

## ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL

### SOUTH ABERDEENSHIRE LICENSING FORUM

COUNCIL CHAMBER, VIEWMOUNT, STONEHAVEN, 11 MARCH, 2015

**Present:** Mr John Kinsella, Mr Alistair Black, Mr Chris Endersen, Mr Wayne Gault, Sgt Gavin Jardine and Mr Keith Simpson.

**Officer:** Fiona Tweedie (Committee Officer), Aberdeenshire Council.

#### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Ms Christine Herron.

#### 2. MINUTE OF MEETING OF 14 JANUARY 2015

There was circulated and **approved** the Minute of Meeting of 14 January 2015.

#### 3. MATTERS ARISING

Members expressed disappointment that no interest in joining the Forum had been forthcoming from the e-mails sent to Pubwatch members in the South Forum area.

Item 2 on the action sheet (discussion on sending a letter to the Licensing Board on the possibility of incorporating a statement on categorising drunkenness into the Board's policy statement) was to be discussed at the meeting but members ran out of time to give this consideration. At the previous meeting of the Forum in January, Sgt Jardine noted that he would provide statistical data on crimes and offences pertaining to licensed premises where drunkenness was a factor, with a view to informing discussion on this. These statistics were attached. This topic would be revisited at the next meeting in June.

Copies of e-mails sent to Michele Pittendreigh (Principal Solicitor (Governance)) were attached, noting that the Depute Clerk would not be able to attend Forum meetings due to lack of legal resources.

#### 4. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING BUSINESS

There had been circulated a report dated 3 March, 2015, by the Committee Officer which advised members that this was the Annual General Meeting of the South Aberdeenshire Licensing Forum and that the formal business to be transacted was to receive an annual report from the Convener and to appoint Office Bearers and members.

In his report, the Convener thanked members for their ongoing support and noted his disappointment that no projects had been initiated over the past year. On a positive note, an application to join the Forum had been included with the agenda.

A list of possible and actual attendances of members at Forum meetings was attached to the report.

Thereafter, the Forum **agreed**:-

- (1) to note the Convener's report 2014/15,
- (2) to formally appoint Mr John Kinsella as Convener for 2015/16,

- (3) to continue with Aberdeenshire Council's administrative support to the Forum in 2015/16, and
- (4) the appointment of members for 2015/16.

Having dealt with the formal part of the meeting, members went on to discuss other subjects.

Alcohol Focus had provided training a few years ago which was considered very useful and members discussed whether something along these lines could be provided again. This could be something which other Forums (including Aberdeen City and others) could participate in. It was suggested that the Forum Conveners might arrange a date firstly, then an invitation could be extended to representatives from the Police, health, ADP, Community Safety, LSOs, etc. The Committee Officer agreed to contact Central and North Conveners to try to agree arrangements.

The next SALSUS report would be carried out in autumn 2015. This asked 13 and 15 year olds questions on topics such as alcohol, smoking and drug use. The next one was going to give local authorities the option to include questions at a local level but an extra fee would be charged for this. Mr Gault said that if members had any questions, they could forward them to him and he may be able to take them forward. The results from the last SALSUS report noted that general trends were heading in the right direction and that fewer young people were drinking alcohol under age. However, those who did were drinking more. In the more deprived areas of Aberdeenshire, problems with drug taking were more evident than in more affluent areas, where alcohol related problems were more likely to be prevalent.

## **5. LICENSING BOARD UPDATE**

There was no-one available to give an update on the activities of the Licensing Board.

Members felt that perhaps a short report would be a worthwhile addition to the agenda if no-one from the Board was available to give a verbal update. It was also suggested that including the Minutes of Meeting of the Board on the Forum agenda would be a useful addition. The Committee Officer agreed to contact the relevant person to find out if this would be acceptable.

Members also asked the Committee Officer to write a letter to the Board asking for sight of the evidence collated over the course of the year which would be included in the Board's Annual Report. This would give the Forum an idea of what subjects the Board was dealing with, and themes such as issues and offences.

## **6. LICENSING STANDARDS OFFICER UPDATE**

Keith Simpson noted that the first quarter of 2015 had been relatively quiet and LSOs were involved in the aftermath of personal licences refresher training, tying up loose ends. 600 personal licences had been revoked and where a premises manager had had their licence revoked, substitutes had been found to keep the premises operating. If a personal licence holder had surrendered their licence, they could reapply but if the licence had been revoked, they could not reapply for five years. It was generally felt that this was harsh and that there were loopholes in the legislation. Mr Simpson said it was difficult to keep track of licences issued as there was no national database for this. Sgt Jardine noted that the National Innkeepers database was to be rolled out for use by Police Scotland but that this would not be available for use by local authorities.

## **7. POLICE UPDATE**

Sgt Jardine informed members that there had been an increased volume of applications but most were non-contentious. In the South Forum area, there were no premises currently

operating under an intervention. The Police should not be seen as a barrier to trade, as they wished to work with the licensed trade. In Aberdeenshire as a whole, there had been 849 incidents. The statistics provided earlier in the agenda were from the south area and showed that matters were not too bad. Police Scotland intervened before any major problems were evident and managers of licensed premises generally worked in collaboration with them.

## **8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There had been circulated an application for membership of the Forum received from Mr Michael Holley. The Forum acknowledged that they would benefit from the addition of new members and welcomed the addition of Mr Holley as a local resident and personal licence holder. It was **agreed** to appoint Michael Holley to the Forum.

Mr Gault brought up the subject of 'drunk tanks', informing members that Albyn House in Aberdeen was a place where those presenting with no medical problem other than being under the influence of alcohol, could be taken, thereby avoiding the need to use facilities at A&E. 20% of usage was from Aberdeenshire residents, so although this meant that a facility was not warranted solely for Aberdeenshire use, there may be questions on contributing to funding of Albyn House.

Mr Gault also noted that the Community Planning Partnership citizen's survey would be coming along soon and that perhaps members might want to forward any suggestions on questions to be included in this. As time was limited on this occasion, this might be a subject for another meeting.

He attended the 'Big Blether' in Stonehaven a couple of weeks ago which was an event which service users with alcohol and drugs problems could attend, along with family, friends and professionals. Interest had been noted in the Forum and he informed members that he would encourage this if they thought it would be of benefit.

## **9. MEETING DATES FOR 2015**

The remaining meeting dates for 2015 were:-

Wednesday, 10 June at 10.30 am at Viewmount, Stonehaven  
Wednesday, 7 October at 10.30 am at Viewmount, Stonehaven.