Item 3

6th September 2022

LOCAL LICENSING FORUM'S MINUTES.

By video conference, 15th February 2022.

Local Licensing Forum.

Present: Donald MacLeod, Concert Promoters' Association (Chair); Andy Clark, Glasgow Clubwatch Group (Substitute for Brian Fulton); Councillor Stephen Dornan, Glasgow City Council; Lise Fisher, Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability, Glasgow City Council; Constable Gavin Frew, Police Scotland (Substitute for Inspector Gareth Griffiths); Billy Gold, Scottish Licensed Trade Association; Luke McGarty, Scottish Grocers' Federation (Substitute for Pete Cheema); Eilidh McGuire, Licensing lawyer representative (Substitute for Jack Cummins); Brian McNelis, Greater Glasgow Hotels' Association; Lionel Most, Community Resident - North West Area; Matthew Reilly, Glasgow Pub Watch Groups; Graeme Ross, Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability, Glasgow City Council; and Gail Sheridan, Community Resident – South Area.

Apologies: Pete Cheema, Scottish Grocers' Federation; Emilia Crighton, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde; Jack Cummins, Licensing lawyer representative; Brian Fulton, Glasgow Clubwatch Group; Inspector Gareth Griffiths, Police Scotland; and Stuart Patrick, Glasgow Chamber of Commerce.

Attending: G McDermid (Clerk); I Miller, Legal Advisor to the Forum; M Millar, Clerk to the City of Glasgow Licensing Board; H Welsh and G Smith, Chief Executive's Department, Glasgow City Council; and P Stewart, Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability, Glasgow City Council.

Chair.

1 Iain Miller, Legal Advisor to the Forum, assumed the Chair and called the meeting to order.

Appointment of Convener approved.

2 Iain Miller, Legal Advisor to the Forum, reported on the procedure for the appointment of the Convener of the Local Licensing Forum.

After consideration, the Forum appointed Donald MacLeod as Convener.

Vacation of Chair.

3 Iain Miller, Legal Advisor to the Forum, vacated the chair, which was taken by Donald MacLeod.

Minutes of previous meeting approved.

4 The minutes of the previous meeting of 7th December 2021 were submitted and approved.

Variation in order of business.

5 In terms of Standing Order No 6, the Forum agreed to vary the order of business as hereinafter minuted.

Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 – Request for feedback from representatives of licensed trade following the lifting of additional COVID-19 restrictions – Various comments noted.

6 There was submitted a report by the Clerk to the City of Glasgow Licensing Board requesting views and comments regarding the current trading conditions and the forecast for the city's licensed trade following the lifting of additional COVID-19 restrictions at the end of January 2022, advising that

(1) throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the City of Glasgow Licensing Board had been keen to engage with and support the city's licensed trade in response to the restrictions placed on the operation of the hospitality sector;

(2) the Board recognised that the licensed trade had faced a difficult trading period over recent months as a result of the additional restrictions introduced in response to the sharp rise in COVID-19 cases due to the spread of the Omicron variant; and

(3) following the lifting of the restrictions at the end of January 2022, the Board was now keen to receive feedback as to the current trading position for the city's licensed trade and on the forecast for the months ahead, in order that it could consider any further support that could be provided from a regulatory perspective.

After consideration, the Forum noted

(a) the contents of the report; and

(b) the following views and comments by members regarding the matter:-

(i) it was pointed out that there was a need to build customer confidence and that some form of message was required at a national level to highlight that it was safe to return to licensed premises;

(ii) there was a general discussion regarding the need for improvements to public transportation to support the night time economy generally and a shortage of taxis and private hire cars was highlighted;

(iii) reference was made to the adverse impact on city centre convenience stores and it was highlighted that the Scottish Government Economy and Fair Work Committee would be undertaking an inquiry into the future of town centres and the impact of a changing retail sector;

(iv) reference was also made to the fact that there had been a significant turnover of staff during the period of the pandemic with experienced staff lost to the trade and that there was now a requirement to undertake appropriate training of new staff going forward;

(v) it was suggested that the Council should look to encourage more residential developments within the city centre to support local businesses and it was highlighted that the draft National Planning Framework 4 was currently out for public consultation with views and comments sought by 31st March 2022;

(vi) concern was expressed regarding the number of occasional licences for 'pop up' bars in the city that had been granted and members commented positively on the recent correspondence circulated from the Minister of Community Safety which highlighted that he was minded to bring forward regulations which would put in place "occasional licence limits" in terms of the number of occasional licences, or the number of days on which occasional licences had effect, in relation to the same applicant or premises in any 12 month period and that he had now asked his officials to consider the matter in more detail and seek input from appropriate stakeholders; and

(vii) there was a need for workers to return to offices in the city centre to support local businesses and it was also highlighted that recent increases in the cost of living would adversely impact on the trade as consumers would have less disposable income.

Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 - Update on licensing standards issues noted etc.

