



# POLICE SCOTLAND

Keeping people safe

CHIEF CONSTABLE'S REPORT TO THE  
ABERDEEN CITY LICENSING BOARD  
FOR THE PERIOD  
1<sup>ST</sup> APRIL 2017 to 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2018

## **Foreword**

It gives me great pleasure to provide the Annual Licensing Report for 2017/18, in accordance with Section 12(A) Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005.

I would like to acknowledge the contributions made to effective licensing regulation in the past year. Working in partnership is vital to ensure a fair and consistent approach to licensing whilst maintaining a focus on preventing alcohol fuelled violence, disorder and antisocial behaviour. Police Scotland is committed to continuing to work with partners in the 32 Local Authorities across Scotland to achieve positive outcomes.

Over the past year, Police Scotland has continued to achieve success with a focus on prevention, underpinned by early intervention and enforcement. This has only been possible with the support of the many active partnerships that exist in local areas. I will ensure that all officers and staff continue to work with the licensed trade and other key partners, utilising the range of options available to them to achieve improved licensing standards, reducing violence, disorder and antisocial behaviour across Scotland.

On 1<sup>st</sup> May 2018, Minimum Unit Pricing of Alcohol was introduced in Scotland. We will work through the Evaluation Advisory Group to assess the impact of this legislation. The coming year will present many challenges but I am confident that through collaborative working, we will meet these challenges and continue to improve licensing standards and deliver a service to the communities of Scotland.

Mr Iain Livingstone QPM  
Deputy Chief Constable Designate  
Police Service of Scotland

## **POLICE SCOTLAND LICENSING OVERVIEW**

The National Licensing Policy Unit (NLPU) sits within the Specialist Crime Division – Safer Communities, based at Dalmarnock Police Office, Glasgow.

The NLPU is responsible for the two tier structure for licensing which supports both national and local priorities. They have overall responsibility for determining and delivering national licensing strategy and policy, by providing advice, guidance and support to divisional licensing teams.

Each of the 13 Local Policing divisions have locally based officers dedicated to the day to day management of licensing administration, complying with statutory requirements as well as addressing any issues that may arise within licensed premises in their local area.

Police Scotland Licensing is supported and governed by a National IT solution known as 'InnKeeper'.

The NLPU and Licensing practitioners within Police Scotland develop partnerships and identify best practice which assist in a better understanding of the challenges faced by the Licensed Trade. This approach enables us to continue to work with local communities and key partners to prevent alcohol related crime and offences.

The NLPU seek to ensure that legislation governing the sale and supply of alcohol is applied consistently across the country and all opportunities are taken to stop the illegal or irresponsible sale, supply or consumption of alcohol with the intention of preventing and reducing crime and disorder.

## **NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE**

Our Priorities and Policing Plans continue to be shaped by the objectives contained within Scottish Government's Strategic Objectives and National Outcomes and the Strategic Policing Plans that are delivered locally through single outcome agreements.

Consultation and engagement is combined with our own analysis of the issues that impact on the safety of the public to provide a firm evidence base for local policing teams to prevent crime and disorder and Keep People Safe.

Our National Priorities are

- Violence, disorder and antisocial behaviour
- Serious organised crime
- Counter terrorism and domestic extremism
- Protecting people at risk of harm
- Road safety and road crime
- Acquisitive crime

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### **LICENSING BOARD AREA**

The Aberdeen City Licensing Board area is policed by North East Division.

Chief Superintendent Campbell Thomson is the Local Police Commander who has the responsibility for all day-to-day policing functions.

### **LOCAL POLICING PRIORITIES**

Following our public consultation process, the policing priorities for North East Division, as set out in our Local Policing Plan are as follows;

- Antisocial Behaviour, Violence and Disorder
- Acquisitive Crime
- Protecting People at Risk of Harm
- Road Safety and Road Crime
- Serious Organised Crime
- Counter Terrorism and Domestic Extremism

### **SENIOR OFFICERS**

The senior officer who holds responsibility for licensing within the area of North East Division is Temporary Superintendent Richard Craig.

### **OPERATION OF THE LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACT 2005**

The North East Division Licensing Team is led by Inspector Kenny McGeough who is based at Queen Street Police Office, Aberdeen. He is supported by Sergeants Gill Flett and Kim Wood, based at Queen Street and Stonehaven offices respectively. Licensing enquiry officers and administrative staff are located across the Division in Elgin, Inverurie, Aberdeen and Stonehaven. All staff have a division wide remit and a working knowledge of all the areas covered.

