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From: ' ' on behalf of Pubs Consultation Responses
Sent: 20 June 2013 11:13
To: Pubs Consultation Responses
Subject: FW: Pub Co

Consumer & Markets | Consumer & Competition Policy | Department for Business,
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From:
Sent: 06 June 2013 15:08
To: Enquiry Enquiry (Other Government Departments)
Cc:
Subject: Pub Co

To whom it may concern:

Much of the Media furore about the Tenant - or in my case Lessee - relationship is unfortunately sensationalistic. I have a more balanced view and would share it with you.

I am often asked how I get on with my Pub Company (Punch Taverns) and the answer is not that simple. It is however the case that it mainly depends on your relationship with your Business Relationship Manager or in my case Senior Business Relationship Manager. We are fortunate that ours has been built on mutual trust and we enjoy a frank and open relationship with him. You may wish to take note of his name -
 Punch Taverns.

There are however existing problems with the "Relationship" in that all BRM's are spread far too thinly - ours never has time for an ad-hoc call say to have a quick coffee or something of that nature.

For certain the price that we pay for Beer is much higher via the Pub Co connection than say from a wholesaler but we are told that this is reflected in lower than Commercial level Rents. I say told as it is difficult to comment on the accuracy of this as it would cost you to find out for sure we just do not have any funds available that would not be better employed elsewhere - remember though that I said before we believe we have "a frank and open relationship" with Punch after all as far as we are concerned Punch = BRM.

There is also the tremendous volume and quality of the information/support open to us - far more accessible than to an individual but often under utilised and obviously undervalued.

I believe however that Pub Co's need to offer a bit more flexibility for example there are various "New Deals" open to new Lessees which existing Lessees cannot access. We are some years away from the end of our existing agreement but have to wait another before "Official" negotiations begin regarding renewal terms. We have had a preliminary discussion with our BRM but surely after say a minimum period (to provide stability throughout) if something better for us is "out there" why could we not convert or again in or case have say two hand pulls Free of Tie (AND I would have no problem with this being subject to a Fair Use policy) you probably gather that we are Punch have created what are basically Monitoring Positions but this sort of approach would be far less needed if the sort of flexibility that I am suggesting could be employed at least in some measure. I would absolutely love the opportunity to give my "Frank and Open" views to any "Forum".

The days of an seemingly endless queue of people with redundancy monies to invest in their "dream pub" are

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over, it seems to me that Punch at least have recognised this and also - perhaps more importantly are helping Lessees/Tenants to stay with their business as they know only too well that customers do not want to see a stream of strange faces behind the bar !.With Banks openly flaunting the Governments various initiatives to release finance for someone to run a Pub where else can you get what amounts to an interest free loan for fixtures & fittings etc?

In short if they could follow the flexibility path a bit more (as per my previous suggestions) and get rid of some of the "Monitoring" posts to release BRM' to spend more time "In the Field" even the less "transparent" agreements would become less contentious.

In closing the various "Cause celebres" Lessees/Tenants that usually pro testate to eg: The Morning Advertiser" would do well to remember - read and digest your agreement thoroughly prior to signing , identify what you consider to be the weak points as far as you are concerned, ask for help before "the Ship starts sinking" and above all Nobody put the pen in your hand and forced you to sign!!

Yours Objectively

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