

REPORT TO ABERDEENSHIRE LICENSING BOARDS

SOUTH DIVISION – 4TH DECEMBER 2019

CENTRAL DIVISION – 11TH DECEMBER 2019

NORTH DIVISION – 20TH DECEMBER 2019

REVIEW OF LICENSING BOARD STRUCTURE IN ABERDEENSHIRE

CONSIDERATION OF OPTIONS

1 Reason for Report / Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consult with the Licensing Boards in Aberdeenshire prior to public consultation on the Licensing Board structure in Aberdeenshire. Appendix 3 sets out the options under consideration.
- 1.2 The objective of the review is to ensure that the Head of Legal and Governance can recommend the most suitable model for Aberdeenshire, including how it would operate in practical terms such as location, volume of business, connection to communities and resource implications. The public consultation will focus on key issues and will shape the ultimate recommendation to Council.

2 Recommendations

The Licensing Board is recommended to:

- 2.1 Consider and comment on the options as set out in this paper at Appendix 3**
- 2.2 Consider and comment on the specific questions posed for the Board at Appendix 4.**
- 2.3 Acknowledge that there will be a public consultation as set out in Appendix 4 from the 20th December to the 19th January.**
- 2.4 Acknowledge that the outcome from the public consultation will be reported to each of the Boards in February 2020 so that the Boards are given an opportunity to comment before determination at Council in March 2020.**

3 Purpose and Decision Making Route

- 3.1 Aberdeenshire Council, at its meeting on 21st November 2019, instructed the Head of Legal and Governance, in her role as Clerk to the Licensing Boards to conduct a review of the Licensing Board structure in Aberdeenshire, including public consultation in accordance with the timeline in Appendix 1 to this report.
- 3.2 A review of the Board structure was undertaken from 2010 to 2012 and it was concluded at that time to retain the existing structure. The Minute from the meeting of Council on the 26th April 2012 reflects the decision to make no change and also records agreement that the Convenors of the Licensing Boards should meet to consider the scope for regularisation

of policies and guidelines across Aberdeenshire. The Boards have aligned their policies, procedures and local conditions in the main with provision for local variance where appropriate since 2012.

- 3.3 All three Divisional Licensing Boards are being consulted on the proposed new arrangements and those comments along with comments from the public consultation will be collated and analysed. The Head of Legal and Governance will make a recommendation to Council. The decision on the structure of the Boards lies with Council.
- 3.4 The public consultation document will utilise Survey Monkey although if members of the public request a hard copy that can be arranged. The link for the Survey Monkey will be made available to current licensees, community councils and through social media.

4 Discussion

Scope of Review

- 4.1 The Scope of the Review as agreed by Council is contained at Appendix 2. This report sets out the legislative provisions, the current structure, the options considered and data to inform Board members consideration of those options. The review will test the status quo and the reduction to one Board for efficiency both in terms of resource and carbon footprint.

Legislative provisions and current structure

- 4.2 The Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 (“the Act”) sets out the requirements for Licensing Boards. Each Council area must have a minimum of one licensing Board for their area and there is provision for divisional licensing boards. There are currently three Divisional Licensing Boards performing the statutory licensing function in North, Central and South Aberdeenshire. The three Licensing Boards were first established in 2007 to perform the Council’s obligations under the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 (“the Act”) and the Gambling Act 2005. The three Boards follow the areas of the old District Council boundaries.
- 4.3 Aberdeenshire is one of only three local authorities in Scotland which has more than one divisional licensing board (the others being Dumfries and Galloway and South Lanarkshire each having 4 Licensing Boards). Highland Council reduced in the 1990s from six to four, then ultimately to one.
- 4.4 The legislation provides that the Council can review the structure of Licensing Boards area. Should the Council wish to restructure, the process is that the original decision to divide requires to be revoked and to establish the new structure in its place. Where this is the case, each of the divisional Licensing Boards is dissolved and all licences granted by divisional boards still have effect under the new arrangements. For context, there are currently 659 premises licences granted across Aberdeenshire.

