

ABERDEEN LOCAL LICENSING FORUM SUB-COMMITTEE  
Monday, 31<sup>st</sup> August, 2009

Present: Allan McIntosh, Chairperson; Jennie Biggs, Sergeant Robert McRobb (substituting for Inspector John Soutar), Diane Sande and Bob Westland.

Apologies: Apologies were intimated on behalf of Sohail Faruqi, Sandy Kelman, Dr. Lesley Wilkie and George Wyatt.

**AGENDA ITEMS FOR FORUM MEETING TO BE HELD ON 17<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2009**

The Sub-Committee agreed that the following items should be included on the agenda for the Aberdeen Local Licensing Forum meeting on Thursday, 17<sup>th</sup> September, 2009 at 5pm:-

- (1) Feedback from the Joint Meeting with the Licensing Board on 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2009 and consideration of the draft Minute;
- (2) Update on Overprovision Assessment;
- (3) Feedback from the National Licensing Conference 2009 – Aviemore
- (4) Applications for Membership of the Local Licensing Forum
- (5) Election of Convener and Vice-Convener of the Local Licensing Forum
- (6) Statistical Information
- (7) Work Plan

It was agreed that the agenda should include a statement advising that public are welcome to attend Forum meetings.

The Sub-Committee considered information on the two applications for membership of the Forum from the University of Aberdeen Students' Association and from Mitchells & Butlers. It was also noted that an informal approach had been made regarding future membership of the Forum by the Street Pastors organisation. It was agreed that the current Forum membership list should be attached to the report on the applications for membership to assist consideration of this item. After preliminary discussion the Sub-Committee was of the view that there would be more merit in supporting the application from the University of Aberdeen Students' Association as it would supplement the Youth Council representation, reach a wide group of young citizens and give potential to open a productive dialogue on a range of alcohol related issues.

Initial reactions to the joint meeting with the Licensing Board were to the effect that there was a missed opportunity to seek information from members of the Board and that in future Forum members should have the opportunity to plan their input.

In relation to consultation on the Overprovision Policy Statement Jennie Biggs advised the meeting that she had tried to persuade Eric Anderson that it was not feasible to have a short period for consultation on this important issue and that it would be more realistic to have up to eight weeks to submit observations. Sergeant McRobb advised that Grampian Police had sent information to Eric

Anderson on 27/8/09 in response to his request for statistical information and analysis to help underpin the later stages of the consultation process on assessment of overprovision. Jennie Biggs advised that she and Sandy Kelman had begun to think about relevant input from NHS Grampian. To make a meaningful contribution it is considered necessary to have information on operating plans and the different services premises offer.

In relation to the meeting on alcohol related issues to be arranged by the Licensing Board following approval of a Motion from Councillor Comrie, it was noted that a decision had not yet been taken on the invitees or the key issues which will be the focus of discussion. Jennie Biggs advised that she would be in touch with Eric Anderson to clarify the extent of participation by NHS Grampian and the information they can contribute once the aims of the summit are clarified. It was noted that First Bus may be invited to be represented at the meeting and therefore it may be premature to proceed to finalise a meeting with them to discuss late night bus services.

For information Jennie Biggs advised the Sub-Committee that the Aberdeen Alcohol and Drugs Partnership will be working with the Northern Community Justice Authority to take forward drugs and alcohol related issues including Domestic Violence and access to treatment and support services regardless of whether or not clients are offenders or ex-offenders.

## **WORK PLAN**

In relation to the task in the Plan to request an outline from the Licensing Board on the measures they will employ to ensure compliance with the five licensing objectives, it was noted that at the joint meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2009, the reply was that there are references as appropriate throughout the Board's Statement of Licensing Policy. In addition lists of conditions are applied to licences for example there is a CCTV condition in respect of off-sales premises. It was agreed it would be appropriate to obtain further information on these sets of conditions. This would be helpful as the Forum considers the policy frameworks of Licensing Boards in other Scottish cities.

## **INFORMATION ON LICENSING BOARD POLICY FRAMEWORKS**

The Sub-Committee noted the information which had been circulated on the Statements of Licensing Policy for the Boards in Edinburgh and Dundee. It was agreed to ask Eric Anderson to comment on the different treatment of Adult Entertainment/Members' Clubs in the Statements of Licensing Policy for Aberdeen and Edinburgh.

In relation to statistical information to be submitted on a regular basis to the Forum, Jennie Biggs offered to contact Sergeant McRobb or Inspector John Soutar to agree on a process to make best use of relevant statistics on alcohol related crime which are submitted to each meeting of the Aberdeen Alcohol and Drugs Partnership. These statistics are non-confidential and would be of interest to members of the Forum.

Diane Sande clarified her role in relation to inspections and confirmed that she would shortly have finalised an inspection sheet and programme with standard letters and other documentation. As she is the only Licensing Standards Officer for the City of Aberdeen she would not be able to pro-actively undertake inspections but would investigate reported complaints. In relation to Members' Clubs during visits she has focused on staff training and providing details of sources of information and support. Diane has been in contact with Safer Aberdeen and they are rolling out training to equip off-sales staff with the confidence to challenge customers who appear to be under age and attempting to purchase alcohol. It was noted that on a voluntary basis a number of licensees are seeking proof of age and not selling alcohol to anyone under the age of twenty-one. In future the Forum will consider the impact of any further legislation on this issue and on minimum pricing.

It is the Sub-Committee's understanding that the Licensing Board and the Forum itself have no resources available to them to support training initiatives. As an independent body the Forum could lend its support to other organisations applying for funding and could make representations to Aberdeen City Council to reconsider its resourcing arrangements in respect of the licensing function if this was considered justified.

Please note that following the meeting information was obtained from Damien Cohen, National Licensing Officer, on the number of Licensing Standards Officers employed in the other major Scottish cities.

<u>City</u>	<u>No. of Licensing Standards Officers</u>
Glasgow	4
Edinburgh	10
Inverness	4
Fife	6
Stirling	2

## **UNIGHT SCHEME**

Sergeant McRobb advised that the organisers of the Unight Scheme wish to inform the Forum that they would be willing to assist with our communications by providing access to their database which has links to social networking sites such as Bebo. For example, messages on events connected with Alcohol Awareness week could be communicated in this way to up to 20,000 people.

The Sub-Committee asked Sergeant McRobb to thank the Unight Scheme organisers for this very helpful offer.

## **NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Aberdeen Local Licensing Forum Sub-Committee would take place on Monday, 26<sup>th</sup> October, 2009 at 5.00pm in order to consider agenda items for the Forum meeting scheduled to be held on 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2009 at 2.00pm.

**- ALLAN MCINTOSH, Chairperson.**