

Minute

Orkney Local Licensing Forum

Wednesday, 10 July 2024, 11:00.

Committee Room 1, Council Offices, School Place, Kirkwall.



Present

- Representative of Holders of Premises Licences and Personal Licences:
 - Malcolm Stout.
- Representatives of Persons Resident within the Forum's Area:
 - Angela Chambers.
 - Barry Cockerham.
 - Andy McGinn.
 - Bob Mackenzie.
- Representative of Young Persons:
 - Charlotte Foy.
- Representative of the Chief Constable of Police Scotland:
 - Inspector David Hall (via Microsoft Teams).
- Representative of Scottish Fire and Rescue Service:
 - Daniel (Danny) Gall, Station Commander.
- Representative of local Health Board:
 - Dr Louise Wilson (via Microsoft Teams).
- Representative of Persons having functions relating to Health, Education or Social Work:
 - Cameron McConnachie.

Clerk

- Hazel Flett, Service Manager (Governance), Orkney Islands Council.

In Attendance

- Orkney Islands Council:
 - Karen Bevilacqua, Service Manager (Legal Services).
 - Lillian Rendall, Legal Clerk.

Observing

- Orkney Islands Area Licensing Board:
 - Kristopher D Leask.

Apologies

- Representative of Holders of Premises Licences and Personal Licences:
 - Jean Tulloch.
- Licensing Standards Officer:
 - Nick Long.
- Representative of the Chief Constable of Police Scotland:
 - Chief Inspector Scott Robertson.
- Representative of Scottish Fire and Rescue Service:
 - David McGroarty, Group Commander.
- Representative of Persons having functions relating to Health, Education or Social Work:
 - Katie Spence.
- Orkney Islands Area Licensing Board (observing):
 - Duncan A Tullock.

Not Present

- Representative of Holders of Premises Licences and Personal Licences:
 - Kelly-Marie McGuigan.

Chair

- Andy McGinn, Convener.

1. Minute of Previous Meeting

There had been previously circulated the draft Minute of the Meeting of the Licensing Forum held on 17 April 2024, which was approved as a true record on the motion of Angela Chambers, seconded by Bob Mackenzie.

2. Matters Arising

2.1. Young People and Alcohol

The Convener gave a brief update on a meeting with pupils from Kirkwall Grammar School, where, along with the Licensing Standards Officer, they had posed three questions:

- How easy is it for people under 18 to get alcohol in Orkney?
- Parties?
- What are the effects of drinking alcohol on young people in Orkney?

Feedback from the pupils suggested that alcohol was more likely to be provided by parents, rather than being obtained from licensed premises. Parents supervised any parties and that no organised beach parties took place. The pupils also suggested that there was no effect on young people from drinking alcohol.

The Convener advised that a similar meeting would be arranged with students at UHI Orkney.

In response to a query from a member regarding the prevalence of drugs in Orkney, the Convener advised this had been discussed with the KGS pupils and it was noted that Kevin Moar, the drugs dog handler, regularly visited KGS and was “one of the family”. However, nothing could be done without any evidence or intelligence. Inspector David Hall advised of Crimestoppers where anyone could report matters anonymously, with plans to run a campaign highlighting the organisation shortly.

3. Orkney Islands Area Licensing Board

The Service Manager (Legal Services), Orkney Islands Council, advised there was nothing significant to report to the Forum, as all work was currently business as usual.

The Legal Clerk, Orkney Islands Council, advised that a number of personal licence holders had been reminded of the requirement to undergo refresher training by the end of August and thereafter provide evidence to the Licensing Authority by the end of November.

In response to a query from the Convener, the Legal Clerk confirmed that members of the Orkney Islands Area Licensing Board were required to undertake prescribed training before sitting on the Board. This was normally done following their appointment to the Board and lasted for their term of office.

4. Pubwatch

There was collective agreement that Pubwatch should be relaunched, given the benefits it brought to licensed premises. Inspector David Hall advised that, while Police Scotland could assist, they did not have the manpower to run the project as had been previously undertaken by Simon Hay.

Charlotte Foy echoed the call for Pubwatch to be reinstated as, currently, there were no repercussions for any patrons who were removed from licensed premises due to unacceptable behaviour.

Angela Chambers suggested that the scheme was there – it just needed the licensed premises to get it back up and running but acknowledged there had been a significant change in premises manager and staff since she was involved in the scheme.

