

**MINUTES of MEETING of LOCAL LICENSING FORUM held in the COUNCIL CHAMBER,
KILMORY, LOCHGILPHEAD
on TUESDAY, 24 JANUARY 2012**

Present: Kenneth Harrison (Chair)

Caroline Church, Alcohol Focus Scotland
John Woods, Alcohol Focus Scotland
Calum MacLachlainn, Licensed Trade
Raymond Park, License Standards Officer
Eric Dearie, License Standards Officer
Tim Saul, Licensed Trade
Raymond Boyle, Community Representative
Cath Cakebread, ABC/NHS Scotland
Fred Bruce, Community Councils
J Russell Buchanan, Ex Licensee
Martin Donovan, Licensed Trade
Eric Box, Community Councils
Catherine Dobbie, ABC/Education
David M. Greenwell, ABCHP
Roanna Clark, ABC Young Scot
Craig McNally, NHS Highland Public Health
Marlene Baillie, Strathclyde Police
Peter Robertson, Argyll & Bute Council
Hazel MacInnes, Argyll & Bute Council
Shona Marshall, Argyll & Bute Council

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Brian Kupris, Iain MacNaughton, Sheila Johnston, Laura Meek, Dr Helen Bath and Elaine Garman.

2. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON

Eric Box intimated his intention to stand down from the role of Chairperson. He indicated that after four years doing the job he felt it was time to let someone else take over. Nominations were invited for the appointment of a Chairperson.

Eric Box proposed that Kenneth Harrison be appointed as Chairperson and this was Seconded by Eric Dearie. Kenneth Harrison was duly appointed as Chairperson.

Kenneth Harrison took the Chair and thanked Eric Box for his work as Chairperson over the past year.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Local Licensing Forum held on Wednesday 26 October 2011 were approved as a correct record.

4. NATIONAL COMMUNITIES PROJECT

Caroline Church, Alcohol Focus Scotland, gave a presentation on the National Communities Project Lochgilphead/Ardrishaig.

She explained the purpose of Alcohol Focus Scotland, its core functions, strategic priorities and use of logic modelling.

She then outlined;

- background to the National Communities Project;
- resultant Community perceptions of impact of the project;
- price paid for alcohol in terms of health and social aspects;
- aim of a whole population approach of the Project;
- impact of alcohol in Argyll and Bute;
- how the role could be approached; and
- outcomes wanting to be achieved.

She concluded her presentation by setting out the next steps of the Project, and sought collective endorsement and support for the Project and its outcomes from the Forum.

Responding to queries she explained that the Lochgilphead/Ardrishaig area had been chosen due to the similar population size to that of the initial Project delivered in Blackburn, West Lothian. However, aspects of the Project could be adapted by neighbouring communities such as Kilmartin, Kilmichael, Carnbaan or the Islands eg school initiatives. Any issues specific to Argyll and Bute could be identified at the end of the year long project, but it was for the community owned steering group to decide its own workplan and outcomes.

The Forum thanked Caroline for her presentation and indicated its support for the Project.

Decision

Agreed that S Marshall send copies of the presentation to Forum members.

5. RE-THINKING ALCOHOL LICENSING - INTRODUCTION OF CURFEWS AND STAGGERING OF VENUE CLOSING TIMES

There had been circulated report for discussion by Calum MacLachlainn on 3am licensing extensions.

Speaking to the report, Calum highlighted the benefits he felt this would bring to town centres as follows;

- result in less chance of pre-loading;
- apply to venues strictly designed for late night entertainment
- enable the venue to apply a charge and in turn provide enhanced entertainment performers;
- reduce incidents on streets as crowd would not congregate outside biggest venue at same time as other bars;

- potentially result in customers going home later in the evening and not just at closing time;
- encourage more responsible drinking, as no pressure to finish drinking 15 minutes before closing time;
- result in less aggressive behaviour;
- improve the tourism sector; and
- enable diverse entertainment to the benefit of locals and tourists alike.

Marlene Baillie, Chief Inspector, queried whether there had been any consultation with local residents in Oban town centre on 3am opening hours. It appeared that they already opposed the granting of 2am licenses.

Raymond Park suggested that a risk matrix, previously used by the Forum, could be applied in this case. The staggering of closing hours could simply move overcrowding in streets forward by one hour, to the detriment of local residents and the town itself. Discussion then took place on whether later opening hours would reduce pre-loading.

J Russell Buchanan suggested that it would be beneficial to look at the structure and distribution of licenses in each of the Wards in Argyll and Bute. Many venues may not be suitable for 3am licenses due to increased costs incurred by the employment of Stewards and CCTV.

Peter Robertson pointed out that the Licensing Board was entitled to look at the effect late licenses would have on police resources. He cited a recent Glasgow case where the court had upheld the Board's decision to refuse extended licence on that basis.

Eric Box felt that when looking at late night licenses, consideration should be given to ensure not only the licensee but the local area benefitted as a result. There may also be health issues involved in granting late licenses as this may encourage the availability of alcohol, which was in opposition to government policy which was geared towards price increases and reduction in availability.

Marlene Baillie pointed out that police shift patterns were set up towards change of shifts prior to 3am. This could result in the reduction of police resources available for dealing with disturbances which resulted from the extension of entertainment and catering premises licenses.

