



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EAST LoTHIAN LOCAL LICENSING FORUM

**WEDNESDAY 5TH DECEMBER 2012
COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HOUSE, HADDINGTON**

Forum Members Present: Stuart Baxter
John Boyce
Dave Dickson (Chair)
Bill Duncan
Richard Foley
David Forrest
Rudi Fruzynski
Pat Hanson (Secretary)
Richard Ross

Council Officials Present: None

Visitors Present: George Hood (RASP)

Apologies: Bernard Harkins
Heather Bowsher
Simon Broadhurst
Jim Goodfellow

George Hood was welcomed to the meeting as a guest from RASP Pubwatch Scheme

1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5th SEPTEMBER 2012

The minutes of the Forum meeting held on 5th September 2012 were presented for approval. Rudi Fruzynski pointed out that these minutes, and other papers, had not been circulated 14 days prior to the meeting, as required by the new Constitution. The Secretary apologised and said that he would discuss and implement new deadlines with the appropriate Council staff.

Decision

The Forum agreed to approve the minutes as a correct record.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

- i Min 5(i) The Secretary said that he had not so far been able to find a suitable contact in the Rating Department with whom to pursue the issue of rating for 'open licence' premises

Decision

This action would be carried forward by the Chair and Secretary

- ii Min 3 John Boyce picked up on some of the issues arising from previous papers on alcohol-related hospital admissions in East Lothian. He said that he would like to re-present some of the data in map form and also explained further about the 'intermediate zones' used in the analysis.

Decision

John Boyce would be asked to re-present this material at a future Forum meeting.

3. ALCOHOL FOCUS SCOTLAND

- i Report on National Licensing Conference, September 2012 The Chair and Secretary introduced the paper which had been previously circulated. The Chair said that personally he was disappointed with the Conference, which had concentrated on the role of Licensing Boards and had had little to say about Local Licensing Forums. The Conference Chair, Lesley Riddoch, had also seemed too keen to pursue her own agenda. The Secretary highlighted the positive views about on-trade management given by a senior police officer from Strathclyde. The Chair also commented on discussions about the different views on 'overprovision' across Scotland. Members suggested that the input of local politicians was the cause of this. The paper was noted.

- ii 'The Cost of Alcohol in East Lothian' The Secretary explained that this report, and similar analyses for all the other Scottish UAs, had been launched at the September Conference referred to previously.

There was a wide-ranging discussion about the figures estimated in the paper. John Boyce said that he thought they were solid enough estimates and said that the relevant total costs of £26 million needed to be substantially reduced. Other members thought that domestic abuse lay at the root of the large 'crime' costs shown and queried the ready supply of cheap supermarket alcohol as an influence. Further discussion covered referrals to support organisations, trends in alcohol consumption

and alcohol consumption amongst young people. John Boyce stressed that health professionals were not prohibitionist but really wanted to see alcohol consumption levels decreasing. The report was noted.

iii eFocus October and November 2012 These Newsletters, additional copies of which were tabled, were noted. The Secretary said that he would check on email contacts with Alcohol Focus Scotland.

4. CHIEF CONSTABLE'S REPORT SEPTEMBER 2012

In the absence of any police representatives the Secretary introduced this report, which had been previously circulated. He drew attention to the number of test purchases made and the number of licences (pubs, clubs and off-sales) extant in total.

Members discussed the report and in particular their experiences on the ground with underage problems, Pubwatch exclusions, intervention policies, decisions on when to call the police to incidents etc.

Members also discussed Pubwatch scheme membership. Rudi Fruzynski drew attention to the free registration scheme for Pubwatches. Ricky Ross suggested that the Licensing Board should take cognisance of which establishments were not members of the appropriate schemes; overall, members were keen that the Licensing Board should recommend to all premises licence holders that they be active members of the local Pubwatch scheme where it existed. This should also be incorporated in the revised Statement of Licensing Policy (see next minute). The Chief Constable's report was noted.

Decision

Recommend to the Licensing board that the above encouragement to participate in Pubwatch schemes should be implemented and incorporated in policy.

5. FORTHCOMING REVIEW OF THE LICENSING BOARD'S STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY

Rudi Fruzynski reported that, in relation to the Forum's previous discussions, there had in fact been no meetings of the Board's Policy Group since the May 2012 elections, therefore the 'big issues' had not yet been discussed. Forum members confirmed that they were ready to make a substantial input to this review and looked forward to hearing details of the relevant timetable.

6. JOINT MEETING BETWEEN THE LICENSING FORUM AND THE LICENSING BOARD

The Secretary confirmed that he had spoken to Kirsty McNeill and that a date in mid to late January was being sought for this meeting. Rudi Fruzynski pointed out that Licensing Boards were to provide a statement on overprovision, which could be considered in their review and particularly in these joint discussions with the Forum. There was little guidance in the Act on this matter. The position was noted.

7. POLICE REPORT

A brief written report by Heather Bowsher was tabled and considered by members. Rudi Fruzynski said that about 5% of police incidents on licensed premises had also been attended by himself. The number of occasional licences issued was about on a par with previous years.

Test purchasing remained at a low level, with some difficulties being found in retaining and training a small group of young people. The report was noted.

8. LICENSING STANDARDS OFFICER'S REPORT

Rudi Fruzynski introduced his report and gave a summary of the licensing business dealt with at recent Licensing Board meetings. Further conversions to 'open licences' e.g. at Prestonpans Labour Club had been approved, together with seasonal licence variations including the general 2am extension which would be available from 14th December 2012 until 5th January 2013. There had been a small number of complaints about noise issues. Quick intervention was usually sought in such cases. The report was noted with thanks.

9. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

It was pointed out by the Secretary (on behalf of the Police representatives and Jim Goodfellow), and others, that Wednesdays were not the best evenings for meetings. Members agreed to switch to Tuesdays.

Decision

Subject to meeting room availability, the following Tuesday evening meetings should be arranged by the Secretary in conjunction with the Council for 2013: 5th March; 4th June; 3rd September; 3rd December.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Richard Foley circulated posters relating to a new MELDAP campaign highlighting parental influence on young people's drinking etc. Members discussed some of the related issues further.

Ricky Ross drew attention to the need for research into the relative proportions of on-sales and off-sales e.g. in the East Lothian area as potentially useful background information when looking at alcohol-related issues.

The Secretary said that he would report to the next meeting on the issue of obtaining Council support for further efforts to recruit Forum members e.g. through leaflets or advertising.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 2105 hours after the Chair had given seasonal good wishes to all members.