Board Area	Number of Premises
North	236
Central	218
South	205
Total	659

The Boards also administer in the region of 1,400 occasional licences per year and have issued 2,136 personal licences. The majority of these applications are dealt with under

delegated powers and only a small percentage require a hearing by a Board. The volume of business dealt with by each Board is detailed in Appendix 3 during the discussion of options.

Improvements to Date

- 4.5 The Boards have, since 2017, updated the format of the agendas. This has enabled the agendas to be streamlined and to focus on the issues where a decision is required rather than using agendas to provide information for noting. Information is now provided to Board members by email on a quarterly basis. This has been a benefit in terms of the size of agendas, navigation of agendas and the paper/printing of agendas. The Scheme of Delegation for the Boards has been updated and business has been dealt with efficiently. There have been a number of technological advances such as the introduction of a new back office system which includes public access ensuring greater openness and transparency. Work is currently being undertaken with the ICT service to develop online forms to enable applicants to apply online which will be a significant improvement in terms of efficiency of the licensing administration team.
- 4.6 Appendix 3 to this report sets out the options under consideration. Appendix 4 sets out questions for the Boards to consider and discuss whilst Appendix 5 is the proposed public consultation.

5 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

- 5.1 The report helps deliver Council Priority 10 – Having the right people, in the right place, doing the right thing, at the right time and has potential to impact upon Priority 11 – Protect our special environment, including tackling climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This report dovetails with the delivery of the LOIP Priority – Changing Aberdeenshire’s Relationship with Alcohol.
- 5.2 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are agreed.

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Financial			x
Staffing			x
Equalities			X
Fairer Scotland Duty			x
Town Centre First			x
Sustainability			x
Children and Young People’s Rights and Wellbeing			x

- 5.3 An equality impact assessment is not required at this point because the purpose of this report is to consult with Licensing Boards on potential options. It is recognised that there may be impacts which will require to be assessed however the options are still being developed. The reports that follow, if approved, setting out options will fully narrate any Equality and Fairer Scotland Duty implications following the consultation. It is envisaged that issues may be raised during the consultation that will shape the direction of the ultimate recommendation to Council. Any impacts should a decision be

made to move to a single board will be fully assessed and reported to the Boards following the consultation and prior to a recommendation to Council.

- 5.4 Any staffing, financial, sustainability and children and young people's rights and wellbeing implications will be assessed during the review and will be reported to Council along with the recommendation. There are no direct staffing implications. Whilst reduction to one board would yield some savings in staff time, these are counterbalanced by increased staff commitment in other aspects so neutralise any effect. The number of premises, personal licences and processing will remain constant in whichever model is adopted.
- 5.5 Adopting one single Licensing Board will lead to a reduction in membership from the current 24 Members to a statutory maximum of 10, yielding a saving in terms of the costs of training which is mandatory and purchased from external certificated providers. There are other potential savings in terms of printing, travel costs through a reduction in membership, paper costs however this would potentially have to be balanced against any increases in travel distances for Board meetings depending on where meetings are held.
- 5.6 The following Risk has been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level:-
[ACORP004 – Business and Organisational Change](#)

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Date 20th November 2019

List of Appendices

[Appendix 1 – Indicative Timeline for Review](#)

[Appendix 2 – Proposed Scope of Review](#)

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Appendix 1

Phase	Consultee	Dates	Action/Comments
Phase 1 Option Generation and Consultation	Full Council	21 st November	Initial Scoping paper to full Council to initiate the review the structure of the Boards.
	South Board Meeting	4 th December	Officer Review of Options and presented to the boards for discussion. Initiate public consultation.
	Central Board Meeting	11 th December	
	North Board Meeting	20 th December	
	Licensing Forum Meeting	13 th November	Briefing on intention to report to Council in November to initiate review
Phase 2 Consideration of Consultation Responses and Appraisal	Public Consultation	20 th December – 20 th January	
	Officer's analysis of the results of consultation	20 th January to publishing papers	
	Officers drafting report and formulating recommendation	27 th January	
Phase 3 Discussion of Recommendation	Meeting with Licensing Board Convenors	Week beginning 20 th January	Discuss outcome from consultation
	South Licensing Board Meeting	5 th February	Discussion on recommendation to Council
	Central Licensing Board Meeting	12 th February	Discussion on recommendation to Council
	North Licensing Board Meeting	28 th February	Discussion on recommendation to Council
Phase 4 Conclusion	Full Council	5 th March	Discussion on recommendation

Appendix 2

Scope of Review

It is proposed that the Clerk to the Licensing Boards for Aberdeenshire (North, Central and South) undertake a **review of the current arrangements** for the discharge of business under the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Gambling Act 2005 in Aberdeenshire and make recommendations on the continuing efficiency and appropriateness of those arrangements.

