

LOCAL LICENSING FORUM

ABERDEEN, 27 August 2024. Minute of Meeting of the LOCAL LICENSING FORUM. Present:- Elaine Mottram, Convener; and Finlay Cran, JP McGivney, John Philip, Lucy Simpson and Pete Turner.

WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

1. The Convener welcomed all those in attendance, including potential new members Karen Gatherum, Artur Ghazaryan and Adrian Watson.

The Clerk advised the Forum that apologies for absence had been intimated by Neil Grant, Steven Stewart, Barry Steven, Sandy Munro, Grant Wiseman, William Rae and Diane Sande.

The Forum resolved:-

to note the apologies.

SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT DAY - PREVIOUS MEETING OF 18 JUNE 2024 (FOR APPROVAL)

2. The Forum had before it the summary of the Local Licensing Forums Development Day of 18 June 2024.

The Forum resolved:-

to approve the summary.

CONSTITUTION

3. The Convener updated the Forum on the Constitution, which was last revised in 2020. It currently stated that office bearers could serve for three years but must be re-elected annually. She proposed removing the three-year term while maintaining the requirement for annual re-election.

The Forum resolved:-

- (i) to agree to the proposed change to the Constitution;
- (ii) to update the Constitution to reflect that "Officers of the Forum shall retire annually and are eligible for re-election for the following year" at section 5.2; and
- (iii) to inform the Licensing Board of this change at the upcoming joint meeting.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

4. The Convener reported on the status of Local Licensing Forum memberships, noting that John Mooney was no longer serving as the NHS Grampian representative. She advised that she was currently in discussions to determine if a replacement had been identified from NHS Grampian, noting that it was essential to include a representative from the NHS on the Forum. She indicated that whilst Mr Mooney may

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continue to participate due to his role at Aberdeen University, he cannot fulfil the NHS Grampian representative position.

The Convener welcomed potential new members to introduce themselves and share their contributions to the Forum.

Karen Gatherum informed the Forum of her background, noting that she previously worked for Aberdeen City Council in the Licensing team for four years before transitioning to private practice. She had spent the last eighteen months at Ledingham Chalmers Solicitors and was currently with Gilson Gray Law Firm. Karen mentioned her attendance at Licensing Board meetings across Scotland, expressing her intention to provide valuable insights from other councils and share what stakeholders were seeking.

Adrian Watson, representing Aberdeen Inspired Business Improvement District, spoke about his role in advocating for the night-time economy in the City Centre. He expressed his desire to gain a deeper understanding of the Forum's work and to provide his team with insights into creativity and innovation within the sector.

Artur Ghazaryan, who will fulfil the role of an off-sales representative on the Forum, shared his extensive international experience of over twenty years across three different countries, highlighting diverse traditions and attitudes towards alcohol. He expressed enthusiasm for the opportunity to exchange ideas and perspectives with others and to contribute as a team member.

The Forum resolved:-

that Karen Gatherum, Adrian Watson and Artur Ghazaryan be appointed as members of the Local Licensing Forum with immediate effect.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

5. The next agenda item focused on establishing success criteria for the Forum. The Convener reminded members of Gavin Wright's presentation from Alcohol and Drugs Action in May, which aimed to inform the development of the criteria, however time constraints had previously hindered progress. To address this, Pete Turner and the Convener collaborated to draft a preliminary framework for the Forum to review, emphasising the need to measure the Forum's effectiveness and ensure their efforts provide tangible value. Unfortunately, it was noted that there was not enough time to distribute the paper prior to the meeting. The paper was tabled.

Discussion then shifted to transportation issues affecting safety in the city. It was highlighted that while availability of cheap alcohol and the perception that there are or excessive licenses are key contributors to safety concerns, lack of transport options at night also plays a major role in public safety. Members noted that the information presented to the Licensing Board often lacked specificity, making it less impactful. They stressed the importance of providing localised data to engage the Board effectively.

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The conversation highlighted the need for a holistic approach, recognising that while the Forum could influence licensing decisions, it must also consider broader systemic factors, including transport and public events. Members expressed a desire to gather specific data on trends, particularly regarding the impact of transportation on licensing and safety. JP spoke briefly about trends in alcohol consumption and will produce a more detailed analysis of trends for the January meeting of the Forum.

Members were encouraged to contribute their insights and data relating to the Success Criteria draft paper within a week, with the aim of producing a revised draft in time for the upcoming joint meeting with the Board. JP McGivney was invited to consider his role in this process, while Pete Turner was tasked to focus on identifying measurable criteria.

The Forum resolved:-

- (i) to invite Forum members to contribute by submitting their suggestions and comments towards the Success Criteria report by the end of the week; and
- (ii) to agree that the Forum's overall goal was to create a comprehensive and relevant framework that reflected the Forum's priorities and which effectively communicated with the Licensing Board.

ELEPHANT STUDY UPDATE

6. The Convener informed the Forum that there had been no updates on the ELEPHANT Study.

The Convener noted that she attended a meeting in March/April with several Forum members, where preliminary findings of the ELEPHANT Study were discussed, though these findings were not conclusive. The Forum was awaiting the final report, with events anticipated in the Autumn. She assured members that the dates for these events would be shared as soon as they were confirmed.

The Forum resolved:-

to acknowledge that there was currently no update on the ELEPHANT Study; however, the final report would be circulated to members as soon as it was received.

JOINT LICENSING BOARD AND LOCAL LICENSING FORUM MEETING - AGENDA

7. The Convener advised the Forum that the agenda for the joint meeting with the Licensing Board on 11 September 2024 would focus on key issues, concerns, and potential solutions. The Convener emphasised the need to inform the Board about the change in the Forum's Constitution, although this would not require Board approval. She indicated that the primary focus at the Joint Meeting would be on establishing success criteria.

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As the Chair of this year's joint meeting, the Convener planned to encourage participation from all members, and to invite Pete Turner to outline how the success criteria had been developed and for JP McGivney to share his initial thoughts on trends as well. New members would also be given the opportunity to introduce themselves, similar to last year's meeting.

Additionally, the Convener highlighted the importance of the annual functions report, which had not been discussed at today's meeting. She expressed a commitment to make the report more engaging, readable, and useful.

It was noted that the meeting's start time may vary, likely to commence around 12pm or 12:30pm, depending on the completion of the Licensing Board meeting. The Convener assured that everyone would get the opportunity to speak, as it was crucial for the Licensing Board to understand the Forum's interests and focus areas.

Key questions suggested to ask the Licensing Board included:-

- What do the Licensing Board expect from the Licensing Forum?;
- How could the Licensing Board support the Forum?;
- What were the Forum currently focusing on?;
- What issues were of interest and concern to the Forum, and what solutions do they propose?; and
- What influence has the Forum had on the Licensing Board?

The Forum resolved:-

to note that the agenda for the upcoming joint meeting would be circulated in due course.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING - 11 SEPTEMBER 2024

8. The Local Licensing Forum were advised that the next meeting would be their annual Joint Licensing Board and Local Licensing Forum meeting, which would be held on 11 September 2024.

The Forum resolved:-

to note the details of the next meeting.

- ELAINE MOTTRAM, Convener