

**THE FIFE COUNCIL - FIFE LICENSING FORUM – BLENDED MEETING**

**Committee Room 3, 5th Floor, Fife House, North Street, Glenrothes**

**22 May 2025**

**2.00 pm – 2.25 pm**

**ATTENDING:** Gregor Hannah (Convener – Premises/Personal Licence holder), Neil Ewing, Licensing Sergeant (Police Scotland), Clare Campbell (NHS Fife – Public Health Scientist), Morag Douglas (Premises Licence holder), Peter Reid (Fife Resident), Paul Smith (Premises/Personal Licence Holder), Gillian Dewar (Social Work, Fife Council), Douglas Hardaker (Lead Officer, Environmental Health, Public Protection), Rebecca Shovlin (Policy Officer, Health and Social Care Partnership) and Sarah Crawford (Resident/Chairperson, CAMRA – The Campaign for Real Ale).

**ALSO ATTENDING:** Diane Barnett, Committee Officer, Legal and Democratic Services, Fife Council.

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Councillor Tom Adams, (Convener, Fife Licensing Board), Izzy Corbin (Resident) and Jeff Ellis (Premises/Personal Licence Holder).

**74. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The Convener welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies for absence.

**75. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING – 20 FEBRUARY 2025**

The Forum considered the minute of meeting of 20 February 2025.

**Decision**

The Forum approved the minute.

**76. POLICE REPORT**

Neil Ewing, Licensing Sergeant provided a verbal update on Police activity since the last meeting of the Forum, including alcohol related youth disorder; underage sales of alcohol and vapes; noise issues arising from the increased use of beer gardens due to the recent good weather; and Best Bar None awards.

**Decision**

The Forum noted the update.

**77. LICENSING STANDARDS OFFICERS (LSO) UPDATE**

Douglas Hardaker (Lead Officer, Environmental Health – Public Protection) provided a verbal update on LSO activity since the last meeting of the Forum, including joint working with the Police in response to underage sales of alcohol and vapes; noise complaints relating to music being played outdoors in licensed premises' beer gardens – restrictions having been relaxed during COVID, not

included in a premise's license; and licenses being revoked for non-payment, though the number of non-payments had reduced.

**78. UPDATES FROM FIFE LICENSING BOARD**

The Forum considered the minute of meeting of the Fife Licensing Board of 21 April 2025.

**Decision**

The Forum noted the minute.

**79. ALCOHOL FOCUS SCOTLAND - EFOCUS NEWSLETTERS**

The Forum noted the eForcus newsletters which could be accessed directly through the Alcohol Focus Scotland website from the link provided on the agenda front cover - <https://www.alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk/>.

**80. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS**

The Forum considered the following:

- Alcohol Awareness week – this year's focus was 'workplaces'. Information to be issued (Rebecca Shovlin, Policy Officer, Health and Social Care Partnership);
- Difficult trading 'environment' due to changes to employer National Insurance contributions; living wage; increased business expenses, for example, insurance, rates (higher rates for hospitality businesses); reduced small business bonuses; and
- How hospitality businesses might influence the government in relation to rates reform, possibly by the lobbying of political parties with a view to relevant policy proposals being included in their manifestos for the upcoming Scottish Parliament elections next year.

**81. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Forum was scheduled for Thursday, 28 August at 2.00 pm in Committee Room 2, Fife House as a 'blended' meeting (attendees had the option to attend in person or remotely). It was also agreed that this date could, potentially, be used for the joint meeting of the Forum with the Fife Licensing Board if suitable.

The Forum considered potential items for the joint meeting, including:

- Rates reform; and
- Scottish Government's Population Health Framework, annual update (Clare Campbell, NHS Fife, Public Health).

There being no further business, the meeting came to a close.