

**Strengthening the community voice
in alcohol licensing decisions
in Glasgow**

Final Report

Glasgow Centre for Population Health

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1 Introduction

Glasgow Centre for Population Health (GCPH), in partnership with Alcohol Focus Scotland (AFS), commissioned this research to determine the feasibility of strengthening the community voice in the alcohol licensing process in Glasgow City. The aim was to identify how best to strengthen the community voice in the alcohol licensing process in Glasgow in a robust and sustainable way and to identify lessons that could be applied to other areas across Scotland.

The study evolved in part from GCPH's response to an evaluation of the implementation of the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 which suggested that further support was required to address the licensing objective to protect and improve public health introduced by the Act (MacGregor et al, 2013). AFS has a wide research programme on alcohol issues, including licensing. Their recent publications include a detailed assessment of the use of licensing to protect public health (AFS, 2014a), a review of the 2013-16 Alcohol Licensing Policy Statements (AFS, 2014b) and a recent report that demonstrated a link between alcohol-related illness and death and the number of alcohol outlets in Scottish neighbourhoods (Richardson et al, 2014). The importance placed in Glasgow's Alcohol Licensing Statement on including communities in the licensing decision making process (City of Glasgow Licensing Board, 2013) was another factor which led to the commissioning of this study.

Background and context

Alcohol policy

The strategic approach to tackling alcohol misuse in Scotland was set out in Changing Scotland's Relationship with Alcohol: A Framework for Action (Scottish Government, 2009). The Framework outlined a range of proposals to address alcohol misuse by reducing consumption, supporting families and communities, promoting positive attitudes and choice, and improving treatment and support. It has been implemented alongside changes to the alcohol licensing process introduced in the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 which came into force in 2009, and new legislation set out in the Alcohol etc. (Scotland) Act (2010) and the Alcohol Minimum Pricing (Scotland) Act 2012. The strategy is based on a whole population approach that aims to reduce alcohol consumption and so reduce alcohol-related harm and improve the health and well-being of the Scottish population. NHS Health Scotland is leading a research programme monitoring and evaluating Scotland's alcohol strategy (MESAS).

The third MESAS Annual Report summarises relevant academic literature and reported that 'greater outlet density is associated with increased alcohol consumption and related harms, including medical harms, injury, crime, and violence' (NHS Health Scotland, 2013, p.21). The Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 aims to regulate the availability of alcohol as part of the overall approach to reduce alcohol consumption and related harm. However, the evaluation of the implementation of the Act noted there was limited evidence that areas with high levels of alcohol outlets were being targeted by Licensing Boards to attempt to limit the availability of alcohol, partly because it was perceived as difficult to define and measure overprovision.

Licensing legislation

The Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 makes provision for the regulation of the sale of alcohol and the regulation of licensed premises that sell alcohol. The Act specifies that the licensing system in Scotland is based on the following five objectives:

- Preventing Crime and Disorder

- Securing Public Safety
- Preventing Public Nuisance
- Protecting and Improving Public Health
- Protecting Children from Harm.

The Act sets out key aspects of the licensing process which include:

- Continuation of Local Licensing Boards, which predated the Act, responsible for decisions regarding new licences, variations to existing licences, and reviewing existing licences related to the on- and off- premises sale of alcohol. The Act stipulates that Board membership is drawn from elected members of the relevant local authority area although Licensing Boards are separate legal entities to councils.
- Every three years, Boards are required to publish a Licensing Policy Statement that promotes the five licensing objectives and provides guidance and clarity on the decision-making process in their area. These statements outline the Board's position on overprovision and identify specific localities where the granting of additional licences would create or add to the overprovision of alcohol. Boards are responsible for reviewing their Policy Statement and producing a supplementary statement if required.
- The Act also detailed that Local Licensing Forums were to be established in each area to review the operation of the local licensing system and advise the Board on relevant issues. The Forum must be consulted on the Board's Policy Statement. Forum membership is drawn from a wide range of interested parties including the licensed trade, community, health and police.
- Licensing Standards Officers (LSOs) were also introduced by the Act. LSOs have three main roles: 1) providing guidance on the licensing process, 2) mediating between interested parties on licensing issues, and 3) ensuring licence holders comply with the conditions of their licence which includes powers of entry and inspection. In terms of guidance, the Act is quite broad in its definition as it states that LSOs' general functions include 'providing to interested persons information and guidance concerning the operation of this Act in the area'. LSOs are members of the Licensing Forum and in most areas they attend Licensing Board meetings.
- Applications for a premises licence must be accompanied by operating and layout plans. The operating plan includes a description of the activities to be carried out on the premises including whether alcohol sales are for consumption on or off the premises, details of operating times, policy towards the entry of children, and the proposed capacity of the premises.

Of particular relevance to this research on the community's involvement in the alcohol licensing process, the Act set out the following notification process by which interested parties are made aware of applications for licensed premises and variations to existing licences (except minor variations):

Section 21 Notification of application

Where a Licensing Board receives a premises licence application, the Board must give notice of the application to -

- (a) each person having a notifiable interest in neighbouring land,
- (b) any community council within whose area the premises are situated,
- (c) the council within whose area the premises are situated (except where the council is the applicant),
- (d) the appropriate chief constable, and

(e) the enforcing authority within the meaning of section 61 of the Fire (Scotland) Act, 2005 (asp5) in respect of the premises

In respect of point (a) above a four metre radius was adopted to notify neighbouring premises. With regard to point (d) above Police Scotland has 21 days to provide a report to the Licensing Board detailing all reported incidents and all complaints of antisocial behaviour in the vicinity of the premises in the preceding year, as well as information on relevant convictions of the applicant or connected persons.

The Alcohol etc. (Scotland) Act 2010 (Commencement) Order 2011 also includes a note at Section 11(4) that consultation of health boards is commenced for all purposes in respect of premises licence applications received on or after 1 October 2011.

Also of particular relevance to this research, the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 set out the following procedure for objecting or making representation regarding a premises application or variation:

Section 22 Objection and representation

Where a premises licence application is made to a Licensing Board, any person may, by notice to the Licensing Board -

- (a) object to the application on any ground relevant to one of the grounds for refusal specified in section 23(5), or
- (b) make representations to the Board concerning the application, including, in particular, representations -
 - (i) in support of the application,
 - (ii) as to modifications which the person considers should be made to the operating plan accompanying the application, or
 - (iii) as to conditions which the person considers should be imposed.

Grounds for refusal are outlined in section 23(5) of the Act. They include refusal if the application is deemed by the Board to be inconsistent with one or more of the licensing objectives, that granting of the application would lead to overprovision of alcohol in the locality, and that the premises (including their location) is considered to be unsuitable. Boards are required to have regard to objections and representations in determining applications. A copy of all objections is passed to the applicant along with the name and address of the objector.

The Act also outlines procedures for the review of an alcohol licence. Reviews can be instigated by any person if they believe the conditions of approval have been breached or 'any other grounds relevant to one or more of the licensing objectives'. Licensing Boards can also instigate a review on their own initiative if they have reason to believe grounds for a review exist. Review Hearings are held by the Licensing Board and can lead to written warnings, or variations, suspension or revocation of the licence, or no action.

Alcohol Focus Scotland has produced an easy-to-follow guide to the licensing process which is available [online](#). It explains the role of Licensing Board, Licensing Forum, LSOs and other licensing stakeholders. The guide also provides an overview of formulating licensing policy and the day-to-day working of the Board.

The Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 followed a detailed review of the liquor licensing law in Scotland led by Sheriff Principal Gordon Nicholson. One of the overarching recommendations of the Nicolson Committee Review was to 'increase community involvement in the licensing

process' (Scottish Executive, 2003).

Licensing in Glasgow

Glasgow City Licensing Board consists of eight elected members of Glasgow City Council. The Board usually meets once a month at the Burgh Court in the City Chambers with meetings starting at 9.30. Agendas are typically made available to the public three working days prior to these meetings via the licensing pages of the City Council's website or in person at the Licensing section. Board members regularly visit a selection of premises applying for a licence to acquaint themselves with the layout, proposals and immediate surrounding area; the number of objections can be a factor in which premises Board members visit. Review meetings are held separately to applications in recognition of the time reviews can take.

The Glasgow Licensing Forum was established in June 2007 as an independent body from the Licensing Board. The membership comprises 20 individuals who are representatives of Police Scotland, community councils, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (NHS GG&C), elected members of the Council, licensing agents and trade representatives. It usually meets on a quarterly basis in a committee room in the City Chambers.

