

ABERDEEN LOCAL LICENSING FORUM

Thursday, 9 September, 2010

Present: Allan McIntosh, Convener; Ken Eddie, Gerard Rattray, Derek Murray, Barry Black, Bob Westlands, Michelle Wall, Inspector John Soutar, Sandy Kelman, Marlene Westland (substitute for Linda Smith), Craig Adams and Diane Sande.

Also Present: Vycki Shade, Katherine Purvis, Councillor Muriel Jaffrey, Hamish Cattanach, Martin Allan and Grant Webster

Apologies: Linda Smith, George Wyatt, Mary Crawford and Councillor Martin Greig

WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

1. Convener Allan McIntosh welcomed the members of the Forum to the meeting. He expressed his gratitude to Fiona Gardiner who had been clerk to the Forum and had recently retired.

ELECTION OF FORUM CONVENER AND VICE-CONVENER

2. In accordance with the Forum's Constitution the Forum was reminded of the annual opportunity to make nominations for the post of Convener and Vice-Convener of the Aberdeen Local Licensing Forum. Allan McIntosh was nominated to continue as Convener and George Wyatt was nominated as Vice Convener.

The Forum resolved:-

to note the continuation of the present postholder's terms of office until September 2011 namely Allan McIntosh as Convener and George Wyatt as Vice-Convener of the Aberdeen Local Licensing Forum.

MINUTE OF FORUM MEETING HELD ON 29 JULY 2010

3. The Forum had before it the minute of the meeting held on 29 July 2010.

The Forum resolved:-

to approve the minute.

NIGHT TIME BUS SERVICES – PROJECT UPDATE FROM VYCKI SHADE, SENIOR ENGINEER

4. With reference to the minute of the meeting of the Forum of 29 July 2010, the Forum received a verbal update from Vycki Shade, Senior Engineer, Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure, on the project work taking place to improve night time bus services.

By way of introduction, Ms Shade informed the Forum that a meeting was held in October 2009 with local public transport operators, the Convener of the Licensing Board, representative from various Council sections and Grampian Police to discuss issues affecting the provision and use of night time bus services from Aberdeen City Centre. Officers from Aberdeen City Council then began a study into possibilities for improving the night time bus network in the city looking at everything from information and publicity through to the frequency of services and route provisions.

Currently in Aberdeen there are 9 night bus services on a Friday and 12 on a Saturday, mostly on an hourly service. In a review of service provision within other cities, it was found that Edinburgh and Glasgow both run a successful night bus service at 15 minute frequencies while Dundee does not have a night bus service. Several other cities in the UK and Europe have hourly services running without subsidies.

Several surveys have been carried out over the past few years to establish the issues that visitors and potential visitors to the city centre have with the night time transport options available. They have found that taxis are frequently preferred due to their perceived convenience and safety. The surveys also highlighted that many potential passengers were unaware of the availability of night time bus services or the services did not go to a location or at a time convenient to the customer.

Using this information a number of options are currently being considered:-

- Timetabling and timetables are under the remit of the bus operators and officers are working with them to establish the best options for this to maximise bus usage;
- Amalgamating bus stops has the benefit of allowing stops to be highlighted, easily located and easily monitored; surveys also revealed that this option was preferred by respondents;
- Further discussion with Stagecoach about reinstating bus services to Stonehaven and introducing Friday night services to other locations;
- Consideration of increased space at shelters for customers; and
- Increased flexibility of ticketing for bus service users.

The study is due to be reported to the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee on 9 November 2010.

Ms Shade then took questions from the Forum. In discussion, several points were raised including utilising train services for out of city areas and

increasing/decreasing the service due to the supply and demand of popular events either within or out with the city.

The Forum resolved:-

- (i) to thank Vycki Shade for her informative update; and
- (ii) to note the information.

AGENDA CIRCULATION

5. The Forum received an oral report from the clerk regarding the circulation of the agenda by both email and hard copy. To reduce the amount of paper used, it was recommended that only email copies would be distributed prior to the meeting, with a reduced amount of hard copies available at the meeting for those members who had forgotten their agendas.

The Forum resolved:-

to agree to reduce the number of hard copies of the Forum's agenda by only emailing out future agendas prior to the meeting.

WORKPLAN

6. The Forum had before it the workplan of the Local Licensing Forum. The Convener went through each issue on the workplan and no updates were heard.

The Forum resolved:-

to note the information.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE LICENSING BOARD ON REVIEW OF THE STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY

7. With reference to the minute of the meeting of the Forum of 29 July 2010, the Forum had before it a copy of the draft Statement of Licensing Policy along with a summation of the recommended amendments previously intimated by the Local Licensing Forum.