7 There was submitted a report by the Council's Executive Director of Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability providing an update on licensing standards issues in respect of the period from July to December 2021, advising

(1) of various licensing issues that had been dealt with by Licensing Standards Officers during the period, which included:-

(a) providing comment on various licensing applications as detailed in the report, with the majority of applications related to existing premises applying for the use of outside areas, off sales and the provision of delivery services and a small number of applications concerned with online sales and new on sales premises; and

(b) dealing with 243 enquiries and 132 complaints, with the majority of matters relating to COVID-19 requirements and issues in relation to outside drinking, which had been dealt with working in close conjunction with Police Scotland and other Council services;

(2) that a small number of complaints as referred to above, while at a minor level, were of a chronic nature and required ongoing dialogue between the various parties over a longer period; and

(3) that interest and stakeholder group activity remained low during the period, mainly due to competing demands on premises staff/management and home working, but that interest remained strong to continue dialogue between the various groups and agencies.

After consideration, the Forum noted

(i) the contents of the report; and

(ii) the following comments by members regarding its content:-

(A) a general discussion followed regarding reported incidents of alleged drink spiking and it was highlighted that these incidents were part of an ongoing Police Scotland CID investigation with no incidents having been confirmed as yet;

(B) with regard to drink spiking, it was pointed out that appropriate training would be delivered by Police Scotland for Best Bar None premises and would be entitled ‘Bystanders and Covers’ and that work would also be undertaken by the City Centre Team with appropriate Student Unions in the city in the run up to Freshers Week; and

(C) that matters such as drink spiking and the delivery of training could be discussed at future pub watch meetings.

Managing the evening economy towards a safer city centre – Update noted.

8 There was submitted and noted a report by the Council’s Executive Director of Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability providing an update on recent developments of Best Bar None Glasgow initiatives facilitated and supported by the Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability City Centre Team in respect of the period from July to December 2021, advising

(1) of the initiatives concerned, namely:-

(a) Best Bar None Glasgow Developments;

(b) City Nite Zones;

(c) Voluntary Sector Partners, including Glasgow Street Pastors' Association and Glasgow Street Aid; and

(d) Digital Radio Network;

(2) that work undertaken by Best Bar None Glasgow had been limited due to the COVID-19 situation but that all work had been supported by Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability staff and enhanced through a multi-agency approach; and

(3) that all activities provided additional value and assistance to the City Centre Policing Plan, which provided an overall approach to crime and safety in the city centre.

Membership of the Local Licensing Forum – Position noted etc.

9 There was submitted a report by the Council's Director of Legal and Administration regarding the membership of the Local Licensing Forum

(1) advising

(a) that it would be necessary for Glasgow City Council to re-establish this Forum and approve its membership following the local government elections on 5th May 2022;

(b) that in view of this, members who represented a body/organisation were invited to advise the Clerk to the Forum in writing by 31st March 2022 if their body/organisation still wished to be represented on the Forum and whether they or another person would be the representative; and

(c) that those members who were included in the membership as individuals, such as Councillors and Community Residents, would be subject to a different selection process; and

(2) attaching the current list of Forum members as an appendix to the report.

After consideration, the Forum noted the

(i) contents of the report; and

(ii) following expressions of interest for membership of the Forum as submitted at the meeting:-

Name	*Body/Organisation*
Billy Gold	Scottish Licensed Trade Association
Pete Cheema	Scottish Grocers' Federation
Donald MacLeod	Concert Promoters' Association
Brian McNelis	Greater Glasgow Hotels' Association
Brian Fulton	Glasgow Clubwatch Group
Matthew Reilly	Glasgow Pubwatch Groups
Chief Constable (represented by Inspector Gareth Griffiths)	Police Scotland
Jack Cummins	Licensing lawyer representative
Graeme Ross	Licensing Standards Officer, Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability, Glasgow City Council
Lise Fisher	City Centre Team, Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability, Glasgow City Council

Coronavirus (COVID-19) business support funding for hospitality sector – Update noted.

10 The Forum noted a verbal update by Graham Smith, Chief Executive's Department, Glasgow City Council, regarding work undertaken by the Council from the middle of December 2021 in administering the Scottish Government coronavirus (COVID-19) business support funding for the hospitality sector, advising of

(1) the following statistical information in relation to the various funds:-

Fund	*Number of applications*	*Number of businesses supported*	*Awarded*
Hospitality: December Business Support Top Up Fund	1,480	1,137	£5,562,700
Hospitality: January Business Support Top Up Fund	1,691	1,330	£2,151,800
Public House Table Service	354	269	£780,000

Restrictions Fund			
Nightclub Closure Fund	35	18	£640,000
Brewers Support Fund	12	8	£81,500
Taxi and Private Hire Driver Support Fund	3,347	3,035	£2,276,250
Total	**6,919**	**5,797**	**£11,492,250**; and

(2) ongoing work in relation to the appeal process for the Nightclub Closure Fund.