It is further proposed that the Clerk include within the review a **consultation** with the Boards, public and with stakeholders, as per Appendix 1, on any proposed revision to the arrangements to ensure that the most optimum operating model is in place in Aberdeenshire.

It is proposed that the review will include:-

- investigating the volume of business that is dealt with by each Board,
- Identifying improvements made to Board procedures.
- the amount of officer and elected member time spent preparing for and at each Board,
- whether there would be any financial savings achievable on reducing the number of Boards.
- quantifying the time and resource implications (internal and external) of alternative options
- quantifying the impact on travel time for officers, members, statutory partners and the public
- Identifying models used by other authorities

The review will also explore alternative models to the one currently in place and test that for efficiency both in terms of resource and carbon footprint.

The objective of the review is to ensure that officers can recommend the most suitable model for Aberdeenshire, which may be different from the current operating model, following a comprehensive options appraisal of viable models, including how they would operate in practical terms such as location, volume of business, connection to communities and resource implications.

Appendix 3A – Options to Consider

There are 2 options worthy of consideration.

1. Reduce to a Single Board
2. Retain the status quo with three Divisional Boards.

Any efficiency achieved by a reduction to two Divisional Boards would be minimal and so it is more appropriate to consider a reduction to one Board.

Option A - Establishing a Single Board

- A1. One of the options is to dissolve the three existing Licensing Boards and establish a new single Licensing Board for the whole of the area that Aberdeenshire Council covers. This appendix details the potential impacts of establishing a single Board and examines the variables within the option. The consultation with the Boards and the public will influence and develop this option further.

Membership

- A2. Schedule 1 of the Act sets out the provisions around membership for Licensing Boards. The minimum number of Board members is 5 and the maximum is 10 and members must be elected by the Council from their elected members. The current Divisional Boards all have 8 members. The quorum for a Licensing Board is half the membership with no less than 3. Case law has established that in quasi-judicial proceedings it is preferable to have at least 4 members in order that both a motion and amendment could be moved and seconded with the convenor having the casting vote.
- A3. In order to ensure that there is still an element of local knowledge regarding licensing applications and the formulation of policy, although this is not a statutory requirement nor a formal consideration in terms of the licensing objectives, it is proposed that any election to a single Board should ensure that there is at least 1 Board member from each administrative area, i.e. Banff and Buchan, Buchan, Formartine, Garioch, Marr and Kincardine and Mearns. It is proposed that should Council establish a single board that the membership of that Board should be 10 members.
- A4. Each member of a Licensing Board must formally sit a course and pass an examination to become accredited before being able to sit on any Board. Should there be a decision to move to one, officers recommend that elected members who are existing Board members be elected to a single Board for continuation of knowledge and skills as well as obtaining best value from the training already delivered. After the last election, the costs of training were £3,550. This included the trainer's travel costs. Each day cost £1,120 and two sessions were required due to the number of elected members who require to be trained and the restrictions on how many members can be trained at any one session. There were also additional costs for separate training for those appointed at a later date.

Practicalities

Anticipated Business at each Meeting

- A5. The number of liquor applications made by those seeking to sell alcohol in Aberdeenshire will not change due to restructuring and will still require to be processed and determined.