Glasgow's current Licensing Policy Statement was published in November 2013. The development of the Statement involved 'a comprehensive and wide ranging pre-consultation exercise to establish views on the content of its policies' (Glasgow Licensing Board, 2013, p.13). A summary of the process follows highlighting the community's input:

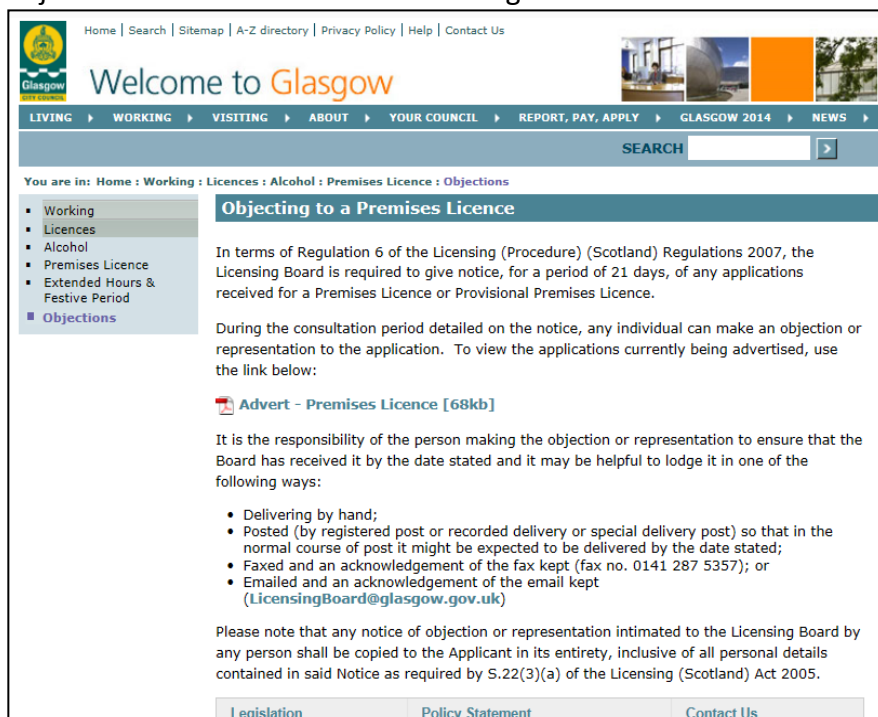
- A range of organisations including community councils, elected members, Police Scotland, Glasgow City Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (ADP), NHS GG&C, and AFS were invited to comment on a pre-consultation document.
- Two evidence sessions were held to enable contributors to the above process to address the Licensing Board about their views and allow the Board to 'test and examine any evidence in support of these views' (Ibid., p.14).
- The Licensing Forum submitted recommendations on overprovision following a request from the Board to establish a sub-group to consider the issue.
- A full day meeting of the Board to assess the evidence gathered.

The Statement identifies a number of policies which were taken into account in the development of the Statement. Glasgow's Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) is identified as a key reference. The SOA is a ten year plan for the city which identifies 'working with the people of Glasgow to create a healthier relationship with alcohol' as one of three key priorities for the city. This outcome is underpinned by a focus on two areas of activity: (1) reducing the accessibility of alcohol within local communities; and (2) reducing the acceptability of misusing alcohol. The SOA includes the following commitment to deliver this outcome: 'engaging and working with communities to identify and respond to alcohol-related problems at a neighbourhood level, including use of community led approaches' (Glasgow Community Planning Partnership, 2013, p.14). The Policy Statement includes an explicit link to the SOA outcomes by stating:

'the Board will work with all of the relevant agencies to play its part in assisting in the delivery of the following key outcomes:

- reducing the rate of alcohol related hospital admissions per 100,000 population
- reducing the proportion of residents exceeding the recommended weekly alcohol limit
- reducing alcohol related crime, violence and disorder'. (Ibid., p.16).

The Policy Statement includes a weblink to Guidance Notes covering various aspects of the licensing process including applying for a new licence, minor and non-minor variations, transferring a licence, and licensing fees. It also contains guidance on the process for making objections which contains the following information:



The screenshot shows the Glasgow City Council website. The main heading is "Welcome to Glasgow". The navigation menu includes: LIVING, WORKING, VISITING, ABOUT, YOUR COUNCIL, REPORT, PAY, APPLY, GLASGOW 2014, NEWS. The breadcrumb trail reads: Home : Working : Licences : Alcohol : Premises Licence : Objections. The page title is "Objecting to a Premises Licence".

Objecting to a Premises Licence

In terms of Regulation 6 of the Licensing (Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2007, the Licensing Board is required to give notice, for a period of 21 days, of any applications received for a Premises Licence or Provisional Premises Licence.

During the consultation period detailed on the notice, any individual can make an objection or representation to the application. To view the applications currently being advertised, use the link below:

[Advert - Premises Licence \[68kb\]](#)

It is the responsibility of the person making the objection or representation to ensure that the Board has received it by the date stated and it may be helpful to lodge it in one of the following ways:

- Delivering by hand;
- Posted (by registered post or recorded delivery or special delivery post) so that in the normal course of post it might be expected to be delivered by the date stated;
- Faxed and an acknowledgement of the fax kept (fax no. 0141 287 5357); or
- Emailed and an acknowledgement of the email kept (LicensingBoard@glasgow.gov.uk)

Please note that any notice of objection or representation intimated to the Licensing Board by any person shall be copied to the Applicant in its entirety, inclusive of all personal details contained in said Notice as required by S.22(3)(a) of the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005.

Navigation links at the bottom: [Legislation](#), [Policy Statement](#), [Contact Us](#)

The Statement sets out the Board’s position in accordance with the Licensing objectives, acknowledging that the position ‘does not override the right of any person to make representations on an individual application or to seek a Review of a licence where such provision has been made in the Act’ (Ibid., p.21).

In addition to approving or rejecting a licensing application, Boards can impose conditions upon a licence. These also present an opportunity for community influence, for example under the preventing public nuisance objective Glasgow’s Statement notes:

‘The Licensing Board remains sensitive to the impact of licensed premises on people who have to live and work in the vicinity of licensed premises. If the impact of licensed premises on the surrounding community is disproportionate and unreasonable, or has a marked effect on the amenity of the area to local people, the Licensing Board will take cognisance of such issues when exercising its licensing functions. In particular, the Licensing Board will attach such conditions as it considers necessary or expedient in order to prevent or control the potentially detrimental impact of licensed premises in relation to issues of public nuisance’. (Ibid., p.21/22).

Glasgow’s Licensing Policy Statement recognises the impact of alcohol on public health and acknowledges the Board’s role to consider this aspect when carrying out its licensing activity. However the legal framework dictates that there has to be a causal connection between a particular licensing application and a concern for the public health objective.

‘The disturbing impact of alcohol on the lives of the citizens of Glasgow cannot be ignored. The Board recognises that work must be done to establish a more responsible approach to alcohol consumption.....the Licensing Board also recognises that there is scope to assist the city in tackling its damaging relationship with alcohol through the

exercise of licensing powers, and in particular through the Licensing Objective of Protecting and Improving Public Health. However, in doing so, it has to be acknowledged and accepted by those agencies with a direct involvement in public health that the Licensing Board can only work within the legal powers it has been given under the Act and that all actions of the Board are open to legal challenge, whether through the appeals procedure set out in the Act or by way of Judicial Review'. (Ibid., p.25/26).

The Statement identifies eight areas of overprovision. Taking account of information on licensed premises and public health, the Board was 'satisfied that there is sufficient evidence to establish the required causal link between alcohol related harm and the number and capacity of licensed premises.....for the purposes of creating a pro-active presumption against the grant of further licences' in the following localities:

- Calton, Gallowgate and Bridgeton
- Carntyne West and Haghill
- Govan and Linthouse
- Ibrox
- Laurieston and Tradeston
- Parkhead West and Barrowfield
- Shettleston North
- Whiteinch.

In assessing applications and establishing the applicant's locality, the Statement identifies that the relevant locality will generally be determined as being the area within a radius of 200 metres in the City Centre and 500 metres elsewhere in the city. Although there is a presumption against granting licences in these localities, the Statement includes the caveat that 'the Board reserves the right to grant applications in these localities where it considers the Licensing Objectives would not be undermined by the application'.

The Statement also identifies four localities - Hillhead, Possilpark, Ruchill, and Shawlands - as 'areas of potential concern' which could be included in future overprovision assessments.

City of Glasgow Licensing Board has produced a [Guide for Applicants and Objectors](#). The Guide is available online and is sent to all objectors who are, as a matter of course, invited to Board meetings to present their case.

Licensing statistics in 2012-13

In total there were 1,745 licensed premises in Glasgow at the end of March 2013, consisting of 1,230 on and 515 off premises licences (Scottish Government, 2014). Across Scotland there were 16,237 licences, with Glasgow's total representing 11% of the total. City of Edinburgh had the second highest number of licences after Glasgow with a total of 1,725.

The same national data source shows that there were 391 premises licence applications across Scotland during 2012-13 including 56 in Glasgow (14%), of which 172 referred to off sales only, including 26 in Glasgow (15%).

