

Licensing Forum
30 March 2015 10.00am
Dunedin Room - City Chambers

Present: Morag Leck, John Murphy, Dianne Bruce, Robin Morris, Tracey McLean, Isla Burton, Chris Wigglesworth, Sam Piacentini, Len Havard, John Loudon (Convenor), John Lee, Ken Fairgrieve, Graeme Arnott, Dennis Williams, Bridget Stevens, Mary Moriarty, Peter Swanson, Kerry Murray, Jim Serval, James Nicholson, Graeme Rigg, Greg Ward.

Apologies: Norman Tinlin, Alison Magill, Rosaleen Harley

Agenda

1. Apologies: Please see above

2. Minute of last meeting: The minutes from last meeting were agreed.

3. Greg Ward, Head of Economic Development: Greg Ward apologised for having had to cancel his attendance at the last Forum meeting, and explained that this was due to a last minute requirement to attend another meeting. Greg Ward gives information on the report submitted to the Forum in November 2014 – this report had been commissioned in 2010 about investment in the city – this is now 5 years old – the staff have moved on and the research has not been updated. Graeme Rigg gives information from the paper (this had been circulated to Forum members at the end of 2014 and Isla had put a link on the Forum web site).

Diane Bruce asked if the report included consideration of crime and disorder – G Rigg replied that it was included, but not to a great degree - the report is more about the economy.

G Ward states that it takes time to develop a cafe culture and that the best way to change is to make cheap alcohol more expensive. There is a culture of pre-loading, but he understands that in some areas young persons' intake of alcohol has reduced – cafes and alcohol would be encouraged but not having drunk people in the streets.

G Ward asked - now that the report is 5 years old would the Forum like this updated? Sam Piacentini asks G Ward if the Planning Department and Economic Development work together. G Ward replies that there is a role for each of the departments and both work with other departments. Economic Development has a duty to bring economy into the city and have a balance of need and quality. S Piacentini thinks that there should be a restriction on the number of supermarkets. J Murphy states that he was told that economic regeneration was the reason given by the licensing board to justify licences being granted in certain areas. G Ward replies that Economic Development are not always asked about licence applications, but would not support all individual applications. J Murphy asks if the Board should include Economic Development as a consultee – only to make comment not to make decisions. S Piacentini states that supermarkets are using cheap alcohol sales to get

customers into the stores. G Ward states that if suppliers of alcohol sell at the same price it could have an impact on crime & disorder and health etc, and makes the comparison on tobacco sales and the reduction of the number of smokers – making smoking less socially acceptable, and the change in the law on where smoking can be done.

Jim Sherval gives figures to the Board – he stated not always 100% accurate – he could stop attending the Board if there were less supermarkets and cheap alcohol. The Convenor asks if the figures from the NHS would be useful to the Economic Development Department and gives the information that for premises which sell alcohol their rates are calculated on the sales of alcohol. S Piacentini states that the visitors to the city are not big alcohol drinkers. D Williams states that big supermarkets have an impact on smaller businesses and local areas.

G Ward replies that for Economic Development quality is the key, e.g. shopping areas, and feels Economic Development would not be competent to comment on crime or public health, this was for the other Departments to comment on, but agrees that visitors to the city are a big market and here to see the sights, heritage etc not to buy cheap alcohol. There is no longer a research team, but would consult the Forum on decisions in the future. The Convenor states that there would be a merit in the Planning Department and the Licensing Board having an input. S Piacentini states that there are fewer residential people in the city but more student visitors, and that new builds seem to be for students or hotels. G Ward agrees that a multi strand approach and input from other Departments would be beneficial.

Chris Wigglesworth asks G Ward about over provision and about the change in the Act – G Ward says that this subject can be added to be looked at. John Lee asks what Economic Development think about the festivals in the city? G Ward replies that Economic Development is all about quality and tries to promote quality markets and festivals, not stag parties etc. S Piacentini feels that there is no connection between Planning and Economic Development and would like Economic Development to communicate with other sections of the Council to promote quality. G Ward agrees that a multi strand group would promote what is wanted in the city. C Wigglesworth states that other cities are more pro-active in Planning and we should be working together instead of separate Departments. G Ward agrees that in other cities it is the Council who decide what is wanted and what is not.

Jim Sherval states that more robust and proper policies have to be in place regarding the control of alcohol. Morag Leck states that the Council has policies and the Licensing Board has policies, but emphasises that the Board is a separate entity.

Dianne Bruce offers police figures to be included into the report. G Ward agrees that a multi-strand report will be looked into, with input from all relevant Council teams and other agencies. Isla Burton offered to be point of contact for the Forum regarding this work.

The Convenor thanked G Ward and G Rigg for attending.