Officers have analysed the business presented to the Boards since January 2017. During this time, 415 reports have been presented to the 3 Licensing Boards. Some of these reports will have been duplicated for all of the Licensing Boards to consider. The following table shows the type and how many reports have been presented to the Boards. By way of explanation, the “admin” reports mean the items relating to any declarations of interest, the public sector equality duty as well as the Minutes. The “determinations” columns refer to the number of reports that have been required for both contentious applications which require a hearing and the non-contentious. There are certain types of application, i.e. new premises and major variations, that must be determined by a Licensing Board and not able to be delegated and these form the non-contentious reports. There have also been reports relating to specific issues for individual Boards and policy reports which have been circulated to all Boards.

Board	No. of Reports	Admin	Determinations		Board Specific	Policy Related (All Boards)
			Contentious (Hearings)	Non-Contentious		
North	156	37	29	31	21	38
Central	138	34	28	27	17	32
South	121	35	16	18	17	35
Total	415	106	73	76	55	105

A6. If the same business had been considered by one board, officers calculate that the number of reports that would have required consideration would have been 244 which is a reduction of 171 reports over the 3 years this is illustrated in the table below. This clearly demonstrates that overall there would be efficiencies in terms of both officer and member time spent both at Boards and in preparation for Boards if the number of Boards is reduced to one. Figures shown in brackets denote a negative figure.

Board	No. of Reports	Admin	Determinations		Board Specific	Policy Related (All Boards)
			Contentious (Hearings)	Non-Contentious		
Aberdeenshire	244	38	73	76	21	36
Impact	(171)	(68)	0	0	(34)	(69)

It is recognised that some of the reports would require to be longer so that information for all areas are contained in the reports.

A7. It is important to look at the pattern over 3 years to form a strategic overview of how the business of the Licensing Boards is dealt with. It is also important to consider what impact moving to one Licensing Board would have for each meeting cycle. Taking into account the business conducted as narrated in the table above, the average meeting of each Board contains the following reports:-

Board	No. of Reports	Admin	Determinations		Board Specific	Policy Related (All Boards)
			Contentious (Hearings)	Non-Contentious		
North	9	2	1	2	2	2
Central	10	2	2	2	2	2
South	7	2	1	1	1	2
Per Cycle	26	6	4	5	5	6

A8. The impact that moving to one Licensing Board could therefore mean that the agenda could contain the following:-

Board	No. of Reports	Admin	Determinations		Board Specific	Policy Related (All Boards)
			Contentious (Hearings)	Non-Contentious		
Aberdeenshire	16	2	4	5	2	3
Comparison Per Cycle	(11)	(4)	0	0	(3)	(3)

A9. It is clear that the number of determinations likely to be required at one combined Board would be higher than the number of determinations at individual Boards. The average would be 4 contentious hearings per cycle. Given that the meetings could take longer, officers have looked at the average length of meetings to give an indication as to the impact of longer agendas.

A.10 The figures in the table below illustrate the average length of time spent physically at Board meetings. As Board members will appreciate, each application is dealt with on its own merits and some can be dealt with expediently whereas others require more consideration and evidence to be presented. The overall length of the meeting information is taken from time recording by officers attending the meetings. These figures are illustrative and should be read as being generous.

Board	No. of Reports	Admin	Determinations		Board Specific	Policy Related (All Boards)	Time
			Contentious (Hearings)	Non-Contentious			
North	9	2	1	2	2	2	3.02 hours
		6 mins each	1 hour each	15 mins each	20 mins each	20 mins each	
Central	10	2	2	2	2	2	4.02 hours
		6 mins each	1 hour each	15 mins each	20 mins each	20 mins each	
South	7	2	1	1	1	2	2.44 hours
		6 mins each	1 hour each	15 mins each	20 mins each	20 mins each	
Per Cycle	26	6	4	5	5	6	9.48 hours
		6 mins each	1 hour each	15 mins each	20 mins each	20 mins each	

A11. The table illustrates that the average cumulative length of meetings per cycle is almost 9.5 hours. If a single Board was to be established, the table below shows how long Boards could last.