Across Scotland in 2012-13, 332 applications were granted and 12 were refused – an approval rate of 97%. In Glasgow, 21 applications were approved and 6 were refused – an approval rate of 78%. In other words, the national data shows that during 2012-13 a greater proportion of licensed premises applications were refused in Glasgow (22%) than nationally (3%) to the extent that half of all refusals reported nationally were in Glasgow.

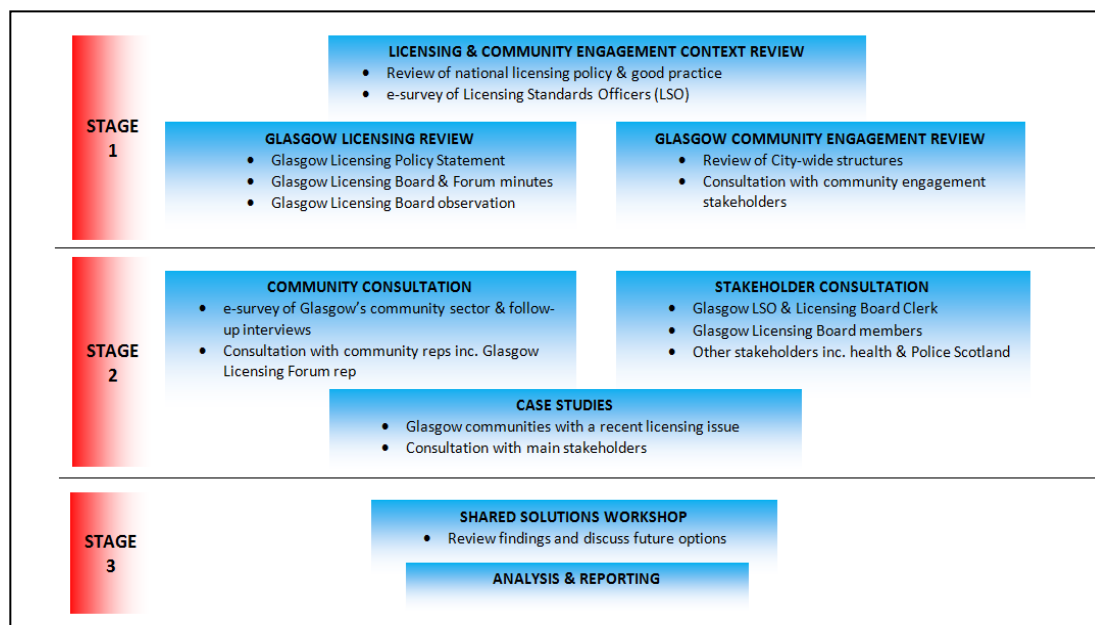
In addition, 19 licensed premises in Glasgow were subject to review during 2012-13 - approximately 1% of all licensed premises in the city. Across Scotland there were 428 reviews – approximately 3% of all licensed premises. Therefore, there were proportionately fewer reviews in Glasgow than across Scotland as a whole. In terms of outcomes, four of the reviews in Glasgow led to a written warning (21%), seven premises had variations imposed on their licence (37%), three had their licence suspended (16%) and five had their licence revoked (26%). Across Scotland 32% received a written warning, 10% had licence variations imposed, 19% had their licence suspended, 11% had their licence revoked and 28% led to no further action (Ibid.). While there were proportionately fewer reviews in Glasgow, they were more likely to lead to action including being revoking a licence.

Report Structure

- The study methods are summarised in Chapter 2.
- Chapter 3 presents the community's experiences of the licensing decision making process in Glasgow. It covers all aspects of the licensing process from the Policy Statement to the Licensing Forum. The experiences and views presented are primarily drawn from the community survey and consultation, with evidence from the stakeholder consultations, LSO survey and document review used to triangulate findings and compare the situation in Glasgow to other areas of Scotland.
- Chapter 4 contains case studies that present the varying experiences and views of four communities' involvement in Glasgow alcohol licensing process.
- Chapter 5 focuses on the key areas for further development in the involvement of the community in licensing decisions in Glasgow that emerged from the research. This chapter draws on evidence from all elements of the research
- Possible solutions to the areas for further development are discussed in Chapter 6. The solutions put forward are broad themes accompanied by examples of specific initiatives which could be implemented.
- The concluding chapter brings together the study findings.

2 Study methods

A comprehensive mixed-methods approach was adopted to meet the study requirements. This involved the following:



Licensing review

Key licensing documents were reviewed at the outset of the study to contextualise the research findings. This included a review of the Licensing Act (Scotland) 2005 and the evaluation of the implementation of, and compliance with, the objectives of the Act (MacGregor et al, 2013) undertaken as part of the MESAS programme of research. It also encompassed AFS licensing research including their papers on the licensing process (AFS, 2011 and 2012), an assessment of the use of licensing to protect public health (AFS, 2014a), and a review of Policy Statements (AFS, 2014b). Relevant documents pertaining to Glasgow were also reviewed including the Policy Statement 2013-16 (City of Glasgow Licensing Board, 2013) and output from the consultation process that informed the Statement. Online minutes of Glasgow's Licensing Board and Forum during 2014 were also reviewed.

Licensing Standards Officer survey

An e-survey of Licensing Standards Officers (LSO) across Scotland was organised with support from the National LSO Forum. The survey gathered information on existing forms of community involvement in alcohol licensing, examples of effective practice, and views on ways to support public participation in alcohol licensing decision-making processes.

An encouraging response rate of 45% was achieved (31 of the 68 LSOs took part), representing 21 of the 32 local authorities, including two responses from LSOs in Glasgow City. The majority of respondents (26) worked entirely on licensing matters although five combined their LSO duties with another role. Appendix 1 contains a full copy of the survey questions; the list of areas that participated in the survey is provided separately, in Appendix 2. The figures quoted in this report refer to the number of individual LSOs providing a specific response to a survey question. Not all

LSOs answered every question and the total number of respondents per question is therefore shown; 21 LSOs answered every question.

Licensing Board meeting observation

As part of the study we observed the May 2014 Glasgow City Licensing Board meeting. The purpose of this was to see first-hand how the Board meetings operate, in particular how the community input to the process.

Community engagement review

Community engagement in Glasgow was reviewed to ensure that options to strengthen the community voice in the licensing process took cognisance of existing structures. This involved a review of relevant Glasgow City Council and Glasgow Community Planning Partnership (CPP) documents and a in-depth interview with representatives from the City Council’s Community Council and CPP support teams.

Stakeholder interviews

In-depth interviews were undertaken with 26 stakeholders from a cross section of the organisations with an interest in licensing issues in Glasgow, as shown in the table below:

Stakeholder	Count
NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (NHS)	6
Glasgow City Licensing Board (LB) members, Licensing Clerk and Licensing Standards Officer	4
Police Scotland (PS)	2
Community Safety Glasgow (CSG)	2
Glasgow City ADP (ADP)	1
Glasgow City Council (GCC)	2
NHS Health Scotland	1
Glasgow Council on Alcohol (GCA)	1
Scottish Community Development Centre	1
Academic (University of Sunderland)	1
Licensing Forum	1

Community survey and consultation

A short survey was developed to gather the community’s views and experiences of alcohol issues and the licensing process in Glasgow. The survey was limited in length to five questions to encourage participation with respondents able to opt in to follow-up interviews. The questions covered the effect of alcohol misuse on communities, awareness regarding input to the licensing process, and experience of inputting to the licensing process including the methods used and their effectiveness -see Appendix 3 for a full copy of the survey questions.

The survey was primarily accessed via an electronic link although paper copies were available on request. Information about the survey was distributed to all community councils in Glasgow via the City Council’s Community Council Support Team. Articles in the newsletters of Glasgow’s Third Sector Forum and Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector, which included a web-link to the e-survey and contact details for a paper copy, also raised awareness of the survey. Members of the study steering group were encouraged to distribute information about the survey to their own networks. Over 300 hits were recorded on the e-survey website. Given these methods the

survey was not intended to provide a representative sample of community groups and organisations in Glasgow.

In total 44 responses were received to the survey from organisations across the city. Thirty community councils responded representing over one third (38%) of the 79 active community councils in operation in Glasgow.