### **PARTNERSHIPS**

The North East Division Licensing team, supported by Community Policing Officers, has promoted the Police Service of Scotland's force priorities alongside the five licensing objectives, the overarching principles and aims of the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005.

The team enjoys a strong working relationship with the Local Authority Licensing Standards Officers. Both teams meet on a regular basis to share information. Over the reporting period there were a large number of inspections carried out jointly to licensed premises in the Board area. Specific areas of concern which often prompts

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such visits can be information about a lack of robust management of premises or lack of compliance with conditions relating to CCTV.

The reporting period has a focus on inspections of licensed premises through Local Days of Action, which were led by the North East Division Licensing Team, supported by the Licensing Standards Officers.

This approach has seen a more pro-active and operational role of the Divisional Licensing Team working more closely with Community Policing Teams and has reinforced the direct partnership working required for the meaningful policing of licensed premises.

North East Division Licensing Team is represented on the Local Licensing Forum and Aberdeen Alcohol and Drugs Partnership and works alongside the following groups and organisations to jointly improve local licensing issues:

- Licensing Standards Officers;
- Unight;
- Weekend Partnership;
- Torry Alcohol Action Group;
- Purple Flag;
- Community Safety Partnership;
- Local Pubwatch initiatives;
- Local Security Industry companies;
- Best Bar None;
- Street Pastors.

### **PROBLEM SOLVING**

Incident management is a critical aspect of our ongoing monitoring of licensed premises.

Community based Police Officers are encouraged and expected to routinely visit licensed premises within their area. Aberdeen city centre benefits from a dedicated Policing Plan to support the night time economy. Within the reporting period, there were 3450 inspections (visits) to licensed premises within Aberdeen recorded on the InnKeeper system.

Any Police Officer who attends an incident at any licensed premises is expected to submit a concise report via the Innkeeper system, particularly when the incident involves violence, disorder, anti-social behaviour, drunkenness, drug misuse, underage drinking, breaches of licensing legislation or any other matter that might impact on the safety of the public. Within the reporting period, there were 1058 incidents connected to licensed premises within Aberdeen recorded on the InnKeeper system.

The information obtained may show a causal link between the operation of the premises and the incident. An incremental intervention process allows for issues to be addressed quickly and effectively at an early stage. This includes a low level 'interaction' which may involve a discussion between the Police and the premises

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management and/or licence holder. The level of engagement from within the Aberdeen licensed trade is very good and in many instances, this approach reduces recurrence or escalation.

Premises may become 'monitored' with closer attention being paid to any incidents occurring there. This is often undertaken in conjunction with tasked, supportive visits to the premises by uniformed Police Officers.

However, where necessary, the staged process allows for more formal intervention to support premises where a need has been identified. A premises licence holder and the premises management may be asked to attend a meeting with the Police, where concerns will be discussed. This will often involve an agreed Action Plan being put in place, with a reasonable time scale for completion. The most common example of an agreed 'action' is refresher training of staff covering their responsibilities including the sale of alcohol to underage or intoxicated persons, 'Challenge 25' and the general terms and conditions of the licence held.

Should the intervention stage not bring about the necessary changes, or be otherwise unsuccessful, the next stage is the submission of a premises licence review application for the consideration of the Licensing Board.

Over the reporting period there have been eight licensed premises in Aberdeen subject to a period of monitoring or intervention. Of these eight, three were late opening venues, three were 'wet sales' led premises, one was a restaurant and one was an 'off sales' premises. The issues that were addressed ranged from sale of alcohol outwith licensed hours to duty of care concerns towards highly intoxicated patrons.

All of these 'interventions' were concluded successfully, thus negating the need to bring to the Board's attention issues which may previously have been brought before them by premises licence review application.

In the reporting period there were no premises licence review applications submitted to the Board.

The North East Division Licensing Team has a system in place which monitors certain conduct of Personal Licence holders. Should such a licence holder be charged with any offence, this is brought to the attention of the team. Should the circumstances appear to be inconsistent with any of the five licensing objectives, consideration will be given to bringing this to the attention of the Board by way of a personal licence review. In addition, should an individual be convicted of a relevant offence, this will undergo the same scrutiny.

### **SUMMARY**

In relation to the city centre of Aberdeen, many of the most common alcohol-related crimes and offences have dropped in the past three years. However, the number of serious assaults which occurred within the city centre during the late night and early morning has not decreased. A significant number of the people who were subsequently identified as being responsible had, in most cases, come from licensed

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premises and the peak time when these crimes occur are the hours from 0100 to 0400 on weekends.

The prevention of crime is not a strategy owned exclusively by the Police and we seek the co-operation, commitment and invested involvement of our of external partners, including the Licensing Board and licensed trade to explore all avenues and options to reduce alcohol-related crime, the impact of which extends beyond economic factors.

