

Licensing Forum
15 October 2014 10.00am
European Room City Chambers

Present: John Loudon (convener), Dennis Williams, Morag Leck (City of Edinburgh Council Principal Solicitor), Ken Fairgrieve, John Murphy, Dianne Bruce, Graeme Arnott, Tracey McLean (City of Edinburgh Council – Minute Taker), Isla Burton (City of Edinburgh Council - facilitator), Chris Wigglesworth, Norman Tinlin, Dennis Williams, James Nicholson, Rosaleen Harley, Len Havard, Peter Swanson, John Lee, Bridget Stevens, Nick Smith (Edinburgh Drugs and Alcohol Partnership), Marshall Bain, Honor Flynn, Sam Piacentini, Tasha Boardman, Len Havard

Apologies: Jim Sherval, Barry Robertson, Jim Wilkie, John Clark (resigned), Eddie Thorn (resigned), Alison Magill, Robin Morris, Ian Lovie

Agenda (out of sequence)

1. Apologies: Please see above

3. Minutes of last meeting (25 June 2014): The Chair asked if anyone had any amendment to make for the minutes of the last meeting – there were none. Minute approved

4. National Licensing Conference (Rosaleen Harley): Rosaleen attended on behalf of the Licensing Forum – she expressed that attendance is always worthwhile and that the following people gave interesting talks – James Nicholson, Crispin Agnew, Evelyn Gillon and Neil Renwick.

The Chair explained that the agenda was being taken out of sequence and asked if anyone had any questions? Norman Tinlin comments that the voice of community councils should not just be for licensing but should include other areas such as transport, and how could this be done. Chris Wigglesworth agrees that community councils need to feel they are being heard. The Chair says that at times it is difficult to get people to join community councils. Sam Piacentini asks if there would be the option of a legal representative being paid for by the Licensing Board to represent a community council. Norman Tinlin replies that this would not be possible as there was no funding but the question could be asked again and it could also include training. Chris Wigglesworth agrees it would be worthwhile asking again as funding is made available for other subjects.

5. Report on the link between outlet density and alcohol related deaths (Insp. Dianne Bruce) : Inspector Bruce gives information from her report and stated that she felt that the Board has previously not taken as much notice of her reports. Nick Smith gave information about a report and that Glasgow and Edinburgh University prepared figures for this. The Chair comments that when he looked at the report it seemed to be just for off sales? John Lee commented that the data is interesting but no causal link. Nick Smith replied there was a link but it is not to just one supplier. Inspector Bruce said that there are findings to take into account - poverty, crime etc, but each case requires evidence to back up each

argument. Chris Wigglesworth asked if there were a link to age? And reminded the Forum that there had been a link from smoking to cancer, and could the radius used be increased to 800m radius? The Chair stated that 800m radius never been used but more focus should be put on business and footfall of area e.g. to take into account the rubbish from takeaways – rubbish is not often outside the premises but further up the street. What is needed is to get the correct questions asked. Inspector Bruce states that the 250m radius does not help the police and does not match up with crime/anti-social reports as it's too narrow an area. Morag gave advice on over provision and the legislation. Norman Tinlin had information from a meeting he attended at Edinburgh Partnership and he would circulate the link for the details. The Chair said there should have been a meeting with David Rule from Economic and Development but that this meeting agenda was full. Isla will arrange for the Forum to meet and get information from this section for a later date.

Inspector Bruce talked about the findings on police reports and NHS report on pre-loading, and the difficulty is proving hard to evidence. John Lee asked how this can be stopped. Sam Piacentini stated that alcohol is too cheap. Dennis Williams asked how many premises in Edinburgh have lost their licence? Morag did not have figures but explains about the review system. Inspector Bruce gave information about how the police used to do test purchasing and how it has to be intelligence led – information from parents etc. Dennis Williams would like the information on how many premises have been suspended – Morag gave information on the process, the difficulties for Boards making decisions and their options. Chris Wigglesworth said that the evidence for alcohol issues is important as well as the volume of sales. Peter Swanson commented that alcohol is so cheap, advertising on television 3 cases for £20 etc. Nick Smith commented that there are lots of sales in the city centre and could this be one of the questions to David Rule and the importance of culture change? Inspector Bruce commented on seasonal variations and the impact on the city for crime and disorder – it is not the tourists causing disruption at 4am.