Board	No. of Reports	Admin	Determinations		Board Specific	Policy Related (All Boards)	Time
			Contentious (Hearings)	Non-Contentious			
Aberdeenshire	15	2	4	4	2	3	

		7.5 mins each	1 hour each	15 mins each	27 mins each	20 mins each	7.15 hours
Comparison Per Cycle							(2.33)

A.12 This figure factors in multipliers to ensure that additional length of papers is considered given that a single Board requires to consider information for all areas of Aberdeenshire rather one particular area. These figures err on the side of caution and it would not be anticipated that all Board meetings would be an all day meeting though they would almost certainly be longer than the current board meetings. However, strategically, there would still be a reduction per cycle of at least 2 hours spent at Licensing Board Meetings.

A13. Based on a meeting cycle of 6 meetings per year, a reduction to one Board could amount to resource savings per year of:

- Almost 14 hours, equivalent to almost 2 working days of time at Licensing Boards being released for use in other ways for members, officers and partners. 14 members would not need to prepare for, travel to, nor attend Boards which is a positive impact on already crowded schedules.
- Almost 3 working days (21.33 hours) hours of members time (as a whole) – based on the longest average meeting of 24 members attending a 4 hour meeting per cycle and 10 members attending a 7 hour meeting every cycle.
- Almost 100 hours of officer time (as a whole) including the time spent by administration staff in the preparation of agenda's could be focused more on processing applications to reduce waiting times for applicants.

A14. The time savings are significant for members and the additional time would be put to good use by officers in terms of dealing with service delivery and focusing on licensing applicants as well as progressing policy matters. It would also create additional capacity in respect of the officer's other duties.

Frequency of Meetings

A15. It is proposed that Board meetings continue to be every 8 weeks. Once the structure has been agreed by the Council, it would be up to any new Board to review their arrangements and it would be proposed that there is an opportunity to review the frequency of meetings when the Board determine their meeting dates for its second year of operation. There is the option for a Special Meeting if required, this is something that is currently an option, particularly for occasional licence hearings where the event is due to take place before the next scheduled meeting of the Board. This is one of the areas of focus for the consultation. Appendix 6 sets out the position across Scotland for information and comparison purposes. This shows that some other Boards have more cycles however most have less meetings overall.

Impact on Physical Resources

A.16 A move to one Licensing Board would mean, in practical terms, that there would also be a reduction in the number of rooms required, two per Board per cycle, which has an impact

on the general availability of resources for other purposes. There could also therefore be an impact in the reduction in the utilities required such as heat and electricity, with the corresponding impact on the Council's carbon footprint.

A.17 Furthermore, officers would anticipate that the establishment of a single board would also lead to a reduction in the use of paper. Having calculated the average length of the reports outlined above and also the average business conducted at meetings it is estimated that the average amount of paper used per cycle is:

Board	No. of Reports	Admin	Determinations		Board Specific	Policy Related (All Boards)	Paper
			Contentious (Hearings)	Non-Contentious			
North	9	2	1	2	2	2	130 pages
		7 pages (combined)	47 pages each	9 pages each	8 pages each	21 pages	
Central	10	2	2	2	2	2	177 pages
		7 pages (combined)	47 pages each	9 pages each	8 pages each	21 pages	
South	7	2	1	1	1	2	113 pages
		7 pages (combined)	47 pages each	9 pages each	8 pages each	21 pages	
Per Cycle							420 pages
Number of Copies Issued							27
Total Paper Usage							3780 pages

A18. It is estimated that reducing to one Board would lead to a reduction in the amount of paper that would be required per cycle.

Board	No. of Reports	Admin	Determinations		Board Specific	Policy Related (All Boards)	Time
			Contentious (Hearings)	Non-Contentious			
Aberdeenshire	15	2	4	4	2	3	318 pages
		11 pages (combined)	47 pages each	9 pages each	10 pages each	21 pages each	
Number of Copies Issued							11
Total Paper Usage							3498 pages
Comparison							(282)

Over the course of a year this would amount to 1,692 pages at an estimated cost of £152.28 which is a saving of 182kgCO₂e. Each agenda costs on average £3 to post. Currently the costs of postage per cycle is £72, and annually this increases to £423. Allowing for additional weight of longer agendas, the cost would decrease to £240 in postage for a single board.

