

THE FIFE COUNCIL - FIFE LICENSING FORUM – REMOTE MEETING

9 June, 2022

2.00 p.m. – 3.20 p.m.

PRESENT: Jeff Ellis, John Barclay, Jim Bett, Clare Campbell, Izzy Corbin, Neil Ewing, Gregor Hannah, Douglas Hardaker, Stewart Ness, Fiona Rattray, Paul Smith and Jo Worrall.

ATTENDING: Rebecca Shovlin, Policy Officer, Health and Social Care; Neil Macdonald, Team Manager - Legal Services and Elizabeth Mair, Committee Officer, Legal & Democratic Services.

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Jeff Ellis welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly those attending for the first time.

2. CONVENER'S REPORT

The Forum considered a report by the Convener, giving an overview of the work of the Forum over the past two years and highlighting the issues caused by the Covid 19 pandemic.

John Barclay commented that the increase in domestic consumption due to the pandemic might cause issues for policing and that the increase in internet sales would be a matter for the Licensing Board. Paul Smith reported that the recent increases in prices and the cost of living was likely to have an additional impact on the licensed trade and the coming years would be difficult for licensees.

Decision

The Forum noted the report.

3. APPOINTMENT OF CONVENER

In accordance with the Constitution and following notification from Jeff Ellis of his intention to resign as Convener, nominations were sought for a Convener for the period to January, 2023.

Decision

The Forum unanimously agreed that John Barclay be appointed Convener and thanked Jeff Ellis for his work in chairing the Forum over the past years.

4. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS

Members were advised that David Henderson, Kirkcaldy West Community Council, had resigned and that Stuart Ness, Chair of the Community Council, was attending the meeting and had indicated his willingness to replace David on the Forum. In addition, two other persons had expressed an interest in joining the Forum, Jo Worrall from Twist Training, providers of various training courses, including for persons in the licensed trade, and Chris Dickson, General Manager of the Dean Park Hotel, Kirkcaldy. Jo was in attendance and introductions were made around the table for the benefit of all members.

Members/

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Members were also advised that Kimberley McIntosh, Police Scotland Youth Volunteer, had not attended a meeting for some years and had not responded to attempts to contact her.

Decision

The following members were reappointed to the Forum - John Barclay, Jim Bett, Clare Campbell, Izzy Corbin, Ian Davidson, Jeff Ellis, Gregor Hannah, Douglas Hardaker, Neil Ewing, Paul Smith, Fiona Rattray. Stuart Ness and Jo Worrall were appointed as new members. As there was still one vacancy it was noted that Chris Dickson could be appointed at the next meeting if he was able to attend.

5. **MINUTE**

The Forum considered the minute of meeting of the meeting of 25 November 2021.

Decision

The Forum agreed to approve the minute.

6. **LICENSING STANDARDS OFFICERS UPDATE**

Douglas Hardaker gave a brief update on the work of Licensing Standards Officers since the last meeting. He advised that there were some concerns regarding the on trade from smaller shops but most of the issues where the rules were being broken were around vaping products.

John Barclay reported that he had heard about shorter two hour licensing training courses being offered, rather than the four to six hours recommended by legislation, and expressed concern over the authenticity of these courses. Douglas advised that this was not in the remit of Licensing Standards. Jo Worrall advised that the Government set the minimum hours for courses and some providers offered a blended training where some of the course was carried out online. It was noted that the important thing was that any certification obtained was genuine.

Decision

The Forum noted the update given.

7. **POLICE REPORT**

Neil Ewing reported that business for the Police was almost back to normal after the disruption caused by the Covid 19 pandemic. A lot of licensed premises were now closed at the beginning of the week but the Police were working closely with the Licensing Standards Officers, visiting premises regularly, and he advised that premises serving food appeared to be doing better than those who did not. He also reported that evening visits were taking place as before but that High Streets were less busy than previously. With reference to earlier concerns expressed regarding domestic consumption, Neil advised that this only became a police matter if persons caused a public nuisance. He also advised of a national campaign called 'It'll Cost You', targeting persons purchasing alcohol for those under 18, following on from the previous 'You're asking for it' campaign.

Decision/

Decision

The Forum noted the update given.

8. MEETING DATES/DAYS CONFIRMATION

Elizabeth Mair advised that the next meeting of the Forum had been scheduled for 11 August and that a request had been made to consider the weekday meetings were held to ensure all members could attend. In response to a question regarding the format of future meetings, she advised that the Council was intending to facilitate blended meetings in future, where members could choose to attend in person or online. Members would be advised once the facilities were in place and procedures implemented.

Decision

Following discussion, the Forum agreed to hold the next meeting on 11 August as scheduled and noted the advice given regarding the format of meetings.

9. ALCOHOL FOCUS SCOTLAND - EFOCUS NEWSLETTERS

The Forum noted that eFocus newsletters could be accessed directly through the Alcohol Focus Scotland website and a link was provided.

10. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

(1) Cost of Living Issues

Jeff Ellis referred to the recent rises in the cost of living resulting in some persons having to 'eat or heat' and suggested that perhaps pubs could be opened outside usual hours to allow people to meet and stay warm. The point was raised that it might be seen to be encouraging the consumption of alcohol by arranging meetings in pubs but it was noted that drinks could be limited to tea, coffee and soft drinks.

(2) Alcohol Home Delivery Services

Gregor Hannah reported that he had seen an advert for an alcohol home delivery service advertised at a football match. Jo Worrall advised that she was aware of a number of companies providing this service and some were currently delivering through the night. It was noted that licensed premises, including takeaways, could deliver alcohol under their licence and that some were applying for extended hours.

Neil Ewing advised that extensions to off sales licences would not be permitted and that conditions for deliveries were included on licences. He also advised that the Bystander training made businesses aware of their responsibilities and extensions to 2.00 am came with a lot of additional responsibility for licencees.

It was noted that deliveries outside licensed hours were illegal and should be reported to the Police and it was important to raise awareness of the rules relating to the delivery of alcohol, particularly to private delivery drivers who might be under pressure to bend them. The current law was that latest orders should be by 10.00 pm and delivery must be by midnight.
