

Item No 16 (b)

Paper to Licensing Board from Michael Baron

I was asked at the last meeting to draft a reply to the Board on the issue of organised pub crawls.

The Licensing Forum's recommendation:

"Organised Multi-Premises Events"

These were events mainly aimed at students that involved some sort of pre-arranged, or commercially organised, pub crawl followed by an event in a night club. It was noted that there was no reference to such events in Edinburgh's Licensing Policy. It was agreed that a statement indicating that such events were generally inappropriate should be included in Licensing Policy and that the Police and Licensing Standards Officers should be informed of such events in advance."

Extract from letter from Licensing Board:

"In relation to the final report on promotions and events, the Board merely noted the recommendations contained in paragraph 2.2 of the relevant report. These were discussed at length and whilst the Board has concerns over promotions encouraging excessive drinking, they are aware that there are significant difficulties in addressing the concerns expressed. In particular the Board have no power to require the organisers of events to notify police and LSOs. It is the Board itself which carries out this notification. The Board agreed that while there should be no specific reference in the statement of policy, licence holders should be advised of the Board and Forum's concerns and should be reminded of their individual responsibilities."

Suggested reply to Licensing Board:

The Forum was very disappointed with the response of the board on the issue of organised pub crawls that encourage excessive drinking. There seemed to be considerable support for this at the joint meeting and it is very disappointed that nothing will appear in policy. We suggested two issues that should be considered: to indicate in policy that such events were inappropriate and to suggest that licensees should let the police and LSO's know in advance.

It seems that the Board agree with the first point, however we do not understand why it was not formally added to policy. It seems to us that one of the purposes of having a policy is to advise licensees of the Board's position. We would not argue with the contention that the Board cannot demand that licensees inform authorities of these events, however we consider that this should be an area where licensees could be advised of the board's views.

In the light of these comments, we would ask the Board to reconsider its decisions.