Discussion was held concerning such issues as Adult Entertainment, under 18 events etc. Clarification was also sought on what would be classed as 'irresponsible promotions' and the Forum were advised that the Scottish Government had been approached to clarify this matter. Discussion also centred on setting local conditions with regards to the 72 hour rule, entertainment venues advertising drinks promotions, mandatory UNIGHT membership etc.

The deadline for responding to the Licensing Board is Friday 8 October 2010 and it was decided that the individual members of the Forum would present

their comments to the clerk by Friday 1 October 2010 so that a response to the Licensing Board could be drafted and issued.

The Forum resolved:-

to thoroughly peruse the draft Statement of Licensing Policy (including the draft recommendations to the Board collated from previous meetings of the Forum) and revert to the clerk with any comments by 1 October 2010.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

8. The Chairperson asked if the representatives present had any statistical information they wished to share with the Forum.

Michelle Wall from UNIGHT updated the Forum on the barring of troublemakers from all UNIGHT member premises. She explained that it was going well and was under constant review at UNIGHT meetings. There were no further updates from the Forum.

The Forum resolved:-

to note the information.

UPDATE FROM LICENSING BOARD

9. The Forum had before it a list of decisions of the Licensing Board in respect of licenses which had been granted over the last period. Questions were raised as to whether there was scope for the Forum to receive further information. It was noted that the Licensing Board did not have access to much more detail than was submitted but the enquiry would be made.

The Forum resolved:-

- (i) to note that the clerk would forward the above enquiry to the Board;
and
- (ii) to otherwise note the information.

UPDATE FROM LICENSING STANDARDS OFFICER

10. Diane Sande advised the Forum that she is continuing to have monthly meetings with Grampian Police to share information. This has led to successful referrals from the Police for subsequent visits, either random or by appointment. In the last period, they responded to 15 noise complaints – 8 are now closed while 7 remain ongoing. She also recently met representatives from an Australian Licensing Forum.

The Forum resolved:-

to note the information

PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A NORTH OF SCOTLAND REGIONAL LICENSING FORUM

11. With reference to the minute of the meeting of the Forum of 29 July 2010, the Forum had before it an update from Fiona Gardiner (former clerk to the Forum) in relation to the proposal to establish a North of Scotland Regional Licensing Forum. The update stated that-

‘On 30/7/10 I spoke to Arlene Kelday Clerk to Aberdeenshire Licensing Forums in response to my email to her requesting more information about the proposal to establish a Regional Forum. She advised that Angus Forum was the only other Forum to respond to her initial approach and they were unsure of its value. Therefore we agreed she would let me know if there was any further reaction after the recess and she mentioned one less time consuming option would be electronic sharing of agendas and minutes as not everyone has their papers on their Council website. She did mention Dundee would be included in the Regional Forum if it went ahead and if they agreed to participate. This is interesting as the LSO Regional Group does not include Dundee. I think there may be more common ground with Dundee than the Shire.’

The Forum discussed the proposal and decided that there wouldn't be a lot of benefit in meeting on a Regional basis. It would have to be organised to coincide with Forum meetings to avoid members having to take further time off work to attend. Discussion moved to the possibility of electronically sharing agendas and minutes to aid best practice and it was decided to investigate this further.

The Forum resolved:-

- (i) to note that the clerk would research other local authorities' websites and provide the Forum with examples (for information) of agendas/minutes produced by Forums elsewhere in the country; and
- (ii) to otherwise note the update.

ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

12. The Forum was advised that Alcohol Awareness Week was to be held from the 4th to the 10th of October 2010. In previous years there have been many different types of promotional material issued and this year should be no different. Aberdeen is to be the launchpad for Alcohol Awareness Week and there will be a visit from an MSP. Further details of this were to be circulated to the members once finalised.

The Forum were also advised that on the 1st October 2010, the Alcohol Etc. (Scotland) Bill will be considered by Scottish Parliament. This Bill includes recommendations to implement minimum pricing upon a unit of alcohol. It was requested that a letter from the Forum be sent to MSPs, asking for them to support the Bill.

The Forum discussed whether the licensing issues training DVD (available for Chairs of Licensing Boards) would be available to view. The clerk explained that he would liaise with the staff in the Licensing team about this.

The Forum heard Craig Adams provide information on an event known as 'The Strachan Run' which seemed to involve irresponsible drinking. He agreed to forward details to each member of the Forum.

The Forum resolved:-

to note the information given and instruct the clerk to make the representations detailed above.

NEXT MEETING

It was confirmed that the next meeting of the Forum would be held on Thursday, 11 November, 2010 at 5.00pm.

- **ALLAN MCINTOSH, Convener**.