Category	Details
30 community councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Baillieston ▪ Blackhill / Provanmill ▪ Blairdardie and Old Drumchapel ▪ Canal area ▪ Cathcart and District ▪ Dennistoun ▪ Drumchapel ▪ Dumbreck ▪ Garnethill ▪ Garscadden / Scotstounhill ▪ Hillhead ▪ Jordanhill ▪ Langside ▪ Linn ward ▪ Merchant City (2 responses) ▪ North Pollok ▪ Partick Community Council ▪ Pollokshaws / Eastwood ▪ Sandyhills ▪ Shettleston and Carmyle ▪ Springburn / Balornock ▪ Swinton ▪ Wellhouse and Queenslie ▪ 7 unspecified Community Councils
9 third sector organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Glasgow Council on Alcohol ▪ Milnbank Housing Association ▪ 6 unspecified third sector organisations
1 residents and tenants associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ RTO Federation
1 social enterprise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unspecified
1 community group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unspecified

In addition to the survey, 11 depth interviews were conducted with community representatives to allow for further exploration of the study themes – the discussion guide is provided as Appendix 4. Representatives from the following bodies took part:

- Blairdardie & Old Drumchapel Community Council
- Broomhill Community Council
- Cathcart & District Community Council
- Dowanhill, Hyndland and Kelvinside Community Council
- East Communities Addictions Forum (2 participants)
- Gartnethill Community Council
- Hillhead Community Council

- Pollockshaws/Eastwood Community Council
- Sandyhill Community Council
- Toryglen Community Council.

Case studies

Four case studies showcase the views and experiences of communities in Glasgow. They have been informed by interviews with representatives from the relevant Community Councils, identified via their input to the community survey and participation in stakeholder interviews. The four areas were chosen to provide a range of contrasting experiences with the alcohol licensing process in Glasgow.

Shared workshop

A shared solutions workshop took place in Glasgow at the Partick Burgh Halls in September 2014. It was attended by 30 invited representatives from a range of stakeholder groups, including: community councils, housing associations, Glasgow Council on Alcohol, Glasgow Licensing Board, Glasgow ADP, NHS GG&C and Police Scotland. The workshop was facilitated by Iconic and GCPH, with additional facilitation support provided by Alcohol Focus Scotland.

After a presentation of emerging findings, attendees worked together in groups to discuss and identify potential methods of increasing the community voice within the licensing process.



3 Views and experiences of licensing in Glasgow

This section presents community experiences of the licensing process in Glasgow. It draws on evidence from the community survey and follow-up discussions as well as consultations with other community representatives and stakeholders. Where possible, experiences in Glasgow are compared and contrasted to findings from other areas, drawing on responses to the LSO survey, stakeholder consultations and the document review.

Alcohol's impact on local communities

Community organisations taking part in the survey strongly identified that alcohol misuse affected their community. Most stated that alcohol had a 'significant impact' on their community (64%, n=28) and a further third (32%, n=14) felt it had 'some impact'; a minority (4%, n=2) stated it had 'no impact' or a 'minor impact'. Through follow up interviews, community representatives gave examples of the types of impacts, such as:

- anti-social behaviour and youth disorder including vandalism, fighting, urinating in the street and verbal abuse
- street drinking
- underage drinking
- noise including shouting and singing disrupting sleep
- litter.

Several community representatives discussed the above issues and spoke passionately about the impact of alcohol misuse on their local community. Their comments tended to focus on the direct impact on the community as opposed to the public health impacts. The following comments from community interviews demonstrate some of the real life experiences of alcohol misuse and its impact on the community:

'Shouting and swearing at two, three and four o'clock in the morning – it's frightening for elderly residents'.

'Fighting, urinating, vomiting and violence...in the afternoon'.

'Though the police have stopped a lot of street drinking there is still a core of youths who drink strong alcohol and commit anti-social behaviour whilst under the influence'.

Awareness of the licensing process

Responses to the community survey indicate that there was limited awareness of the scope for community members to participate in the alcohol licensing process - less than one in ten respondents agreed with the statement *'there is general awareness among the community that it was possible to participate in alcohol licensing decision making processes in this area'*. Over half (55%, n=23) strongly disagreed with the statement and a further third (29%, n=12) disagreed meaning that overall, more than eight out of ten respondents did not think there was general awareness among the community that it was possible to participate in alcohol licensing decision making processes.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
There is general awareness among the community that it is possible to participate in alcohol licensing decision making processes in this area	2%	7%	7%	29%	55%
Figures based on 42 responses to a survey of community organisations undertaken between May and July 2014.					

Comments made by community members in interviews added to the sense that there was limited awareness of the licensing process among the general public:

'No awareness of the processes in our area'.

'The public are unaware of alcohol licensing until it affects them personally'.

Almost half of the LSOs who responded to the question agreed with the statement *'there is general awareness among the community that it is possible to participate in alcohol licensing decision making process'* (43%, n=9 of 21 responses), just under a third (29%, n=6) disagreed and another third (29%, n=6) neither agreed nor disagreed. One of the LSOs in Glasgow responded and agreed with statement commenting that there was awareness among community councils and other organisations used to dealing with licensing and similar matters such as planning, but less awareness among individuals. This respondent highlighted how limited awareness can impact on the licensing process and expressed surprise that some licensing applications or variations in the City received no community objections despite relating to premises or neighbourhoods where the community had previously raised issues such as noise.

This perception of a lack of awareness about the ability to participate in the licensing process is repeated in other local authority areas; 13 of the 21 LSO survey respondents who answered the question reported that public awareness of the right to input to the licensing process was a barrier to engagement with 12 also stating that the level of interest among the community in licensing matters was a barrier.

Community views and experiences of participation in the licensing process

The findings set out above relate to the limited awareness among the general public. From the interviews with community council representatives there was greater awareness of the licensing process and their community groups' role within it, which typically stemmed from their previous involvement in the process.

'I would think it is only people who attend the Community Council meetings who are aware of this'.

'The community haven't a clue what goes on regarding licensing, that's why they come to community councils or elected members when they have an issue'.

'Training for community council members should be made available to allow awareness to be shared with the public or another channel of communication used to create public awareness'.

However, while levels of awareness were greater among community representatives there was a strong sense that their influence within the licensing process was limited as shown by the following comments made by community survey respondents:

'We feel our opinion is welcome but will never be actioned'.

'We are not aware of any mechanism whereby we can participate effectively'.

'I know no-one who thinks it does any good at all. There is widespread disillusionment with the effectiveness of participation. Rightly or wrongly, the community believes that what an applicant wants, the licensing board will grant, irrespective of local feeling, however valid and reasonable'.

'The local community and many local agencies including the police and housing objected to an alcohol licence renewal.....but it was a waste of time. Local opinion is not valued or acted upon in my opinion'.

These views are supported by one of the key findings from the community survey – 73% of respondents felt that existing channels to input to the licensing process were not effective. LSOs appear to support these views as 13 of the 21 LSOs who answered this question agreed that perceptions of the public’s ability to influence outcomes was a barrier to engagement in the licensing process. In contrast a number of stakeholders felt the community’s input did make a difference to the licensing process, particularly to Board decisions about premises licences.

Community experiences and views on the development of Glasgow’s Licensing Policy Statement

Some of the community representatives and stakeholders involved in the development of Glasgow’s Policy Statement in 2013 were also interviewed for this study. They highlighted the proactive approach taken by City of Glasgow Licensing Board in the development of their Statement which was summarised in Chapter 1.

Approximately six out of ten respondents to the community survey (n=24) had some experience of the Policy Statement development and consultation process.

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Response to policy statement development or consultations	26%	26%	10%	38%
Figures based on 39 responses to a survey of community organisations undertaken between May and July 2014.				

Some community representatives spoke positively of the Policy Statement consultation process during interviews– noting that they had taken part and were glad to be asked - but were unable to be specific about the impact of their input. In several cases references to the Policy Statement were linked to the criticisms of the overprovision element and this was a particular issue for the Community Council highlighted in case study 2, whose comments on overprovision were as follows:

'Previously there was an idea that an overprovision policy would be based on the location of alcohol outlets. In the run up [to development of the current Policy], all the premises were busting a gut to get their submissions in before the clamps came down – there was loads of [licence application] activity. Now it’s all been turned the other way – overprovision is now deemed to be in parts of the city where there are alcohol health problems – rather than linked to where it is being sold. Unfortunately Glasgow only appears to be able to hold one thought in its head at a time – these are the two ends of the same scale – why not let them both be covered'?

Stakeholders involved in developing the Licensing Policy Statement highlighted the steps taken to gather community views in the process such as public meetings, establishing working groups to review the policy development which incorporated community representatives, providing 'heat' maps linked to colour coded data so that statistics were clear and easy to understand, providing communication in alternative form to email and offering explanations of technical information in layperson's terms. Across interviews, stakeholders generally felt Glasgow was an example of good practice and stated that the Policy had been directly informed by responses gathered in the consultation process, although one stakeholder felt that community input to the process may be exaggerated and had limited impact. A number of stakeholders highlighted that proposals to extend closing times in the city centre were dropped due to the lack of support from consultees. One stakeholder felt the Policy Statement gave the community and other interested parties 'the teeth to object'.

AFS undertook a national review of policy statements, also reaching positive conclusions about Glasgow's performance in this regard, including:

- Glasgow having one of the policy statements which stood out for 'presenting the licensing policy in context, summarising the evidence and providing meaningful explanation for a policy approach'.
- 'Nearly all policy statements state they will have regard to other local strategies, but with the exception of Glasgow City, fail to demonstrate how'.
- 'Those boards that refer to the views of consultees include Glasgow'.

