

## ABERDEEN LOCAL LICENSING FORUM

12 November 2009

### Late Night Bus Services

A meeting was held on 2 October 2009 with representatives from First Aberdeen, Stagecoach, Bluebird and Bains coaches together with representatives from NESTRANS, Grampian Police and the City Council including the Convenor of the Licensing Board.

It is clear that the bus companies are actively interested in improving services and there is a desire from everyone involved to promote change to better meet customer and provider requirements. At present night time bus services are not viable and risk being discontinued. Services are dependent on the student population which means there are seasonal fluctuations in demand. The service is not being well used. Some customers do not pay and drivers are under instruction to be non confrontational in these circumstances. The use of a second person on the bus has been considered but there is a risk if they have been inadequately trained and there would be a cost associated with employing a second person. CCTV on buses cannot be viewed remotely and it would be costly to make this enhancement to the facility.

The Programme Manager of Safer Aberdeen advised that it was unlikely individual licensed premises would want to contribute to transport costs although there may be scope to do this on an industry wide basis. It is understood that there is no legislation in place to impose a compulsory levy. However a voluntary scheme is one option.

Following on from the meeting an Action Plan will be drawn up and the actions will include obtaining data on where customers are coming from, their destinations, what time they require services and assessing demand to get a commitment that there would be a customer base to use increased services. Details of late night bus services in other cities will be obtained. Sunderland, Southampton and Inverness will be approached for information. Possible options will be considered including routes, timing, costs and contracts. Other options will include a pilot approach and examination of the availability of subsidies.

Funding sources will be investigated including a licensing levy, via NESTRANS, the Bus Route Development Fund and Scottish Government initiatives on safety, public transport or accessibility. The option of funding via the Business Improvement District will also be considered.

The Local Licensing Forum will receive further briefings as this issue is developed via the partner organisations involved in implementing the Action Plan.

### **Fiona Gardiner**

Clerk to the Aberdeen Local Licensing Forum

COMMITTEES/licensing forum/minutes/2009/121109 note A