It was agreed that the Convener and the Depute Convener should discuss with Senga Flett, Chair of Pubwatch, to ascertain what might be required in order to get Pubwatch up and running again.

Inspector David Hall was heartened to hear everyone voicing the same view. Staff needed to feel safe at work and currently there was no deterrent for customers who “kicked off”. He also agreed to contact the Convener to discuss a way forward.

5. Orkney Street Pastors

Barry Cockerham advised that, as five or six out of the 19 trained volunteers were currently unavailable, he was struggling to undertake patrols every weekend, with only two of five weekends covered in the previous month. For July, there would be no patrol in Kirkwall on the 27th as they would be in Stromness for Shopping Week. Activity remained much the same, with 50-60 bottles picked up every month, as well as glasses outside premises – the weather did not appear to affect this.

In response to a query from a member regarding additional bins, Barry Cockerham advised that the Street Pastors knew where they were located but no additional capacity had been provided, be that additional or larger bin(s).

6. Licensing Standards Officer

There had been previously circulated a report on the work of the Licensing Standards Officer during the period 1 April to 24 June 2024.

The Convener advised that he had met with the Licensing Standards Officer prior to the meeting and had anti-spiking stickers which he made available to members. These would also be handed out at the Scam Action Group stand at the County Show. In response to a query from a member, Inspector David Hall gave assurance that reports of drink spiking in Orkney were rare, and all such reports were investigated.

It was noted that no proactive inspections were being carried out and a member queried whether this should be done, given the known influx of visitors and workers for the Island Games and SSSEN's development in Finstown; the Forum should be ensuring that staff and premises were as safe as possible. The Convener advised that the service was currently short staffed and were prioritising other areas of work meantime. Inspector David Hall advised that he would investigate the possibility of their licensing officer, who was based in Inverness, coming to Orkney and visiting premises at a weekend.

The Service Manager (Legal Services) advised that a lot of discussion was currently ongoing with the organisers of the Island Games and it would be for an individual licensee to apply for any extensions to existing licensing hours and/or occasional licences, depending on the circumstances. Concern had already been expressed regarding adequately managing a large influx of people.

7. Public Health

There had been previously circulated the summary findings for the Orkney Islands Council area from the Scottish Schools Adolescent Lifestyle and Substances Use Survey (SALSUS) from 2018, as well as some statistical information on alcohol related hospital admissions for young people aged 11 to 25 years.

Dr Louise Wilson highlighted the fact that Orkney had the second highest number of alcohol related hospital admissions for young people aged 11 to 25 years, with only Shetland being higher, and this was a consistent trend. Colleagues in the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership were currently interrogating more up to date information, given that the SALSUS survey was now out of date.

Members discussed the statistics provided and commented that the admissions could be at the higher end of the age bracket, the only place to go in Orkney was the Balfour, whereas in other areas there could be other facilities, and one individual with several admissions could skew the figures. Dr Louise Wilson confirmed that the numbers related to hospital admissions, and not presenting at Accident and Emergency. Cameron McConnachie advised that the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership were undertaking a “deep dive” into the statistics and hoped to have further detail for the next meeting.

8. Police Scotland

Inspector David Hall gave a short update on Police Scotland activity since the last meeting, in that 159 inspections of licenced premises had been carried out in the period from 18 April to 9 July 2024, which was a decrease on the total number from the previous period due to other operational demands. Five incidents within licensed premises had been recorded. Police Scotland were currently in conversation with one premises regarding patrons outside after closing time and it was hoped this would be resolved to avoid moving to the next stage of intervention.

In response to a query from the Convener, Inspector David Hall confirmed that the Chief Constable’s annual report was currently with her for comment and would be issued in early August.

9. Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Danny Gall advised that the service continued to monitor trends to determine whether alcohol and/or drugs were contributing factors to any incidents attended by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. Danny Gall also advised that the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service could providing training, include CPR and use of defibrillators, to staff within licensed premises.

10. Any Other Competent Business

The Convener advised that he had been invited to attend the meeting of the Community Alcohol Partnership on 23 September 2024. As he was unable to attend the Depute Convener would attend, if possible, together with the Licensing Standards Officer.

11. Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting be held on Wednesday, 6 November 2024 at 14:00.

The annual joint meeting with the Orkney Islands Area Licensing Board would be held on the same date at 15:30.

12. Conclusion of Meeting

There being no further business, the Convener declared the meeting concluded at 12:00.