Analysis of the LSO survey responses showed that community participation in the preparation of Policy Statements in other areas was informed by a range of methods including:

- surveys were used in 6 of the 21 local authority areas covered
- public meetings were used in 6 of the 21 areas
- written representation by the community in 13 of the 21 areas
- representation of community views were presented by other bodies such as Alcohol Forum or ADP in 15 of the 21 areas.

LSOs were asked if they thought the community engagement had informed the content of the Policy Statement and the findings were revealing. LSOs from 11 areas were of the opinion that the Policy Statement had been informed by community engagement whereas LSOs from 8 areas disagreed and felt the Policy Statement had not been informed by the community engagement. Some of the LSOs who reported that the community engagement had not informed the Policy suggested this was mainly because there were no major issues raised by the community consultation. One LSO stated that the absence of overprovision localities in their Policy Statement was not based on research or a thorough examination of the evidence available which included a number of responses to their consultation process that had highlighted concerns about overprovision.

Community experiences on responding to licensing applications in Glasgow

A number of the community representatives in Glasgow consulted during this research had experience of responding to premises licensing applications. As the table below illustrates, one fifth of respondents to the community survey stated that they 'often' wrote letters to support or object to licensing applications (n=8), 13% stated they took this action 'sometimes' (n=5). Approximately 4 out of 10 respondents reported that they never wrote letters regarding licence applications or variations (n=15).

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Letters from the public (for example to support or object to new licences/amendments)	21%	13%	26%	39%
Figures based on 38 responses to a survey of community organisations undertaken between May and July 2014.				

Community council representatives highlighted a number of specific issues relating to how communities are notified of a new or changing alcohol licence application. A number of respondents felt the physical notices were insufficient, such that the public could easily be unaware of a licensing application in their community. Written neighbour notifications only related to premises within four metres of the applicant while the placement of notices on the premises are often poorly positioned and written in a format that did not grab the attention of passers-by. Although new application notices are available on-line respondents were concerned that some community representatives did not have internet access and/or the IT skills and confidence to find information on the licensing applications in this format. One community council representative made the following comment on this issue:

‘The Council’s website can be impenetrable sometimes so you’d need to be pretty well motivated to do something about it’.

A LSO from outwith Glasgow identified similar IT issues when they commented:

‘The web based system the council uses for advertising occasional licences makes it virtually impossible for anyone to know about the applications’.

Community councils as a mechanism to engage the community

Community councils are the only community-related statutory consultee for new or amended licence applications. Stakeholders identified a number of potential issues including the absence of community councils in some parts of the City. In Glasgow there is provision for 101 community councils across the City of which only 79 were active and 22 were inactive (as of October 2014 (Glasgow City Council, 2014)).

There were mixed views across the stakeholder and community representative interviews on the effectiveness of community councils as a mechanism for engagement. For example, while almost all of the community councillors that took part in depth interviews noted that alcohol licensing was a standing item on their agenda with every application considered by their council, it was frequently noted that is not taking place in areas where the community council is inactive.

Issues with reliance on community councils were raised by a number of community representatives during interviews, for example:

‘Glasgow City Council are poor at engaging with the community on any issue. They rely too heavily on the community councils as a rubber stamp, or objection base without engaging further’.

One tenants’ association interviewed for the research was frustrated by the existing process which they felt restrictive and suggested a possible means of strengthening the community voice as:

‘Recognising tenant associations as stakeholders....community councils are not the only key stakeholder’.

The 21-day limit to respond to new applications was frequently mentioned by community groups and wider stakeholders as a barrier to inputting to the licensing process. Respondents from community groups felt this limited the time available to respond and was particularly problematic for community councils as their schedule of meetings may shorten the time available to respond further, or mean that some applications are not discussed at all where they fall outwith the meeting schedule such as during the summer when many community councils do not meet. The timescale for responding to application was also identified as a barrier by 11 of the 21 LSOs who answered this question.

One interviewee from a community council raised a particular issue linked to boundaries and geographical limitations on objections. Their area is next to a large public space used for events such as music concerts, which are granted temporary alcohol licences. They believed they could not object to the licences because only the community council that contains the public park within its boundaries had the legal right to object, even though access to the park - via one of the main gates - was within the boundary of the community council consulted during this research. This Community Council was of the view that licensing policy should be changed so that ‘impacted communities’ had the right to object.

‘Our legal rights are limited. The only Community Council which could object to licensing of events in this Park does not currently exist’.

Some of the community representatives were concerned that the content of objections and the name and address of the objectors was shared with the applicant. There was a preference among many of these consultees for objections to be anonymised, a view supported by the LSO survey in which 18 of the 21 LSOs who answered this question stated that a ‘desire to remain anonymous’ acted as a barrier to engagement.

Overall, across both survey responses and interviews there were many more negative views and experiences among the community than positive ones about responding to licensing applications.

Community and broader stakeholder experiences of Glasgow’s Licensing Board

Attendance at Licensing Board meetings was variable among community survey respondents.

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
In person representation at licensing hearings	11%	21%	26%	42%
Figures based on 38 responses to a survey of community organisations undertaken between May and July 2014.				

Community representatives and some of the broader stakeholders with experience of attending Licensing Board meetings highlighted issues relating to the timing, the setting and the format of the meetings in Glasgow.

In terms of timing, a number of community representatives felt that holding meetings during the day made it difficult for working people to attend; some stakeholders also highlighted this issue. Community representatives pointed out that the length of the meetings, which start at 9.30 and can go on until 7 or 8 in the evening (usually on a Friday), are not conducive to the involvement of community members. They also expressed concerns about knowing when their case was going to be heard, how long the Board would be away for when they retired to discuss cases, as well as not having the time or desire to attend a meeting that lasted so long. Some also questioned whether such lengthy meetings could impact on Board members’ ‘freshness’ to

discuss cases.

The Board members consulted during this research stated that the Board would try to accommodate community representatives who had limited availability if their concerns were made known to the Clerk; if this is to be taken up by awareness would need to be raised among the community. One Licensing Board member also commented that if the issue was important enough 'people can put half a day, or a day aside, it's not impossible'.

Some interviewees from community councils stated that they did not find the setting of Glasgow's Licensing Board meetings - the Burgh Court - welcoming. Issues included finding the acoustics difficult given the size of the room and the layout with some contributors speaking to the Board while facing away from the public area. Other issues raised by community representatives during interviews included finding it intimidating to speak in public and specific anxieties about having to speak in front of the applicant.



The format of the Licensing Board meetings was also raised by a number of community representatives and other broader stakeholders. A key concern was the judicial feel to proceedings, which some interviewees described as surprising, characterised by the Clerk calling out "Court rise" as the Board Members enter and solicitors referring to the Board members as "Your Honours". Generally the central role taken by the applicant's solicitors was seen as adding greatly to the legal 'feel' of the meetings and some community interviewees pointed out the applicant's solicitor did the vast majority of the talking on behalf of the applicant who may not actually say anything. One Licensing Board member described the input of applicants' solicitors as 'not an equality of arms.....you can't get away from the fact that they are qualified, specialised and experienced in licensing law and appearing at Boards'. Another stakeholder with significant experience of Licensing Board meetings felt that cross-examination of objectors was creeping into hearings and strongly added to the legal feel.

Another concern about the format of the meeting, raised by a small number of community consultees, was the order in which speakers addressed the Board - objector first and then applicant – which some community representatives stated did not give them the opportunity to reply to the applicant's comments. Similarly, a small number of consultees also stated that the ruling whereby objectors can only speak to the content of their letter and not introduce new evidence was restrictive. The Board members consulted during this research acknowledged that this could constrain objectors but suggested it was necessary to avoid complications and interjection from the applicant's solicitor.

Community views about these issues included:

'A far more positive engagement is required with local communities. At the moment the Licensing Court is not a welcoming environment, and Glasgow City Council's Committee documents website is not an easy place for the public to access info about licensing decisions. The word obfuscation comes to mind...'

‘As a community council we have protested once against [supermarket] getting a licence and it was a daunting process for our member to be questioned by lawyers. Maybe community councils should have the services of Glasgow City Council lawyers to make it an even playing field’.

‘I would say that the attitude of the Licensing Board is crass and antediluvian¹, actually. Just generally they act like you’re being a nuisance and getting in the way of something us grown-ups are doing’.

‘We have tried to participate in the process. For a working person it’s almost impossible. Any, every, way to take part is time consuming and difficult.....it seems that the bureaucracy surrounding complaints deters most people’.

There was an acknowledgement from some community consultees that Licensing Board members do try to put objectors at ease and sometimes ask helpful questions that could, for example, allow them to reinforce a key part of their objection. The Board members consulted during this research confirmed that they do try to make the process as comfortable as possible for objectors and do take full account of their objections when making decisions about premises applications.