Location of Meetings

A.19 It is considered that the location where a single board would meet is important. It must be easily accessible for those who would be invited to attend as well as members and officers. This is one of the areas of focus of the consultation. It is acknowledged that those attending the meetings, including applicants, consultees and members may have to travel a further

distance. Officers are investigating the potential for use of a “hub and spoke” model whereby applicants and their agents could go to a more local office for them to use a surface hub to enable them to join the meeting remotely to reduce travel time and costs. The outcome of these investigations and an analysis of the consultation will be brought to the Boards in February for consideration before comments will be taken to Council. It is inevitable that the distance to travel for a Board hearing may increase depending on the starting point and where a Board would be. It is difficult to quantify the impact of this on members, officers, partners and applicants until there is a clearer picture as to where one Board would meet. During the consultation process, officers will look for feedback on this point and prepare some calculations and some options as to this impact to feed back to the Boards in February. There may be other concerns raised during the consultation process which will be fully assessed as to the impact before returning to the Boards and to Council.

Licensing Forum

- A.20 The Act provides that the function of the forum is to keep under review the operation of the Act in the Forum’s area and also the exercise by the Boards of their decisions. The Forum can also make recommendations to the Board as necessary. The Act is silent on the mechanics of how this can be achieved however it is proposed that it would be more straightforward for the Forum to have oversight of the operation of the Act over the whole of Aberdeenshire enabling them a more strategic input. Arranging the statutory joint meeting between the Board and the Forum, and ensuring that this is quorate, could be more simplistic should there be one Board.

Licensing Policy Statement and Scheme of Delegation

- A.21 Until November 2018 the three Divisional Boards maintained separate statements of Licensing policy however these were combined, whilst still ensuring that local circumstances are catered for, into one document and this has been welcomed by both the licensed trade and our statutory partners. If a new structure was agreed by Council, the existing policy document could be adopted to ensure consistency until such time as a review is required, either by statute or due to local issues. Likewise, the current Scheme of Delegation, which is already approved by each divisional licensing board, could be adopted by a single Board.

Impact on Decision Making

- A.22 It is also important to note that the requirements of the Act is to provide a licensing service for the whole of Aberdeenshire. There is a benefit in consistency of approach to certain matters, particularly fees to ensure that all applicants are charged the same price for the same service across Aberdeenshire. It is appropriate that, at the moment, officers present information to the Divisional Boards on matters such as fees or on consultation responses however there is potential that all of the Boards come to different and contradictory decisions. In order to address this, officers have sought a delegation so that if there are contradictory decisions that officers can liaise with the convenor to make a final determination. Officers have often had to ask for extensions to consultations so that all Boards could be consulted before submission.

A23. There is a comparison to be made to the Local Review Body which deals with planning application reviews for the whole of Aberdeenshire. The Local Review Body reviewed its structure in 2015 and concluded that one Local Review Body was the most efficient and effective mechanism to deal with applications for all of Aberdeenshire. There is an opportunity to increase consistency of decision making in quasi-judicial matters across Aberdeenshire by reducing to one Board as all decisions affecting alcohol licensing will be dealt with by the same members.

Impact on Partners

A.24 It is important to recognise the impact of the structure of how alcohol licensing is dealt with on our partner organisations, such as Police Scotland and NHS Grampian. It is proposed that in addition to the public consultation, that direct approaches will be made to these bodies so that they can provide us with information about the impact of a review on how they operate.

Licensing Matters Event

A.25 There are no foreseeable impacts on the Licensing Matters Event from reducing to a single Board.

Option B – Retention of Three Board Structure

B1. Option B is to retain the three Divisional Licensing Board structure. Less detail is given in this option as this structure is well known to members.

B2. This option would mean that the Council would agree that Aberdeenshire is best served by Divisional Boards in the North, Central and South areas. Each would continue with 8 members, meaning 24 members involved in alcohol licensing across Aberdeenshire. The Boards would continue to meet within their areas on an 8 weekly cycle in accordance with dates agreed by the Boards.

B3. The review of the structure of the Boards in 2012 also involved a public consultation and reasons given for retaining a 3 Board structure at that time was that there was a perception of good local knowledge, the capacity to identify and address local issues and good working relationships with the trade. This was evidenced by the North Board initially instigating an annual meeting with the trade in the North area. The Central Board then initiated the Licensing Matters Event. This is an event that is open to all those interested in licensing across Aberdeenshire and is now in its third year.

