Thank you for responding to the Local Government and Regeneration Committee's Call for Evidence on the Air Weapons and Licensing (Scotland) Bill. All submissions will be examined and considered as part of the Committee's scrutiny of the Bill.

Please be aware that questions marked with an asterisk (*) require an answer before you can submit the form.

Follow the Local Government and Regeneration Committee's Twitter feed - all Committee tweets on this Bill will have the hashtag #aw&lbill.

*1. Please supply your name and contact details:

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<th>Name</th>
<th>George Eckton</th>
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<td>Organisation</td>
<td>Child Eyes UK</td>
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* 2. Please confirm that you have read and understood the Scottish Parliaments “Policy on the treatment of written evidence by subject and mandatory committees”:

✔ Yes

* 3 Please confirm whether you are content for your name to be published with your submission:

✔ Yes

☐ No

* 4. Which of the three categories below best describes your interest in the Bill (please tick only one)?

✔ Personal

☐ Professional

☐ Commercial

* 5. Do you wish your email to be added to the Committee’s distribution list for updates on progress of the Bill:

✔ Yes

☐ No
6. Invitations to give oral evidence to the Committee on the Bill will be based on the submissions received. If you wish your submission to be included amongst those considered for possible invitation to give oral evidence, please indicate here.

☐ Yes

☐ No

7. You may answer questions on the entire Bill, or on any part of the Bill. Please indicate which parts of the Bill you are responding to? (You may select as many options that apply).

☐ All of the Bill

☐ Equalities, climate change and other Scottish Government objectives

☐ Air Weapons

☐ General licensing issues

☐ Alcohol licensing

☐ Civic licensing – taxi/private hire car licensing

☐ Civic licensing – scrap metal dealers

☐ Civic licensing – theatre licensing

☐ Civic licensing – sexual entertainment venues
1. Equalities, Climate Change and other Scottish Government objectives

You may respond to all the questions or only those you have a specific interest in. (Text boxes have no word limit, they will increase in size accordingly).

8. Do you consider that the Bill has any implications for meeting Scotland’s climate change commitments? Please explain.

9. Do you consider that the Bill has any implications for meeting Scotland’s equality and/or human rights commitments? Please explain.
We believe the Bill if amended further from its Stage 1 draft has the opportunity to meet even more of Scotland’s equality and human rights commitments especially in regard to the preventative aspect of reducing exposed of children to indecent objectifying and gender stereotyping literature.

The publication on 25 June 2014 of the Equally Safe Strategy for Scotland in its key objectives clearly recognises the preventative agenda in preventing and eradicating all forms of violence against women and children.

The overall aim of the strategy is to prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls, creating a strong and flourishing Scotland where all individuals are equally safe and respected, and where women and girls live free from such abuse - and the attitudes that help perpetuate it.

Four key priorities are set out within the strategy:

1. Scottish society embraces equality and mutual respect, and rejects all forms of violence against women and girls.
2. Women and girls thrive as equal citizens: socially, culturally, economically and politically.
3. Interventions are early and effective, preventing violence and maximising safety and wellbeing of women and girls.
4. Men desist from all forms of violence against women and girls and perpetrators of such violence receive a robust and effective response.

While the strategy sets out some early commitments, it explains how a phased approach will help ensure that longer-term change is sustained. We think the Bill’s recast of certain Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 powers, which itself was proceeded and recast the Indecent Displays (Control) Act 1981, could have a significant contribution could have a significant environmental impact on the exposure of society especially young children to “sex sells” media.

We believe that legislation is the only avenue at the moment to reverse the current over-sexualised displays parents are exposed to whenever they take their children into the general public spaces and supposedly family friendly retail environment. This de-sexualisation of public places we think would be a significant contribution long-term to the achievement of the challenging goals outlined in the Equally Safe Strategy and also more widely expressed in other Scottish Government Equality and Human Rights documents.

The Equally Safe Strategy outlines that violence, as a continuum from sexual harassment to physical violence, stems from an ongoing inequality between men and women and can have immediate and long-lasting impact on the individuals and families involved. In addition, highlighting the wider impacts on health, wellbeing and safety of Scotland’s communities. In financial cost terms, the Strategy outlines that the estimates of expenditure to address the impacts of domestic abuse is £1.6 billion and £4 billion when impacts of all violence against women is incorporated. The strategy is bold in its ambition and rightly so in our view, outlining the need to eliminate the systematic gender inequality that lies at the root of violence against women and girls and the need to be bold about how we do it.

We also consider that the proposed amendment to the Stage 1 draft of the Air...
10. Do you consider that the Bill has any implications for preventative spending and/or public services reform? Please explain.