### **PREVENTING THE SALE OR SUPPLY OF ALCOHOL TO CHILDREN OR YOUNG PEOPLE**

Aberdeen City attracts a relatively low number of reports of underage drinking or youth congregation involving alcohol when considering other towns and cities across Scotland.

Where a person under 18 years of age is found to be either under the influence of alcohol, drinking alcohol in a public place or in possession of alcohol, the Police Officer involved will take all appropriate steps to ascertain the source of the alcohol.

Where information that cannot be fully evidenced is received regarding the sale of alcohol to children and young persons, in accordance with the national guidance contained within the 'Alcohol Toolkit', letters will be sent to licensed premises in the area reminding them of their responsibilities and requesting extra vigilance.

If such concerns were to continue in respect of specific premises, then other operational strategies would be considered.

One way in which North East Division delivers our commitment to the community is through our School Liaison Officers and School Based Officers. These Officers attend schools and other educational establishments seeking to equip our young people with the appropriate information and understanding that will allow them to make better informed decisions in key areas of their lives, both now and in the future. To this end they deliver lessons, linked to the Curriculum for Excellence, on a range of subjects including alcohol, controlled drugs and anti-social behaviour – particularly alcohol fuelled anti-social behaviour and the potential for related safety issues and consequences.

In support to the Protection of Children from Harm licensing objective, applications for premises licences and variations to premises licences come under close scrutiny often resulting in the submission of letters of objection, or more commonly, of representation, in which the imposition of conditions in respect of on sales, with regard to the times and terms in which children can be on such premises, will be recommended by the Chief Constable.

### **TACKLING SERIOUS AND ORGANISED CRIME**

Many of the processes and procedures involved in licensing applications are carried out to guard against Serious Organised Crime Groups (SOCG) infiltrating the

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licensed trade in any way. This scrutiny is further enhanced with the nation-wide InnKeeper system. This database contains details of all liquor and civic licences for every Division in Scotland, and enhances our information sharing in respect of premises and people in the licensed trade as they move about the country and work in multiple venues.

If such an SOCG were able to gain a foothold in licensed premises this would afford the criminal group a seemingly legitimate income stream, which could be no more than a veneer for other criminal activities such as money laundering, tax evasion, drug and people trafficking and other dishonest activities.

Many of the procedures currently carried out by the North East Divisional Licensing Team, particularly in relation to new premises licences and the transfer of premises licences are done to ensure complete financial transparency and to ensure there are no business related irregularities which may be indicative of SOCG involvement.

Frequent and directed Police attendance and contact with licensed premises also increases the opportunity for irregularities to be identified or reported.

As part of this, the North East Division Licensing Team regularly liaise with Police Interventions staff who are aware of SOCG activity within the Division to ensure that applicants are not affiliated in any way to such groups, before responding to the Licensing Board.

The consistent high profile approach and interaction with licensed premises in direct correlation with the aforementioned close scrutiny in the application process should reinforce the work carried out to maintain this position.

### **PROPOSED ACTIVITY FOR THE YEAR AHEAD**

Over the forthcoming year, North East Division Licensing Team, in conjunction with Community Policing Teams, will work alongside licensed premises, to ensure that these premises are adhering to the spirit of the legislation and operate in a manner that supports the five licensing objectives.

The North East Division Licensing Team is fully engaged in the consultation process as we move towards the publication of a new Statement of Licensing Policy and will continue to provide the Board with relevant data in respect of key times and locations to assist inform policy on guideline hours in relation to certain activities taking place within licensed premises, to continue working to reduce alcohol related violence.

This aspect of our future work should build upon the success of other areas within North East Division alongside an increased focus upon the use of analytical evidence to support direct, yet proportionate reasons for requesting that short and long term public safety orientated conditions are considered for one off events and established licensed premises.



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We intend to continue carrying out Local Days of Action and other associated initiatives involving activity at and around licensed premises, with a view to further reducing the numbers of adverse incidents at such premises and to support premises licence holders and their staff too, who make a positive contribution to Aberdeen's economy and creditable reputation. These operations will be carried out in support of and in conjunction with Community Policing Teams. We will carry out this activity in partnership with other agencies, particularly the Licensing Standards Officers, ultimately to uphold the five licensing objectives to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the people of and visitors to the city of Aberdeen.

To conclude we would like to thank you for your continued support and stress the importance of this collaborative, problem solving approach which ensures that Police, licence holders and licensed premises staff have a secure understanding of their responsibilities to preserve order, reduce violence and promote safety.