

**REPORT ON
COMMUNITY COUNCIL LICENSING WORKSHOP
WEDNESDAY, 7TH DECEMBER 2016
ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL, TOWN HOUSE**

Background

In 2016 Alcohol Focus Scotland published the “Alcohol licensing in your community” toolkit that explains how the licensing process works in Scotland, and provides some practical tips to help people who want to get involved. Colleagues already working in the field of licensing welcomed this document and have been circulating it widely within their networks.

During discussion between Karen Rennie, Community Council Liaison Officer, and Community Councils in Aberdeen City, licensing was identified as one of the training needs for newly elected (and existing) Community Council members. Following on from this, it was agreed that representatives from NHS Grampian (NHSG) Public Health, Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership (ACH&SCP), Aberdeen City Alcohol and Drug Partnership (ADP) and the Licensing Standards Team would attend a workshop event held on 7th December 2016. This event was publicised through Karen Rennie, to all Aberdeen City Community Councils.

A total of 15 Community Council delegates attended with 12 Community Councils being represented. The intended format for the event included a number of short presentations with opportunities for discussion; the showing of two short films; with the event concluding with a practical workshop element. On the evening the format did not follow the plan as there were lengthy discussions between the Community Council members and the representatives. As a result of the extended discussion, there was no time to deliver the practical workshop. However, the Community Council members said that they had valued the input from the representatives who attended and requested a further evening to complete the practical workshop.

Main topics for discussion

- Lack of information and speed of delivery were high on the agenda for Community Council members.
 - Community Councils receive very limited information from the Licensing Board. It would be ideal if Community Councils could receive the same scanned information as NHSG, Police and Licensing Standards Officers, however it was acknowledged that this would be a big step. In the interim it was suggested that the Licensing Board could provide Community Councils with the basic information that was displayed on site notices as this would be better than the letter that was currently issued.

- Delays in receiving letters and lack of time in which to make a response were discussed. It was suggested that the Licensing Board use e-mail to contact Community Councils. To ease this process Karen Rennie suggested that the Licensing Board e-mail her and she would forward to the appropriate Community Council.

Tasks identified from the discussions

- The Licensing Standards Officers agreed to investigate litter nuisance concerning a specific licensed premises
- The Licensing Standards Officers agreed to investigate a specific pricing issue and sale of alcohol from a licensed premises
- The Licensing Forum Chair agreed to write on behalf of the Community Council delegates to express their disappointment that the Licensing Board overprovision statement is still suspended
- NHS Grampian and the Licensing Standards Officers agreed to identify ten of their licensing “success stories” for sharing with Community Councils

Evaluation of event

Community Council members were asked to complete an evaluation questionnaire for the event. The resulting responses identified that:

- 100% (15/15) advised that their knowledge of the licensing process had increased
- 80% (12/15) advised that their knowledge of the AFS Toolkit had increased with only 20% (3/15) indicating no change
- 83% (13/14) advised that their confidence to apply learning was “Satisfactory” or “Good”. One person felt their knowledge was still “Poor” but added that he/she now knew who to contact
- 87% (13/15) rated the content of the session as “Good” or “Very Good”
- 87% (13/15) rated the knowledge of the facilitators as “Good” or “Very Good”

All Community Council delegates received a pack of alcohol related information and statistics and contact details so that they would know who to contact for any help in the future.