The amendments proposed in Section 55 of this form to the existing Stage 1 draft Bill we think are in line with the Equally Safe objectives of seeking a stepchange in emphasis on preventing violence from occurring in the first place or intervening at the earliest possible stage to minimise the harm caused to the victim. Equally Safe highlights that prioritising prevention challenges the notion that violence is inevitable it acceptable. It demands a fundamental change in the societal attitudes, values and structures that give rise to and sustain the problem.

The strategy outlines that this is an ambitious approach to take, demanding a determined effort over the long-term and as well as the public sector re-design challenge also highlights the renewed and increased focus on prevention from those working in the private sector, to identify where they can pursue preventative measures.

Equally Safe recognises that some of the initiatives and legislation we are proposing may have short-term benefit but also may be challenging as the positive effects of such preventative measures may take some years to deliver noticeable benefits at a time when public resources are already squeezed and demand for measureable results is heightened. However, it concludes that prevention is the only approach if we are to achieve the aim of a strong and flourishing Scotland where all individuals, regardless of gender live Equally Safe.

11. Do you consider that the Bill has any implications in relation to European Union issues? Please explain.
12. Do you have any other comments on the impact of the proposals contained in the Bill relation to Scottish Government objectives?
3. General Licensing Issues

You may respond to all questions or only those you have a specific interest in. (Text boxes have no word limit, they will increase in size accordingly).

23. Is the current Scottish licensing regime, as set out in the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 and the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005, fit for purpose?

We believe that the current licensing regime does not provide parents with the confidence that the current public spaces are regulated in a manner that does not sexualise children through the consumption of their surroundings in everyday life.

Therefore, whilst we recognize that parents have a responsibility to protect children. The problem we have is that parents are unable to protect children as sexual imagery and pornography is in every arena.

24. Should a licensing system seek to regulate individual behaviour or communities of space (eg. ‘city space’ etc.)?

The Licensing and Civic Government provisions of the proposed Act in our view should seek to regulate individual behaviour and communities of space where the environment provided is indecent, degrading and offensive to women, children and parents and should provide a recourse for individuals and groups to register their complaints about such issues as shop window displays and other displays of material. For instance, a parent can only protect children from the degrading sexual imagery in shops (The Sport, Nuts, Zoo) if they either do not go into the shop or blindfold their child. Neither is a suitable solution. We have evidence from many shops including Co-op, Tesco and Spar.

25. In what way should the licensing system in Scotland interact with the support the land use planning system, community planning and regeneration?
26. How does the licensing system in Scotland assist with the delivery of sustainable development and economic balanced areas?

27. In what way does the licensing system in Scotland support health and planning, addressing health inequalities and public health wellbeing outcomes?

We think that licensing further the display of indecent and sexualised imagery within public places would contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the Equally Safe Strategy by providing a less sexualised environment for children to develop and form their own opinions on the current stereotypical gender roles specified for society via the publication and display of images across all forms of media and goods.
55. Civic Licensing

Do you have any other comments to make on the civic licensing aspects of the Bill?
We would respectfully suggest that the Bill also considers the opportunity offered to update some of the provisions of the Indecent Display (Control) Act 1981 and also related provisions in the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 around the display of sexualised images in public places and that it also takes the opportunity to close some of the loopholes/lack of powers for enforcement or removal of indecent displays. Whether this is via devolved primary legislation or a reserved legislative consent motion.

Specifically we would wish to see an amendment of Section 51 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act covering obscene material to cover incensed and degrading imagery regularly published in the press displayed/placed in an appropriate area outwith general view:

51 Obscene material.

(1) Subject to subsection (4) below, any person who displays any obscene material in any public place or in any other place where it can be seen by the public shall be guilty of an offence under this section.

(2) Subject to subsection (4) below, any person who publishes, sells or distributes or, with a view to its eventual sale or distribution, makes, prints, has or keeps any obscene material shall be guilty of an offence under this section.

[F1(2A) Subject to subsection (4) below, any person who—

(a) is responsible for the inclusion of any obscene material in a programme included in a programme service; or

(b) with a view to its eventual inclusion in a programme so included, makes, prints, has or keeps any obscene material,

shall be guilty of an offence under this section.]

(3) A person guilty of an offence under this section shall be liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding the prescribed sum or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding [F2 6 months] or to both or, on conviction on indictment, to a fine or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding [F2 3 years] or to both.

(4) A person shall not be convicted of an offence under this section if he proves that he had used all due diligence to avoid committing the offence.

(5) Under an indictment for or on a complaint of a breach of subsection (1) above, the court may, if satisfied that the person accused is guilty of an offence under section 1(1) of the M1 Indecent Displays (Control) Act 1981 (offence of public display of indecent matter), convict him of a breach of the said section 1(1).

1 To lower dignity, dishonour or disgrace

(a) .................................................. F3

(b) included in a performance of a play (within the meaning of the M2Theatres Act 1968).

(7) For section 5(4)(b) of the Indecent Displays (Control) Act 1981 (saving) there shall be substituted