There was limited awareness among community consultees of Glasgow Licensing Board’s [Guide for Applicants and Objectors](#) which includes information about the Board meeting.

A number of broader stakeholders empathised with community representative’s views on the timing, setting and formality of the Licensing Board meetings. There was a strong view among some stakeholders that the Board meetings were not, generally speaking, ‘community friendly’ and could make it difficult for the community to contribute to the process. One health stakeholder suggested that the community’s experience of licensing was ‘probably enough to put them off for ever’.

The community’s experience of the Board meetings in Glasgow appears to be similar to that in some other local authority areas. Consultation on potential changes to the licensing process (Scottish Government, 2013) referred specifically to ‘bad practice’ with regard to Licensing Board meetings which included:

- excessive formality, and use of jargon, which is intimidating to those attending
- objectors not being able to lodge new material at a hearing, while applicants can
- lack of guidance to objectors on how they can be most effective
- allowing the legal agent at the hearing to routinely respond instead of the licence holder
- aggressive behaviour and intimidating those attending
- cross examination of objectors.

Broader stakeholders with experience of Licensing Board meetings in other areas stated that communities elsewhere faced similar issues although there are specific elements of Glasgow’s approach that add to the challenges in the City, such as the Burgh Court setting and the length of the meetings. While still respecting the quasi-judicial setting, Licensing Boards in some other local authorities appeared less formal and more community friendly – East Dunbartonshire, East Renfrewshire and Aberdeenshire were named as examples. One of these stakeholders stated that licensing solicitors had commented on how formal Glasgow’s Board was. Linked to the above, the majority of LSOs (18 of the 21 survey respondents who answered this question)

¹ Antediluvian meaning: “Of or belonging to the time before the Biblical Flood, or ridiculously old fashioned”.

identified the formality of the licensing process as a barrier to community involvement, although three LSOs did not feel the formality was detrimental to community engagement. One LSO commented:

'A common barrier to the community being successful in influencing the outcomes of licensing decisions is that most applicants are legally represented. Licensing Boards appear to place a significant imbalance of weight on anything said at a Board hearing by a solicitor on behalf of an applicant, when compared to an unrepresented member of the public. In this area some of the Councillors on the Licensing Board are so deeply embedded in the culture we are trying to change that it hampers due process. Members of the Board often place weight on the commercial benefit to the applicant or the area of granting a licence, often showing a complete disregard to the effect the licence may have on the wider community'.

The importance of the community attending Licensing Boards was shown as a number of community representatives – and other stakeholders – felt that appearing at the Board to present their case was perceived as the most effective means of participating in the process. These interviewees suggested it allowed the community to clarify their concerns and some of the stakeholders were also of the opinion that it demonstrated that community concerns were genuine and held strongly enough to attend. One respondent to the community survey stated:

'it is essential to appear in person to speak to an objection - otherwise it is ignored. Not many people are able to go to court to do so'.

Another community survey respondent agreed but also questioned why this should be the case commenting:

'appearing in person at hearings is the most effective - but surely it should be sufficient to be able to act effectively in writing'.

Interestingly an alternative view was presented on the most effective way of participating in the process with some community consultees suggesting engaging relevant bodies, for example local addiction recovery groups and other kinds of civic forums, such as tenants and resident associations or parent teacher councils, was the best way to effect change. They felt engaging with such bodies would provide a collective response that strengthened their position, enable them to draw on others' experiences of the licensing process and views as to what would be most effective, as well as being more likely to help them develop evidence that would be considered robust in any presentation to the licensing board.

The majority of LSOs (18 of the 22 who responded to this question) were of the view that appearing in person was the most effective of the available mechanisms of influencing the outcome of the licensing decision making process. Some of the LSO survey comments on this issue include:

'Someone presenting a cogent argument at a Board hearing has the most effect on the decisions made by Board members, particularly if they have liaised with LSOs'.

'Helps the licensing board come to their decision, as they can ask questions that are maybe not covered in a submission in writing'.

'If done well it can sway opinion of Board members at the last minute'.

'Persons who write in have their letters taken into consideration, but their attendance at Licensing Board is much more effective where they are invited to make a statement,

ask questions and provide more in depth comment of points under discussion’.

‘The Board seem to take much more heed of any individual who takes the time to attend the meetings where the final decision is made.

‘The Licensing Board appreciate a personal appearance at the Board meeting where they can hear first-hand information and make an informed judgement/decision by hearing all sides’.

‘When a person attends a board hearing to voice their objection this has added weight as opposed to a petition or copied letter’.

‘When backed up with an initial written request, the Licensing Board will listen carefully to all individuals who stand before them and describe the difficulties they are having with licensed premises, or in support of an application also. This can be difficult to convey in writing sometimes’.

The following example from the community survey relates to an issue with a licensed premises and demonstrates the experience of one community council and their engagement with the Licensing Board in Glasgow:

‘Despite members of the licensing board monitoring the situation there was a lot of denial initially that there was a problem and it was not until we provided evidence in the form of a video that we were eventually listened to. I think the Board should attend the Community Council on a regular basis to share views and concerns and to work together in improving the situation for residents’.

Experiences and views on Glasgow’s Licensing Forum

There was infrequent mention made of Glasgow’s Licensing Forum by consultees, both at the community and stakeholder level. Community members who were aware of it commented on the level of community representation:

‘the city licensing forum is a joke only two community reps for a city this size with the number of licences we have’.

‘we didn’t really trust the Board and the Forum to find anybody who would actually argue with them. So when the local elections took place in 2012 and the Forum was reconstituted thereafter we got some community council reps forced on the forum....we felt we’d done our job by making sure they were at least being elected through a democratic process onto the Forum’.

There were mixed views among Glasgow stakeholders regarding the city’s Forum. Some stakeholders felt it was struggling to find its purpose and although forum discussions and presentations were described as interesting, its overall impact was frequently questioned. One stakeholder described it as a ‘constructive talking shop’. There was a general perception among a number of stakeholders that trade representatives had a strong presence on Glasgow’s Forum. In contrast, half of the members on East Renfrewshire’s Forum are community representatives with four representatives of the licensing trade; in Glasgow three of the 20 members are community representatives.

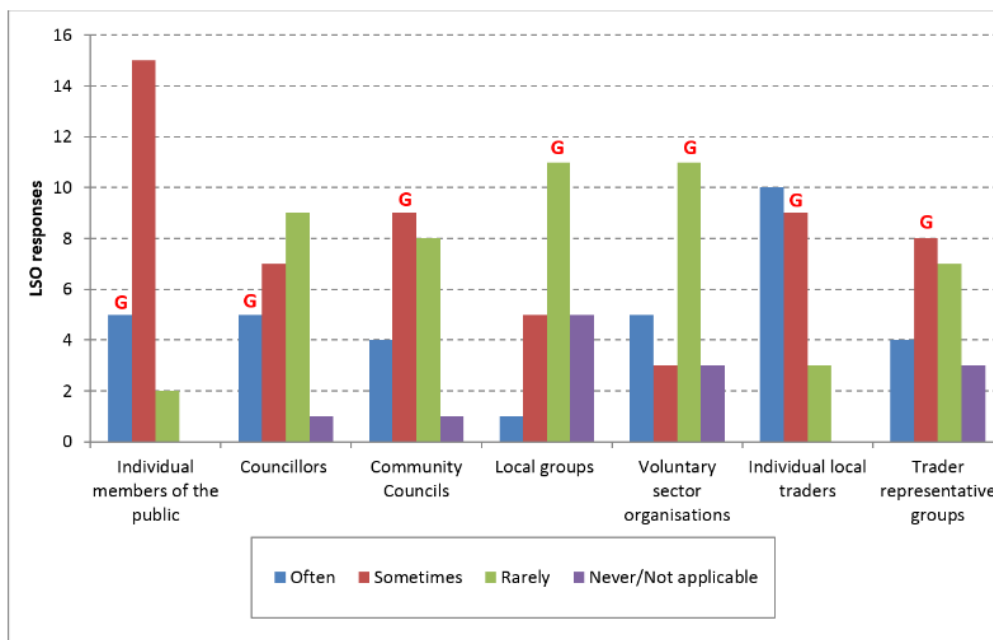
The evaluation of the Licensing Act reported mixed views on Forums with a number of interviewees describing them as having stalled or failed completely (MacGregor et al, 2013). There were also mixed views on Forums among LSOs. A small number of LSOs described the licensing forum(s) in their area as very active and examples were provided of forums making

important contributions such as to the formulation of the Board’s Policy Statement. On the other hand, some LSO felt the role of the forums was unclear with one stating it was ‘wandering aimlessly and no-one is entirely sure what they’re there for’; another stakeholder with experience of a number of forums described them as ‘toothless tigers that don’t hold Boards to account’.