She queried whether there was any supporting evidence that granting 3am extensions would, for example, reduce domestic incidents or result in a reduction of hospital admissions or disorder in town centres.

Decision

- 1) Agreed to place the "Re-thinking of Alcohol Licensing – Introduction of Curfews and Staggering of Venue Closing Times" as an Item for discussion on the Agenda for the next meeting of the Forum; and
- 2) Agreed that Caroline Church bring information to the next meeting of the Forum on any set precedents or evidence available from other parts of the country on the effect of later licensing hours on public disorder, hospital admissions etc

6. LOCAL LICENSING FORUMS - BEST PRACTICE DISCUSSION

Referring to the “Notes from the Local Licensing Forums Best Practice Discussion” held by Alcohol Focus Scotland on Friday 2 December 2011”, Eric Box highlighted the sections “Young People” and “Alcohol: the Facts in Fife 2011”.

During discussion it was explained that West Dunbartonshire Council had taken into account the correlation in statistics on health and the number of licensed premises in an area, to help them build a picture of trends and inform their overprovision policy.

Craig McNally also informed the Forum that NHS Highland had carried out a report on health issues attributed to access to alcohol in the Highlands in relation to health.

Roanna Clark referred to the membership of young people. There were two youth representative places on the Forum. However, owing to other commitments one representative was unable to attend the meeting and the other place was vacant but would be filled in the near future. She confirmed that both youth representatives would be attending the next meeting of the Forum, and did not consider that any additional youth places were required.

Youth representatives were important to the Forum as they passed on relevant information to young people through sources such as the Young Scot website and the Argyll and Bute Youth Forum. The Forum also gained from having a youth voice as part of its membership.

Decision

- 1) Agreed that “Alcohol: the Facts in Fife 2011” be put as an Item at the next meeting of the Forum;
- 2) Agreed that Craig McNally obtain a copy of the NHS Highland report for circulation to the Forum; and
- 3) Agreed that Caroline Church obtain a copy of the “Alcohol: the Facts in Fife 2011” report for circulation to members of the Forum.

7. ALCOHOL FOCUS SCOTLAND

The Chair referred to the invitation for any representative from the Forum to attend a Regional Event “Re-thinking Alcohol Licensing” being held in Inverness on Tuesday 7 February 2012 by Alcohol Focus Scotland. The same event was also taking place in Glasgow on 20 February 2012.

Decision

Agreed that any member wishing to attend either of the “Re-thinking Alcohol Licensing” events inform Shona Marshall, Committee Services.

8. POLICE STATISTICS

Marlene Baillie spoke to the report on the Summary of Storm Incidents, October – November 2011.

Following a query on the statistics, Eric Box explained that Storm Incidents were

incidents which had been reported to the police, and included attendance by police officers at licensed premises.

Marlene Baillie pointed out that any incidents occurring at licensed premises required a separate type of form to be completed, and some information may not be published due to disclosure issues. Figures on drug related incidents in licensed premises were available for the past year, however there were a range of factors which would have to be taken into account when considering whether or not drug use was on the increase and as such the figures could not be looked at in isolation.

Decision

Agreed that an analysis of the police statistics for the year 2011 which showed trends of the figures, as had been produced for the meeting on 17 July 2011, be brought to the next meeting of the Forum.

9. UPDATE FROM LSO

The Forum noted the update from Eric Dearie. He confirmed that in some cases the closure of licensed premises in Lochgilphead, Campbeltown and Oban had resulted in quieter streets, and in other cases the population had shifted to other premises in the towns.

Premises in Argyll and Bute were of a good standard and pubs were now required by law to maintain certain records and measures such as record keeping and training of personnel.

He went on to inform the Forum that the Council's Environmental Health Section also carried out formal inspections and would contact licensed premises managers to inform them if they were to be in their area to carry out inspections.

Decision

Members noted the report and thanked Mr Dearie.

10. ISSUE TRACKER

The Forum noted the following updates;

- (i) National Outcomes for LLF – the study was on-going
- (ii) Promotion of LLF – ongoing
- (iii) Alcohol Focus Scotland – Linda Bowie to attend April 2012 meeting of the LLF
- (iv) Re-thinking Alcohol Licensing – ongoing

With regard to the Educational DVD, "don't make the same mistakes we did" Roanna Clark reported that following a project exchange with Poland it was noted that some of the country's youth projects were funded through taxes on alcohol sales given to the Local Authority. These projects also existed in Sweden and Denmark. The Argyll and Bute local Scottish Youth Parliament member was now interested in bringing a similar project to the Youth Parliament and she queried whether the Forum would be supportive of this initiative.

The Forum agreed their support to the suggestion that youth activities be funded by

use of an alcohol levy.

Discussion then followed on the timing of the number of Joint Licensing Board and Licensing Board meetings which should be held. It was suggested that these be held on a more regular basis.

The Forum agreed that the Minutes of the last joint meeting of the Licensing Board and Licensing Forum held in September 2011 be circulated.

11. FUTURE MEETING DATES

The Forum noted the following future meeting dates;

- Wednesday 11 April 2012
- Wednesday 18 July 2012
- Wednesday 17 October 2012