

Minute of Meeting Renfrewshire Licensing Forum.

Date	Time	Venue
Wednesday, 09 September 2020	14:00	Remotely via MS Teams,

Present

C Cardosi, C Dickson, M Dymond, S McLean, D Reid, I Robertson and E Smith.

Chair

M Dymond, Convener, presided.

In Attendance

D Campbell, Assistant Managing Solicitor (Licensing) and P Shiach, Committee Services Officer Renfrewshire Council (both Renfrewshire Council).

Apology

P Pieraccini.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest intimated prior to the commencement of the meeting.

1 Minute of Previous Meeting

There was submitted the Minute of the previous meeting of the Renfrewshire Licensing Forum held on 5 February 2020.

DECIDED: That the Minute be approved.

2 Matters Arising

It was noted that there were no matters arising from the previous Minute.

3 Licensing Standards Officer - Update

C Dickson, Licensing Standards Officer (LSO), provided an update in relation to licensing activity undertaken since February 2020.

He advised that visits had stopped on 16 March as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and that 34 compliance visits had been undertaken. There had been no revisits or enquiries.

The Forum was advised that an additional visit had been undertaken on 27 May 2020 following the issue of a Section 14 Failure to Comply notice in terms of a partial premises licence fee.

The LSO provided figures in terms of the number of premises currently licenced as under: -

On sales 101
On/off sales 196
Off sales 144
Total 441

The Licensing Standards Officer indicated that COVID-19 had been the biggest issue being dealt with prior to Phase 2 of the lockdown. Premises managers and agents had submitted requests to undertake deliveries, however these could only be undertaken if deliveries had been included previously in their operational (business) plans. Some premises managers were now considering including these in their operational plans however this would involve their having to submit major variation applications. He indicated that phase 2 of lockdown had also led to a significant rise in applications for occasional licences for external drinking areas at licensed premise, with car parks being converted into beer gardens.

The Licensing Standards Officer was then heard in answer to questions from Forum members on the content of the report.

DECIDED: That the update be noted.

4 Police Scotland Update

I Robertson, Police Scotland, provided a verbal update on local licensing issues which had arisen since the last meeting of the Forum on 5 February 2020.

He indicated that during lockdown officers from K-Division had worked closely with officers from the Council's Trading Standards services. He advised that following the Scottish Government decision to allow licensed premises to facilitate external drinking area at licensed premises, Police Scotland had been inundated with the relevant applications.

Sergeant Robertson advised that 331 inspections had been undertaken with 54 incidents relating to social distancing or anti-social behaviour. He indicated that the policy of Police Scotland at this time was to encourage compliance rather than enforcement.

Sergeant Robertson was then heard in answer to questions from Forum members on the content of the report.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

5 Alcohol Focus Scotland

(a) E Focus Newsletter – February 2020

There was submitted the Alcohol Focus Scotland newsletter for February 2020.

The newsletter provided information on evidence which demonstrated that alcohol advertisements led to youth drinking; the effect of alcohol duty on the poor; the global alcohol Policy Conference 2020; the cross-party group #scothealth2021; research; training; and events.

DECIDED: That the newsletter be noted.

(b) E Focus Newsletter – April 2020

The Clerk advised that the April 2020 would be circulated to members for information.

DECIDED: That the information be noted.

(c) E Focus Newsletter – August 2020

The Clerk advised that the April 2020 would be circulated to members for information.

DECIDED: That the information be noted.

6 Licensing of Additional Outdoor Drinking Area

There was submitted a report by the Clerk to the Licensing Board providing information in relation to licensing applications for new external drinking areas at licensed premises.

The report indicated that in the months leading up to 6th July 2020, licensed premises were unable to operate as a result of restrictions set out in the Health Protection (Coronavirus) (Restrictions) (Scotland) Regulations 2020. These restrictions were eased to allow outdoor drinking areas to operate with effect from that date, with the

rules being further eased to allow the operation of indoor areas from 15th July 2020. Both outdoor and indoor areas continue to be subject to strict social distancing and other health protection requirements. These restrictions are enforced by the Council's Environmental Health and Trading Standards teams, working with officers in Licensing and Police Scotland as required.

The report advised that in anticipation of the above relaxations to the rules, the Council's licensing officers engaged extensively with licence holders enquiring about obtaining occasional licences for external drinking areas (or additional areas). A standard response was developed advising of the regulatory processes licence holders were required to follow and a procedure was agreed with officers in the Roads team to simplify the process for applicants and avoid them having to submit separate applications for licences and road occupation permits. The Council's licensing team also widened the consultation on these applications and arrangements were made to refer contentious licence applications to Members of the Licensing Board. These arrangements were made to ensure a balance between the interests of the licensed trade and the interests of the local community, particularly neighbouring residents.

The report indicated that to date, a total of 24 licensed premises have obtained occasional licences for outdoor drinking areas, or additional such areas. These premises were located throughout Renfrewshire as follows:

- Paisley 11
- Johnstone 1
- Bishopton 3
- Erskine 3
- Houston 3
- Linwood 0
- Inchinnan 1
- Bridge of Weir 1
- Renfrew 1
- Total 24

The report advised that a further three premises had applications for occasional licences for new outdoor areas pending. These premises were in Paisley, Renfrew and Bishopton. A further 13 premises had made enquiries with the Licensing team in the period from July to date, but these enquiries had not yet resulted in a licence application. Recent trends, as monitored by teams across the Council, were that levels of interest and activity in establishing outdoor trading arrangements had now peaked.

The Assistant Managing Solicitor (Licensing) was then heard in answer to questions from the Forum on the content of the report.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

7 Proposed Future Meetings of the Forum

There was submitted a report by the Clerk relative to proposed arrangements for meetings of the Forum until May 2021.

The report advised that in terms of the Constitution approved at the meeting of the Forum held on 2 October 2007, there was a requirement for the Forum to meet no less than four times per year and for one of these meetings to be a joint meeting with Renfrewshire Licensing Board.

It has been the custom and practice that the Forum meet on a quarterly basis, with meetings being held during February or March, April or May, August or September and October or November.

The report proposed that meetings of the Forum be held on:-

Wednesday 18 November 2020
Wednesday 3 February 2021, and
Wednesday 26 May 2021.

DECIDED: That the proposed dates for future meetings until May 2021, as detailed in the report, be approved.