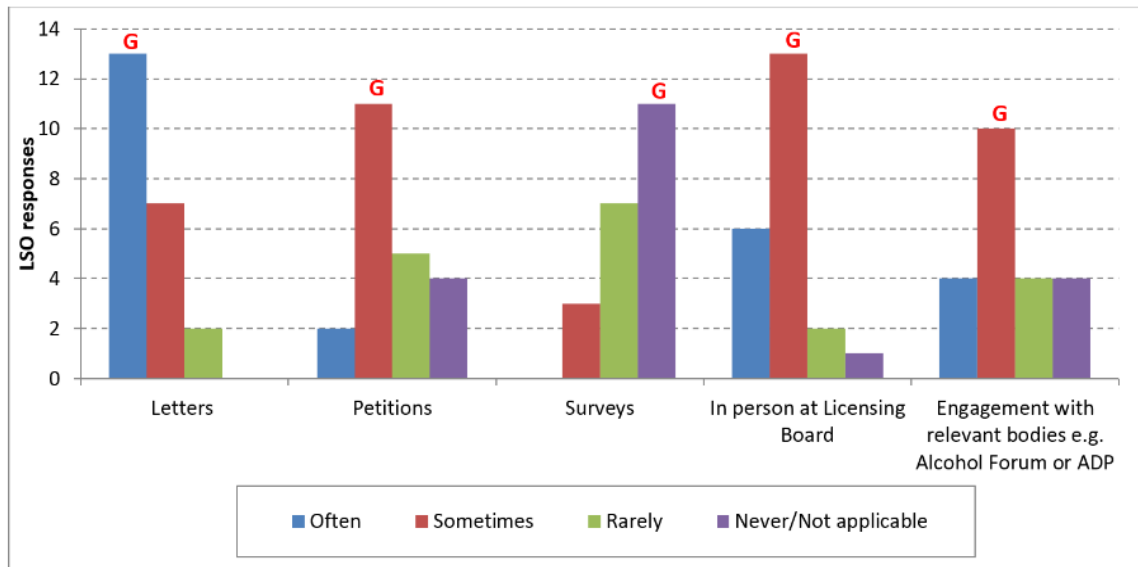
Overview of LSO views on community participation in the licensing process

The LSO survey allowed some comparison between community engagement with the alcohol licensing process in Glasgow and other areas. The following draws on responses from the LSOs survey.

The graph below illustrates how LSOs across Scotland perceive those who engage in the licensing process and how frequently they do so; Glasgow’s perceived position is marked with the letter ‘G’ in the graph. Each bar represents the number of LSOs who gave a particular response, for example 15 LSOs stated that individual members of the public “sometimes” engage in the licensing process in their area, and 5 LSOs (including Glasgow) reported that individual members of the public “often” engage in the licensing process in their area. Overall, the perception of engagement in Glasgow is quite positive in comparison to other areas. The Glasgow LSOs suggested that the following stakeholders engaged in the licensing process ‘often’: individual members of the public, and Councillors/elected members excluding their input as members of the Licensing Board; the following engaged ‘sometimes’: Community Councils, individual local traders, trader representative groups/associations; and the following engaged ‘rarely’: local groups such as community groups, tenants and residents associations, parent councils, and religious groups, and Voluntary sector organisations or charities such as the local Council on Alcohol, or charities representing.



The LSO survey also addressed the means of engaging in the licensing process which showed that letters were the most common means across Scotland including in Glasgow. As above, generally speaking Glasgow appears to compare favourably with other areas of Scotland, in the opinion of LSOs.



LSOs also highlighted their own role in providing relevant information to the community. In some areas LSOs were quite pro-active with a substantial amount of time taken up speaking to the community, for example in Argyll & Bute a number of community councils have a dedicated licensing representative who has have trained and are consulted by the LSOs on licensing matters and new applications in their area; this set-up was instigated by the LSO in response to the limited community voice in licensing. The Argyll & Bute LSO also reported that they ‘meet and greet’ objectors at the Licensing Board to help them feel at ease and answer any last minute questions. One of Glasgow’s LSOs highlighted that they have engaged specific community groups usually in response to invitations due to resource issues, but the majority of their time is spent processing licensing applications which involves liaison with applicants, and to a lesser extent objectors, and preparing information for Board meetings.

4 Case studies

The experiences of four Glasgow communities in the alcohol licensing process are explored in the form of case studies. Each case study showcases a different aspect of the process or different experiences and views of the process.

Case study one – a community council that believes their input into the licensing process is effective

Area profile

This community council area is a largely residential with above average life expectancy, owner occupation and qualification levels.

The Council's approach to alcohol licensing

There has been an active community council in place for at least 20 years, with a keen interest in alcohol licensing issues. Board members describe themselves as 'vigilant' with regard to alcohol licensing and generally they perceive the Community Council has a high prolife locally. When reflecting on their approach to alcohol and licensing, comments included "this used to be a dry area and now we have an abundance of pubs and licensed premises – we don't need any more", and "when they are from well-run premises – like the bowling club – we have not objected to them. We use discretion – if it's brand new and it's not needed, we take a look at it. If it's an extension from somewhere well run, with no problems, then we leave it".

The Community Council meets nine times a year. If a notification is received between meetings the Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer meet to start preparing material for an objection - so that when the full meeting takes place they are ready to implement whatever they agree to do.

Representing the community

Members make a point of trying to raise awareness of the Community Council's role and responsibilities and try to engage with and consult local residents. They encourage members of the community to view them as a conduit for reporting to the police on alcohol matters, if they require anonymity or do not want to be seen as interfering, for example if "a resident has seen a young person [under age] coming out of the shop with some alcohol".

Impact of alcohol on the local area

Community Council representatives suggested that people under the influence of alcohol can become a nuisance within their residential area, and highlighted underage drinking as an issue: "we have a couple of shops here and the kids are still managing to get the drinks...you can hear them at two, three and four in the morning shouting and swearing – that's quite frightening to elderly people who live alone". They also suggested that drinking has a resource implication for emergency services, noting that "alcohol makes it more difficult for the police to police the area".

Examples of activity to engage in alcohol licensing matters

The Community Council identified the following examples in which their efforts around alcohol licensing had been successful, in their view:

- Example 1: "There were new licensed premises planned for the area – a licensed grocers - and we managed to put in enough objections to stop it. We knew that the

individual had been seen selling drink from a van – so we put forward the argument that the person was unsuitable to hold a licence on that type of premises – and we won”!

- Example 2: “A fast food shop was going to be selling alcohol and we managed to get that turned down – they had to have a rethink and now they only sell food, not alcohol. We just felt there was sufficient alcohol availability in the area – lots of places you can go and buy a drink – we don’t need any more”.
- Example 3: “We don’t know how they [a local shop] are doing underage sales – we’ve had police on behalf of the Community Council go into the shop in the scheme here and they are confident the managers are not selling it to young folk - perhaps it’s one of the staff members who is selling when the manager is out”.
- Example 4: “One shop opened in the summer period, without our knowledge – but because the owner had told the Board he would not sell Buckfast they were quite happy with that. But I’m sorry, the kids today are drinking gin and vodka, not only Buckfast. Now it’s there and there have been problems that we report to the police”.

Suggested changes to strengthen the community voice in the licensing process:

The following suggestions were made to strengthen the community’s voice in the licensing process:

- Change the notification periods to prevent licence applications being processed when community councils are inoperative - “community councils stand down in July and August and some licences get through then”.
- Change the timescales for responding - “the timescale needs to be looked at as well. There’s no point in giving us four weeks if we need six or eight weeks”.
- Raise awareness of alcohol’s impact on communities - “resources are not a problem for our Community Council - we’re fine at the moment. What is missing in other areas – and it’s quite obvious - is that there’s no alcohol information or recovery presence in the community”.

Case study two – A community council that views existing mechanisms of engagement in licensing matters as ineffective

Area profile

This community council area comprises a mixture of residential and commercial uses. The area is relatively affluent with above average qualification levels as well as above average health indicators.

The Community Council’s approach to alcohol licensing

This Community Council view the area as having an extremely high density of on and off sales provision. Council members were described as being “pretty sophisticated” with a high level of confidence in getting involved in licensing issues and presenting to the Licensing Board. While the Community Council takes an active approach in responding to new applications, they do not feel their efforts make a significant difference and are unsure of the extent to which any restrictions or refusals have been brought about by their objections - “you never ever actually know whether it was you that achieved change”.

One Community Council representative described a perception that objections made on behalf of the community were linked to Community Councillors’ personal beliefs, which they felt were perceived as not being in keeping with the times - “it’s as though it’s a crime to suggest that you should restrict alcohol at all – like we’re puritanical. We all have a drink – most people have a

drink from time to time”.

