district councils. Together we promote the views and interests of all tiers of local government across the South East, representing 8.9 million residents – the largest population in the UK.</b>

**Question 1: Should local areas have the power to extend trading hours on Sunday?**

Yes

No

Not sure

**Question 2: If the power is devolved, who do you think should be given the power to change Sunday trading rules?**

It should be devolved to e.g. elected metro mayors as part of 'devolution deals'

It should be devolved to all local authorities

Not sure

**Question 3: How would you be impacted by local changes to Sunday trading rules?**

Positively – the changes would benefit me

Negatively – the changes would cause me problems

No difference

Please provide evidence:

- SEEC welcomes the opportunity to comment on this review given the importance of ensuring our high streets are able to compete with the growing online retail sector.
- We welcome the principle of offering devolved decision making powers on Sunday trading hours as part of the Government's wider devolution agenda. Ensuring local high streets flourish with a suitable mix of retailers – small and/or big, independents and/or larger chains – is a key concern for local areas, and devolved powers could provide more flexibility than the current national system to meet the needs of different places.
- If powers are to be devolved, local councils are best placed to take these decisions taking account of local business and community perspectives, recognising there are varied views on any changes that might be made to Sunday trading hours. For example the Federation of Small Businesses has raised national concerns about the possible impact on smaller traders. Councils will of course, as appropriate, need to work with local traders, adjoining councils and partners such as LEPs to ensure co-ordinated approaches. This will help meet the needs of the area and sustain a suitable mix of traders, avoiding unhelpful significant differentials between neighbouring areas.
- Making devolved decision making powers available to local councils will enable effective joined-up decisions at the local level given existing DC/UA licensing and planning powers – for example making links to vehicle delivery times and licensed hours for the sale of alcohol. It also gives councils greater powers to tailor Sunday opening to support high street improvement plans/ locally led town centre regeneration.
- Any new devolved powers must be available to all councils – not just those areas with elected 'metro' Mayors/Metropolitan devolution deals. The South East has many small and medium towns and cities without elected Mayors or existing devolution deals, but with big numbers of large stores. It is only by offering devolved powers to councils that these areas will be given the opportunity to use them as appropriate for their areas' circumstances.
- Devolution of trading hours can contribute to giving local areas control of the economy. We hope this will be followed by more devolution to give all councils powers to create the right conditions for local economic growth.

**Question 4: Where did you hear about this consultation?**

	.gov.uk website
Y	Other website
Y	National press
	Local press
	Trade magazine
	Social media
	Local Government
	Business representative organisation or trade body
	Trade union or staff association
	Religious organisation
	Through family or a friend
	Other (please specify)

Thank you for taking the time to let us have your views. We do not intend to acknowledge receipt of individual responses unless you tick the box below.

Please acknowledge this reply

At BIS we carry out our research on many different topics and consultations. As your views are valuable to us, would it be okay if we were to contact you again from time to time either for research or to send through consultation documents?

Yes

No