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## **Aberdeen Local Licensing Forum Development Plan**

### **Review and Recommendations**

#### **Introduction**

Firstly I would like to take the opportunity for allowing me to attend your recent meetings as well the warm welcome received whilst there. I am also extremely grateful for the feedback received both via the questionnaire and in discussing the various issues face to face.

As you may be aware, this is an independent partnership working exercise undertaken as part of my submission for the Police Diploma in Leadership and, whilst this was initially for my own progression, through careful examination of the role and impact of the forum, it is my sincere hope that this report can assist in building on some of the excellent work that you bring to the group and provide some small measure of advice for your consideration.

#### **Method**

Primarily, this has been an information gathering exercise and through your feedback via the Questionnaire should be reflective of the consideration that as individual members of the forum, inclusively you are the drivers for change and progression.

The Questionnaire was designed with ascertaining attendance, further partnership working, external communication capabilities, progression with the five licensing objectives and, finally, your thoughts on the way ahead.

On the basis of the responses given, as well as my own information gathering through research and dialogue, I have established the following for your further discussion and consideration, albeit the total number of responses have been somewhat limited. I would advocate that this report should therefore be considered as perhaps interim until any further responses are received or otherwise as a catalyst for you to utilise as you deem fit.

## Background

It has been identified that the forum has lost some impetus over recent years and a number of invested parties have withdrawn their participation. Furthermore, areas for consideration and progress often go unactioned due to a lack of positive communication and engagement. As such, a review has been agreed which will address the areas of concern. This will be done by actively seeking out the opinions and suggestions of all of the partnership agencies with a view to submitting an appraisal and set of recommendations in order to improve the effectiveness of the forum as well as re-engaging with former participants.

### **Questionnaire Results**

Overall, I had ascertained that there was little active dialogue and negotiation with the Licensing Board itself coupled with a general lack of understanding of what the Board do. This has led to some confusion as to how the Forum can be as effective in bringing the board to account. There was little, if any time, allocated at the Forum meetings to discussing the aims and progress of the organisation. Primarily, the meetings were more or less each individual member reporting on what they had done as opposed to contributing directly to the Forum's goals and terms of reference. This, in turn, has led to very little tasking which is compounded by the breakdown in communication between the forum and the Board itself. As such, the team work ethic within the Forum was low with some members pushing hard for it and others not engaging. Each individual partner was, undoubtedly, working hard and providing quality work, but only from within their own field of expertise. Finally, there was little in the way of any Social or traditional media footprint and, likewise, within the internal media footprint of each agency.

## Recommendations

1. Discussion time centred around aims and progress of forum should be allocated to each meeting
2. Enhanced Social Media foot print with: a)Trade b) Individual forum members  
c) public

3. Stronger engagement with the Licensing Board. Attendance at Board meetings.
4. Awareness sessions (in conjunction with 3) of what the remit of the Licensing Board does as well as the remit of the forum (consistency with terms of reference in constitution)
5. Forum Review publication alongside minutes (a how we are doing and what we are doing overview for general dissemination via social media and within each organisation).
6. Independent cost/benefit analysis by an external body (value for money) this will help in determining if the forum is heading in the right direction.
7. Regular press releases (local/trade/organisational publications as well as the social media aspect).
8. Engagement/Fact Finding exercise with other Local Authority Forums. Ascertain best practice, similar issues throughout Scotland.
9. Clearer and more defined tasking and ownership of responsibilities when providing recommendations and information to the Licensing Board.
10. To enhance closer working and improve internal relationships, consideration for Team Building days.

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