

Governance and Law

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Mary Elmar
Alcohol Focus Scotland
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Direct Line 01546 604192
Ask for Charles Reppke
Our Ref:
Your Ref:
Date: 15 June 2012

Dear Mary

Re: Discussion of the Rethinking Alcohol Licensing Report

Thank you for your letter dated 29th March 2012 concerning the above. You raise many points from the document pack minuting the LLF meeting on 24th January 2012 which caused us some concern.

However I think the general jist of our discussion may have been missed either by you or by the phrasing used within the documents. We do take very seriously any evidence based study into alcohol misuse. In particular the “Rethinking” report has been of great interest to us. In fact I personally have attended some Holyrood discussion on the matter and with others from the LLF attended the Glasgow Seminar.

Our discussion at the LLF meeting went towards the possible rethinking of licensing hours with respect to the type of premise holding the licence. Argyll and Bute has a demography which we feel needs careful attention both for the local economy and the Health and Welfare of its constituents. In Oban, for example, we have a locus of nightlife whilst less than 3 miles out with the town we can find ourselves in a very rural setting.

We also have the added consideration of being a busy ferry port with the requirements of traffic (both commercial and tourist) travelling both to the islands recreationally and to Oban for shopping etc.

To this end we have looked at not only re-distributing the Licence norm but also the possibility of reducing the overall number of hours available for the retail sale of alcohol. However this is still at a very early and contemplative stage.

As part of this initiative the LLF spent time discussing the fact that late licences **could** perhaps be restricted to premises which were appropriate to accommodating such a licence; eg provision of food during the whole open period, availability of

taxi, and least disturbance to neighbouring residential property etc. thereby removing the ethos that all premises could take for granted that a 1.00am licence (for example) was the norm.

I apologise for any misconception or misunderstanding which our notes may have brought. We do take very seriously the responsibilities placed on us. Our LLF is very fortunate in that we have representatives from a wide diversity of sections of the community. However it is sometimes good practice to be reminded by organisations like your own of the original remit to the LLF system in particular taking heed of "The 5 Objectives" strategy.

In order to strike conformity of our procedures with other LLF's I would be grateful if you could please pass to me the contact details of the Convenors of other LLF's. In particular Highland, Glasgow City, and Dumfries and Galloway. I would very much like to attend one of their meetings as an observer. Likewise, you may pass on my contact details to other LLF's. Their representatives would be most welcome to attend any of our meetings in whole or part.

Thank you for your advice and help.

Yours sincerely

Charles Reppke
Head of Governance and Law