

Welsh nightclub sector warns about New Year's Eve as left 'astounded' by closure decision

The nightclub sector in Wales has warned about New Year's Eve and said they were "astounded" by the closure decision from Welsh Government.

Last night First Minister Mark Drakeford announced clubs will have to close on December 27 as part of measures after Boxing Day.

It is over fears that the Omicron variant will start to fuel a surge in cases in Wales in the coming weeks as is being seen in London and Scotland now.

But the government has come under fire from the industry which has endured the worst of the Covid restrictions over the last 21 months.

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Michael Kill, chief executive of the Night Time Industries Association, told BBC Radio Wales: “The industry are astounded by the announcement by Welsh Government, there is a lot of anger and frustration.

“We have supported the public health strategy in Wales for two years, closures, debts, we’ve implemented Covid passes which is going very well in terms of the implementation, although it has lost us some trade. These further restrictions are a step too far.

“The concern is there is no evidence to suggest that nightclubs are more transmissible than other settings.

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“Easy to draw yourself (restriction wise) to those settings, if we are doing Covid passports, why are we then drawn again to a closure, singled out, marginalised, targeted.

“It is hugely frustrating and angering for many many people who run these businesses across Wales.

“The concern now that New Year's Eve has been taken away is that those people who would normally socialise in clubs will displace into unregulated setting, without those mitigations which would be counter-productive.”

He warned some businesses would not survive 2022.

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