B4. The three Board structure allows for those attending to attend locally. However this may not always be the case as agents can travel from the Central belt. The current locations in which the Boards meet are Peterhead, Inverurie and Stonehaven. Due to renovations in Stonehaven other locations have been used recently including Banchory and Portlethen. It is difficult to quantify the distances that must be travelled to get to the current Board locations given the geographic spread of Aberdeenshire and the differential starting points of those travelling.

Appendix 3B – Summary of Potential Impacts

Consideration	Current Structure (combined)	Single Board	Impact of Moving to One Board
<i>Membership</i>			
Number of Members	24	10 with at least one nominated from each Area	14 less members attending meetings with the corresponding time savings for those members.
Accreditation of Members	Cost £3,550 approx	£1,120 approx	Saving of £2,230 approx
Impact on Members and Officers			
Average number of reports presented for consideration over 3 years.	415	244	171 less reports to be considered.
Average report number presented per cycle	26	15	11 Reports less per cycle to be prepared and considered.
Average number of reports presented per Board per cycle	9	16	7 more items per agenda would lead to longer meetings however impact in less members being needed to attend.
Time spent attending Boards (average)	72 hours (3 hours on average per meeting per cycle x 24 members)	70 hours	2 hours of saving overall per cycle. Some members would be excused from memberships of Boards and have much more time free however others could have a longer meeting.
<i>Impact on Officers only</i>			
Preparation for Board Meetings including agenda preparation	360 hours per year	260 hours per year	These figures are based on admin officers requiring 5 hours per Board Meeting to prepare the agenda and time spent by solicitors on applications.
<i>Impact on Physical Resources</i>			
Rooms	6 rooms per cycle, 36 room bookings per year	2 rooms per cycle, 12 room bookings per year	More rooms available for use, impact on energy use by the Boards.
Paper	3780 pages per cycle	3498 pages per cycle	Saving of almost 1700 pieces of paper with an estimated cost of £152.28 with a saving of 182kgCO ₂ e.
Postage Costs	£423 p.a.	£240 p.a.	£183 of saving approximately

Appendix 4 – Questions for consideration by Board Members

1. Do you think that there are any positives about reducing the number of Boards to one?
2. Do you have any concerns about reducing the number of Boards to one?
3. What would be your views on the possibility of applicants attending and participating in Board meetings remotely?
4. If Council determine that there should be a single Board:-
 - a. Do you think that the location of the board should be fixed or should it rotate?
 - b. Do you think that any venue should be easily accessible by public transport? A location such as Woodhill House has the benefit of being on most bus routes, would this be helpful to those attending a meeting?
 - c. Do you have any suggestions as to where meetings of a single Board should be?
 - d. Do you think that meeting should be held in a different venue to any of the current Boards to encourage a new identity and neutrality?
5. Do you think that there should be representation on a new Board from all areas of Aberdeenshire? Do you think that this could be achieved by ensuring at least one member from each area in Aberdeenshire is elected to a single Board? Do you have any other suggestions as to how to ensure local member input?
6. How frequently should a single Board meet? Any Board is able to review its own timetable and venue for meetings.
7. How many members do you think a single Board should have bearing in mind the minimum is 5 and the maximum is 10?
8. How much time do you spend preparing for a Board meeting?
9. Can you see any resource benefits in relation to the option of moving to a single board that have not already been considered in formulating the options?
10. Can you see any resource benefits in remaining with 3 Boards?
11. Are there any other resource implications that you would like officers to consider?
12. Any other comments?

Appendix 5 – Proposed Public Survey through Survey Monkey

Consultation on Aberdeenshire’s Licensing Board Structure

This consultation should take between 10 and 15 minutes maximum to complete.

Aberdeenshire is currently divided into three Divisional Licensing Boards, South, Central and North. These boundaries are based on the old district council boundaries. Aberdeenshire is one of only 3 local authorities in Scotland who have more than 1 Licensing Board. Recently the three Divisional Licensing Boards agreed a joint policy statement which aligns policies, with local variation where appropriate, across Aberdeenshire. The Council also reviewed the Licensing Forum structure in 2018 and agreed to reduce from 3 localised forums to one to represent the whole of Aberdeenshire.