2. Andrew Mitchell (Community Safety Manager), Catherine Scanlin (Licensing Manager):-

Andrew Mitchell introduced himself and gave information on his role and some history on the section – in the past department was run by legal, two years ago there was a change and more focus put on customers. Staff support and service was in need of upgrade to be fit for purpose and new procedures put in place to support front line service. There have been discussions with staff about new roles, the matching process. There will be a group of staff responsible for customer enquiries from start to finish. ICT systems were not fit for purpose and now have a system for councils which records times and performance figures. ICT will be improving further and an online option will become an alternative. Service has been under pressure at various times of the year (June to August) and steps are being taken to even out throughout the year. Meetings have taken place with legal agents for customer feedback, customer research has been compiled and we now know what customers want – findings will be given to the Licensing Board and Committee and published. Police work has also been revised and the Board will be informed. The Chair commented that this seems to be a positive exercise. Andrew then commented that only Edinburgh has a six week last lodging and this time period may need to be extended. The Chair said that agents do get instruction at the last minute at times. John Murphy talked about community councils and local residents and how they are informed. Andrew replied that community councils

information may not be up to date. Norman Tinlin confirmed that community councils do get informed every month. Morag gave the legal advice on who must be informed, Catherine Scanlin gave the information that neighbour notifications had increased from a 4m radius to 10m radius to ensure all were informed and that more information was included on the web - type of premises etc is now included. Norman Tinlin said the new information was welcomed. John Murphy asked about occasional, being informed and not accepting late applications. Andrew informed that there will always be applications lodge late, but decisions would be made by Board. Chris Wigglesworth stated that the city is also customers, what about reviews, capacities and volumes. John Lee asked Andrew if Licensing Standards Officers are in his team and about the cost of a new system. Andrew replied that the LSOs are in his team and the cost of the new system is £60,000 for the whole of the licensing section. Andrew informed the Forum that the Scottish Government has an online system but that it does not cover licensing – only 10% of applications are lodged on line, but it is a basis to work on. Registers are on the web and all should be online by the end of the financial year. John Murphy confirms registers are online but could more information for all licences. Andrew states that the new system will give more detail and would have all the information - applicants etc. Isla gave information on the extent/space of the Councils web page. Norman Tinlin asked about minutes and decision list for the Board meetings. Isla explained they were on and will circulate the link. James Nicolson asked about any increase in fees? Andrew said that no increase will be in the near future, that some fees were set by the Scottish Government and that there were costs not met by the Board which are met by the Council. James Nicholson then asked about St Andrew Square and the toilet provision. Andrew replies that the services will make comment and conditions. Peter Swanson enquired if there will be a profit and loss report for the Board? The Chair stated that SBPA Had made FOIs for all of Scotland and in many cases it has not been possible to get costs for providing the system. Andrew gave the information that only Board expenses can go to Board costs, (not all were included 5 years ago) and this would be reviewed carefully before any increase figures are published.

The Chair asked if there was an Alcohol Framework Task Group, Andrew confirmed that there was. Norman Tinlin will provide a link for this. The Chair asks Forum members about having a joint meeting with Edinburgh Drugs and Alcohol Partnership (EDAP) – feedback from forum members was that this would be welcomed. Isla will arrange a meeting for November and will try to include a meeting with David Rule (Economic Development) and Nick Smith (EDAP).

6. Documents submitted to the Board (and any responses): The Chair goes through the list of questions provided and asks other Forum members if they will ask certain ones. It is agreed that certain members will ask specific questions.

7. Potential joint meeting with Edinburgh Alcohol and Drugs Partnership to discuss overprovision (Nick Smith): Isla will arrange the meeting, time, date and venue.

8. AOCB - none

9. DONM: Again Isla will arrange and circulate the agenda.

