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14th July 2012

FAO Councillor Marie Boulton & Eric Anderson c/o Aberdeen City Licensing Board

As a group, and a voice for a significant amount of the late night licensed venues within the city centre, Unight Aberdeen are interested in the possibility of working with the Licensing Board to re-allocate the extra hours provided for two of the Sundays of calendar Bank Holiday weekends. Normally this extra hour provision is given on the May Bank Holiday weekend and on Christmas Eve. This idea was discussed with Councillor Marie Boulton at a previous Unight Aberdeen Chair meeting at the beginning of this year, Jan/Feb 2012, with a favourable response.

We would like to put forward the motion to change the allocation of these to the St Patricks Day and Halloween weekends instead. Unight Aberdeen are convinced that this alteration would make more business sense and will encourage more people to frequent the city centre on these weekends. The member venues feel they notice that business levels for the weekends of the existing Bank Holiday provision currently only trade at normal business. These levels are regardless of the extra hour put in place. These weekends are also predominantly when people are on holiday and are most likely to be out-with the city centre.

On a positive note, the venues feel they notice that there is more positive customer interaction and less police involvement on the St Patricks' day and Halloween weekends. Unight Aberdeen feel that as a representative group of these member venues, it makes it a more practical decision to re-allocate the hours to the St Patricks' Day and Halloween dates in question.

On another note, Unight Aberdeen is also keen to see the introduction of a condition on venues licences (particularly relevant to the late night opening venues – nightclubs, casinos and other late licensed establishments) stating that they should be an active member of their local alcohol focus community project (of which Unight Aberdeen, Safer Aberdeen and Bar/Pub watch would examples.) Safer Aberdeen have pointed out that it is already an existing clause in the Shoppesafe radiolink agreement which all venues will have agreed to in order to obtain their security radios.

By active, we feel that a 60% attendance rate in any given year is not an insurmountable objective. (This equates to 7 meetings out of 12 in any calendar year.) Unight Aberdeen feel that this condition would encourage the current members of such schemes who are only members in name and currently do not actively participate. These venues gain all the benefits of being a member however, never or very rarely attend meetings to contribute to the efforts of the group. This is with particular reference to any information needed to be uploaded via Grampian Police or Safer Aberdeen to the SIRC's database. (The SIRC's database is the information sharing protocol that we currently utilize in association with Safer Aberdeen, Aberdeen City Council and Grampian Police to track criminal offenders within the city centre.)

Unight Aberdeen would welcome any feedback on these issues, as well as any alternative suggestions from the Licensing Board in both how these ideas could be feasibly introduced or alternatively achieved.

Thank you very much for your time in reading this letter.

Sincerely,

CAFowler

Chris Fowler
Vice Chairman
On Behalf of Unight Aberdeen