Appendix

Mini round tables – Exercise 1

Based on everything you have heard from the speakers this morning, what more can be done collectively to address issues/ concerns?

Comments from delegates:

- Widespread agreement that Forums appear to operate more effectively in city/ urban local authority areas compared to rural/ Island local authority areas.

- Need to consider the differences between rural and city settings. Suggestion that in some rural communities many people are automatically opposed to any new licensed premises opening near them.

- Concerns expressed about a lack of council resources to support Forums.

- The Licensing Board is only one of the partners at the (LLF) table. However acknowledge that Forums are currently struggling.

- Support for a National Forum for Conveners, including support for new conveners.

- Share good practice with Forums, for example, work plans.

- All Forums should have a broader remit to discuss a wider agenda of issues that are linked to licensing. For example, when large events are taking place in a local authority area, is the late night economy and public transport network prepared for the influx of people etc. Need to consider the implications of such events on stakeholders, as well as the local community.

- Should be greater support for Forums and lay persons, including training.

- Need for better engagement with stakeholders such as local community groups, and important to get them involved on Forums. More divers and wide ranging Forums are needed.

- Scottish Government should provide the lead on Forums, and issue Guidance.

- Is a financial incentive needed to increase/ encourage participation?

- There is a need for localised and good quality data to provide a good evidence base.

- Need to ensure that everyone is working collectively to get consensus, a real understanding of peoples drivers, and support people to participate.

- Need to encourage participation – change the conversations.

- New approaches required/ quality improvement refresh.

- There should be formal and recognised training and guidance available.

- Need for fresh funding and investment. Could any surplus licensing board funds be used to support the system? [In response to this suggestion it was stated that most boards run at a loss. In addition, Councils are the bodies that support Forums, not Boards.]

- Direction/ Guidance from the Scottish Government is required, i.e. how to structure and support Forums.

- Forums have an important job to do in influencing statements of licensing policy.

- A publicity campaign to increase awareness of Forums (national and Local) would be beneficial.

- A focussed agenda for Forums is needed.

- Administrative support from Councils was required, as is more funding.

- A budget is needed to allow for advertising of the Forum on platforms such as Facebook.

- Provide training for Forum members at the first Forum meeting. This may encourage participation if potential Forum Members know they are not required to undertake time consuming training ahead of joining the Forum. Needs to be more flexibility.

- The 2005 Act is complex legislation, therefore good quality training for Forum members is needed.

- Important to acknowledge that licensing is a ‘dry subject matter’, and complicated.

- Change Forum rules so that they are not so prescriptive. For example, remove the requirement for X amount of Forum meetings per year.

- Need to look at ways to ensure that there is a diverse range of people on Forums.

- There is a need to consider an effective Communications plan. For example, communicate locally what the Forum is and how to get involved. Use social media and the local council website to raise awareness of the Forum. Forums should look to network with local community councils.

- Need to review the constitution of Forums. How to ensure that young people are represented on Forums. For example, not all local authority areas have further education establishments.

Mini round tables – Exercise 2

Looking ahead and building on the back of today's session, what new/ innovative steps should be considered by the Scottish Government, Independent Licensing Boards, Local Licensing Forums and their members and licensing stakeholders' to generally strengthen Local Licensing Forums?

Comments from delegates:

- Time for a re-fresh/ re-launch/ re-boot of Forums.

- Forums should produce an Annual Report.

- Fresh resources, staff and budget required to strengthen Forums.

- Need for better advertising of Forums to generally increase awareness of them. This will also help to publicise their achievements.

- Need to consider ways to achieve a balanced approach. For example, how should Forums obtain the views of children. Should Forums go into primary schools to seek views of children?

- Need to look at ways to get more young people involved in Forums. Can programmes such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award be utilised?

- Forums should go into stakeholders communities to raise awareness and participation in Forums. For example, to ensure participation of disabled people and young people.

- Forums should go and talk to licence holders to geta better understanding of the job that they do.

- Petition various groups to get involved in Forums. i.e. Chambers of Commerce, Transport providers and local community groups.

- There needs to be a discussion within Forums about bringing mew members into group.

- For Forum membership ensure a balance and variety of professional and lived experience.

- Review the quorum of the forum, currently set at 50%.

- An accreditation system such as 'Best Bar None' should be utilised.

- Need to consider what Forum members get from being a member of a Forum.
- Look to engage with Licensing Boards about the discussion that has taken place at this event.
- Public health data can help to inform the evidence base.
- Scottish Government should look to provide clear guidance and support for Forums.
- There is a need to make the role of Forums more transparent.
- Support from Licensing Boards is required. For example, advertise the Board on council/ Board websites. Funding needs to be provided to the Forum.
- Potential for Forums to do self-assessment, similar to child poverty self-assessment to identify strengths and weaknesses and inform the workplan.
- Need to consider the remit of Forums. Funding and training support is required.
- A National Licensing Forum should be created.
- Forums need a sense of purpose, this will help improve their relationship with the Licensing Board.
- Need to improve communications around Forums.
- Need to offer more flexibility around Forum meeting schedules. What time of day and day of the week best suits Forum members.

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