Consideration is being given to changing the existing arrangements so that instead of three Boards there would be one Board covering the whole of Aberdeenshire. Reducing to one Board would have a positive impact on resources including sustainability implications and use of paper. The purpose of this consultation is to obtain your views on what the impact of any reduction would mean to you.

We would really appreciate your views on the questions below.

1. Do you think that there are any positives about moving to a single board for the whole Aberdeenshire area?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Please provide a reason for your response.

2. Do you have any concerns about moving to a single board for the whole Aberdeenshire area?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Please provide a reason for your response.

3. Have you attended a Board meeting in the last three years?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. If so, which Board did you attend?
 - i. North
 - ii. Central
 - iii. South

4. In what capacity did you attend the meeting?
 - a. Applicant
 - b. Agent for Applicant
 - c. Objector
 - d. Consultee
 - e. Licensing Forum Member
 - f. Other

5. If it were possible to attend and participate in Board meetings via video link or similar remote means would you consider it instead of travelling to attend in person?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Comments

6. Is a venue close to public transport important to you?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Comments

7. Do you think that the Board location should be:-
 - a. Fixed
 - b. Rotating round different locations across Aberdeenshire
 - c. Comments

8. Do you have any suggestions for where meetings should be held that is accessible for all from across Aberdeenshire?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Comments

9. Do you think that Woodhill House, Aberdeen would be an appropriate location for a single Licensing Board for the whole of Aberdeenshire? This is where most of the Council's policy Committees meet and is a central point and is on public transport routes.
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Comments

10. Do you think that there should be representation on a new Board from all areas of Aberdeenshire?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Comments

Thank you for taking the time to respond to our survey.
Your feedback will be used to help shape the future of Licensing Boards in Aberdeenshire.

Appendix 6 - Comparison in other Areas in Scotland

Scottish Licensing Board Arrangements				
Authority	No. of Boards	No. of Members	Meeting Cycle (Approx)	Meeting Location
Aberdeenshire	3	8 in each	Each x 6 = 18	Fixed – Board Area
Aberdeen	1	9	8 weekly cycle	Fixed
Angus	1	10	9-13 meetings a year	Fixed
Argyll & Bute	1	10	5 meetings a year	Fixed
Clackmannanshire	1	9	12 meetings a year	Fixed
Comhairle	1	10	-	-
Dumfries & Galloway	4	5-6 in each	-	-
Dundee	1	10	-	Fixed
East Ayrshire	1	10	10 meetings a year	Fixed
East Dunbartonshire	1	-	7-9 meetings a year	Fixed
East Lothian	1	6	9-11 meetings a year	Fixed
East Renfrewshire	1	5	11 meetings a year	Fixed
Edinburgh	1	10	11 meetings a year	Fixed
Falkirk	1	8	11 meetings a year	Fixed
Fife	1	10	monthly	Fixed
Glasgow	1	8	monthly	Fixed
Highland	1	10	9 meetings a year	-
Inverclyde	1	8	4 meetings a year	Fixed
Midlothian	1	10	7-9 meetings a year	Fixed
Moray	1	9	8 weekly cycle	Fixed
North Ayrshire	1	10	5 meetings a year	Fixed
North Lanarkshire	1	10	-	Fixed
Orkney	1	8	-	Fixed
Perth & Kinross	1	10	9-11 meetings a year	Fixed
Renfrewshire	1	10	5 meetings a year	Fixed
Scottish Borders	1	9	12 meetings a year	Fixed
Shetland	1	8	9-12 meetings a year	Fixed
South Ayrshire	1	9	10 meetings a year	Fixed
South Lanarkshire	4	10 in each	Each x 4-5 = 16-20	Fixed – Board Area
Stirling	1	8	6 meetings a year	Fixed
West Dunbartonshire	1	8	11-12 meetings a year	Fixed
West Lothian	1	8	14-15 meetings a year	Fixed

