

ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL

SOUTH ABERDEENSHIRE LICENSING FORUM

COUNCIL CHAMBER, VIEWMOUNT, STONEHAVEN, 14th FEBRUARY, 2018

- Present:** Mr Alistair Black, Mr Chris Endersen, Mr Kenneth McGeough, Mr Alistair McKelvie (as a substitute for Cllr Argyle), Mr Michael Riley and Mr Keith Simpson.
- Officer:** Anna Ziarkowska (Assistant Committee Officer), Aberdeenshire Council

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from and Mr Peter Argyle.

2. MINUTE OF MEETING OF 27th SEPTEMBER, 2018

There was circulated and **approved** the Minute of Meeting of 27th September, 2018.

3. MATTERS ARISING

Mr Keith Simpson provided the update on the renewal process for personal licence holders after the initial 10 year period and the level of training that is required. Members were informed that training template is now in place and flowchart has been produced outlining the renewal process for the license holders. It was noted that LSO Team plan to prepare a training module and pull together a detailed guidance on how to go about the process which will be distributed among the license holders in due course.

Thereafter, Committee Officer went through the action sheet from the last meeting to provide an update on progress in respect of each point. There were no further matters arising.

Action 1: Committee Officer to circulate a flowchart on the PLH renewal process.

4. PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL LICENSING FORUM

There had been circulated a letter from East Ayrshire Council addressed to all Licensing Forums in Scotland advising on proposed establishment of a National Licensing Forum. The letter summarising comments and views received from 22 Licensing Forums (representing 18 local authorities mostly from the West of Scotland) wishing to participate in a National Forum. The proposed draft of constitution was attached to the letter indicating the Forum's objectives, terms of reference, funding sources and schedule of meetings.

Following on from discussion, Members considered the potential benefits and drawbacks of having centralised Licensing Forum at the national level. Members were concerned that new body would not be influential enough to bring about changes to the legislation or to provide meaningful discussion as its main objective was described merely as to provide a forum for members and officers to meeting on a regular and constructive basis to discuss common issues. It was observed that it would be of a great benefit to have Scottish-wide Licensing Forum, however, with the precise powers and significant role in the formation of licensing legislation.

After consideration, the Forum **agreed** to note information provided.

5. REVIEW OF LOCAL LICENSING FORUMS

There had been circulated a report on Review of Local Licensing Forums that was considered by the Aberdeenshire Council at its meeting 18th January, 2018. The report recommended to establish one new Licensing Forum for Aberdeenshire to take effect from 1st April, 2018 and to agree terms of the revised constitution for the new Aberdeenshire Licensing Forum. Members were advised that following consideration, Full Council agreed to replace the North, Central and South Divisional Licensing Forums with Single Licensing Forum for Aberdeenshire.

Committee Officer briefly explained the implications of the decision for the Forum Members and outlines the way forward. It was noted that the existing Forums will cease to have effect from 31st March, 2018 and that their meetings in February 2018 are likely to be the last meetings of the existing Licensing Forums. Committee Officers advised there is work in progress and Council Officers will concentrate on getting the new Forums up and running over the next two months. It was further noted that a new recruitment campaign would be launched shortly to ensure that there is a fair representation of Members from across Aberdeenshire on the new Forum. Members were informed that their membership will not automatically transfer to the new Forum and that each individual is welcomed to apply to become a member of a new body. It was agreed that details of recruitment process along with application form would be provided to Members via email.

After consideration, the Forum **agreed** to note information provided.

Action 2: Committee Officer to circulate 'Briefing note' explaining the decision along with application forms round Forum Members.

6. LICENSING BOARD UPDATE

During Mr Peter Argyle absence, Keith Simpson provided Members with the update on the review of licensing policy process. It was noted that feedback from online survey has been collected and that a draft of document will be produced by the end of April. It was further observed that formal consideration on revised draft will take place at the end of June when Board will engaged with the Licensing Trade. Members were advised that the continuous update on the licensing policy review will be provided to the New Forum.

After consideration, the Forum **agreed** to note the information provided.

7. LICENSING STANDARDS OFFICER UPDATE

Keith Simpson advised that there have been no issues around liquor licensing recently and most premises were operating well. It was observed that LSOs focused on educational aspect to provide help and support to license holders via online tools and software. It was further reported that LSOs successfully run their annual programme of inspection in partnership with the Police colleagues. Keith continued that Minimum Unit Pricing regulation will come into force on 1st May, 2018 and LSOs work closely with all licenced premises to provide support to make sure that pricing is correct. It was also noted that LSOs undertaken a role of Civil Licensing Standard Officer and tried to maintain a fair balance in dealing with a licensing workload.

After consideration, the Forum **agreed** to note the information provided in the update.

8. POLICE UPDATE

Mr Kenneth McGeough advised that Police Licensing Team is really busy with visiting licensed premises and working with Licensing Standards Officers in order to identify problems and take

preventive measures at early stage. He continued that Police Scotland delivered its presentation to all Aberdeenshire Licensing Boards as a part of consultation process for licensing policy review. It was reported that Licensing Matters Event in November, 2017 was really successful with a good attendance from Trade. Following a number of positive comments and feedback received, organisers plan to run a follow-up session in 2018. The work is in progress and stakeholders are now looking for external source of funding. Kenny also informed that similar event called 'Licensing Conference' is organised by Aberdeen City on 8th March, 2018 and everyone is welcome to attend upon prior registration. Members were advised that details of the event would be circulated via email.

During discussion, Members raised their concerns about the intoxication in licensed premises, rate of alcohol related violence in Aberdeenshire area and issue of duty of care and person's vulnerability.

After consideration, the Forum **agreed** to note the information provided in the update.

Action 3: Committee Officer to circulate 'Licensing Conference' flyer round Forum Members.

Action 4: Committee Officer to circulate a link to 'Who are you' video designed to raise awareness among the premise staff of 'bystander intervention' to minimise the risk of harm and increase awareness of a person's potential vulnerability.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair expressed his deep gratitude and appreciation to all Forum Members for their considerable efforts in keeping the Forum discussions interesting and simulative. He similarly thanked all Members on the Committee for their work and valuable input during the Forum operation over last 11 years.

The Chair further informed that he would not continue with his membership and he wished all the best to the New Single Licensing Forum.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Committee Officer advised that a date of the first meeting of the Single Aberdeenshire Licensing Forum has not been agreed as yet, but Members will be provided with all required details in due course.