Impact of alcohol on the local community

The area is largely residential and was described as having an “uncomfortable” relationship with alcohol due to the large number of bars, pubs and restaurants. “There’s definitely an impact on residents in terms of noise, people coming out of premises at night, the clearing away of bottles, glass collection”. The Community Council also highlighted a detrimental side effect of on sales (e.g. pubs, clubs and restaurants) - “noise and air pollution from the taxis that line up to take people away at the end of the night”. They feel there has been an overall increase in provision within the area, brought about by the cumulative effect of each premise increasing its capacity - “‘salami tactics’ – a little more here and there – it’s very hard to pin down anyone of them and there’s a management issue that nobody takes responsibility for”.

Challenges in engaging with the licensing process

Inequities in resources between those applying for and opposing licences were frequently mentioned - “this is mega money and mega power we’re dealing with – and it’s got out of control”. Acknowledging that the financial draw of alcohol sales is significant, one Community Council representative noted that “we only really have successful outlets here, who are competing in terms of getting clients in their doors – they are actually very good at fighting their corner”.

Difficulties in engaging with City of Glasgow Licensing Board were also highlighted, for example notifications being sent to the wrong address on occasion, and an impression that Licensing Board members had a negative “attitude” towards any objections from community councils.

Clarity of information was raised as a frustration - “if you look at the committee papers they are all wrong. Wrong dates, wrong minutes – in my view totally obfuscated and mixed up so that nobody can understand them. They have to sort out their procedures and behaviour because, at the end of the day, the ability to make much difference depends on it”.

The issue of monitoring developments at a local level was also discussed - “all sorts of sneaky tricks. Suddenly there’s a pub under a tenement, which wasn’t there before, and you can trace it back over years of creeping movements. It went from a bank to a hairdressers that served a little wine, then a café with wine, then the café turned into a restaurant, which turns into a pub. They are very clever in the way they word things, sneaky wording that you think means one thing but actually means another”.

Examples of activity to engage in alcohol licensing matters

The Community Council representatives struggled to think of many instances in which their efforts had resulted in change and were not able to quantify how many objections had been made. The suggested that any effects from their objections had been minimal - “minor modifications, that’s about it”. Community Councillors are also adopting other approaches, for example making complaints about existing premises, in order to influence the availability of alcohol sales:

- Example 1 – “A local sports club, started selling alcohol, then stopped, then their licence was modified – I think that was a result of what we did”.
- Example 2 – “we’ve discovered you’re more likely to get somewhere by making complaints once something is in action – it’s hard to complain about something before it’s happened”.

- Example 3 – “there’s a row of shops near the school – we want to know if they are going to cover their alcohol up because of the amount of young people in there at lunchtime, who go in there every day because they don’t have a playground. But there are so many complications in putting in objections! And lots to think about – the burden is on us to anticipate all these problems in advance – but we have no help at all”.

Suggested changes to strengthen the community voice in the licensing process

The following suggestions were made to strengthen the community’s voice in the licensing process:

- Improvements in how the Licensing Board engage with the community throughout the licensing process - “licensing has managed to be a law unto itself for so long, and it has been a separate thing – which they all play on - but now it really has been brought more within the Council’s work”.
- Professional support for community representatives within the licensing process - “it would be good if one had some professional person to look at it for you – a bit like Planning Aid for Scotland”.
- Give more weight to the community’s input into the process and provide examples of the sorts of evidence required.
- Training for community councils specifically on alcohol licensing matters - “it all takes time and effort. And years of experience in understanding and interpreting the legal language, to grasp what it is they are actually proposing...which almost forces you to go for simple blanket objections. Even if that probably isn’t the right way to go”.
- Re-visit the city’s overprovision policy.
- Reduce the formality of the Licensing Board hearings: “it’s carried out in a courtroom. The objector’s letter is read out and the applicant’s lawyer can reply. But when I wanted to respond to that – because what they said was not true – I wasn’t allowed to speak again. It’s at the discretion of the chairman. He said something like “we don’t want you to get into an argument that you might lose” – very condescending. The lawyer should have stepped aside to let me use the microphone but they didn’t”.
- Improve the information made available online - “you have to specifically go into the city to look at the detail (operating and layout plans) because they are not available online”.
- Changes to law - “fundamentally a lot of the problem is about what is allowed by the law – and Glasgow’s licensing policy etc.”

Case study 3 – A community council with a strong interest in licensing

Area profile

This Community Council area includes a vibrant commercial area with shops, restaurants and bars in close proximity to a densely populated residential area. Life expectancy is similar to the Glasgow average and qualification levels above average. More than one-fifth of the population are from an ethnic minority group.

The Community Council’s approach to alcohol licensing

The Community Council has been active for a number of years and meets monthly; licensing is a standing item on their agenda.

The Community Council’s approach to licensing is that there are enough licensed premises in their area which led them to adopt a policy to object to all new applications unless there were

exceptional circumstances. They do not generally canvass opinion on specific applications as they believe they “already know the community’s views”, although they do try to talk to members of the community who might know about a particular premises or issue. They were particularly concerned about the omission of their area from the overprovision localities identified in Glasgow’s Policy Statement and they felt their stance on objections was necessary because of this omission. At least one of the Community Councillors will attend the Licensing Board meeting when they have lodged an objection; their perception is that attendance at Board meetings adds weight to their case.

Impact of alcohol on the local community

Alcohol was said to have a significant impact on the local community with specific concerns focussed on noise, taxis, delivery vehicles, fighting, and the safety of those on a night out as well as local residents.

Challenges in engaging with the licensing process

A number of challenges were identified during consultation with the Community Council. Awareness among the general public was one issue as it was felt that most residents would not know where to find information about licensing and new applications in particular. This resulted from the Community Council having only one notice board in their whole area, no online presence, and the Licensing Board’s over-reliance on on-line information (as many members of the community were not connected to the internet or were not IT literate). The Community Council had limited time and resources to raise awareness of new applications.

Attending Board meetings can be daunting, especially for Community Councillors or members of the general public who have not been before. Knowing the ways that the Board works only comes with experience with examples cited of not being able to introduce new evidence, having to relate objections to the Policy Statement, and confusion stemming from the fact that some applicants apply for various elements to cover sporting events, weddings, funerals and dancing (which can also lead to additional and wasted effort from the Community Council).

There was recognition that the community was consulted about the Policy Statement but a perception that the Board does not apply the Statement when it comes to decisions in this area. If they did, the Community Council felt, the majority of applications would be refused because of the level of noise, disruption to residents and antisocial behaviour. They felt the interests of the night-time economy were given precedence over community concerns and commented that the income and jobs reliant on the night-time economy led to a “permissive approach to anything happening at night” and the “community voice on antisocial behaviour being ignored”. One of the Community Councillor’s felt their position was misunderstood: “we have to battle the perception that we are ‘killjoys’ or part of the Temperance Movement”.

In relation to the kind of stance taken by community councils such as this of objecting to all applications, one stakeholder commented “it does not help as it suggests they just don’t like licensed premises rather than having specific concerns about an application” raising obvious tension points. Another stakeholder commented that a community council that “objects to everything is self-defeating” and suggested that the Board was “likely to give their objections less credence”.

Examples of activity to engage in alcohol licensing matters

The Community Council did cite a couple of examples of applications in their area being refused although they did not know what impact their objection had as the reasons for rejection were

not widely publicised. The Community Council's perception is that the number of refusals in their area is less than it was previously.

Suggested changes to strengthen the community voice in the licensing process

The following suggestions were made to strengthen the community's voice in the licensing process:

- Requiring the applicant to speak instead of their solicitor.
- Allowing objectors to introduce new evidence and allowing objectors the right to respond to comments by the applicant's solicitor.
- Substantially widening the radius for neighbour notifications and notifying relevant organisations other than the community council.
- Neighbouring community councils working together to support objections where there was an impact in both areas.
- Requiring the Licensing Board to publish detailed reasons for their decisions.
- Help with access to evidence to support objections.

Case Study 4 – A community council's account of objecting to a premises application

Area profile

This Community Council area covers both residential areas and mixed use areas including part of the city centre with a significant night-time economy. Life expectancy is slightly lower than the Glasgow average for both men and women. Approximately a quarter of this neighbourhood's population is from an ethnic minority group.

The Community Council's approach to alcohol licensing

The Community Council reviews alcohol licence applications in their area at their monthly meetings. However, they noted that this is not possible at Christmas and in the summer months when they do not meet and reported, as with other community councils, that this can cause problems. Each application is reviewed and discussed by the Community Council. They tend not to object to applications in the city centre area but would consider doing so in the residential area where there was a "nuisance to residents". They feel it is the Community Council's right to object, with one member suggesting they are the "only local group representing residents' interests, as far as I'm aware". The four metre neighbour notification radius was described as "verging on the stupid" going on to suggest that it "should be closer to the planning process" which has a neighbour notification radius of 20 metres.

Impact of alcohol on the local community

The Community Council did not report that alcohol had a significant impact on the community. One part of their area is in the city centre and has a number of licensed premises, however one Community Councillor suggested that there was limited impact on the community as very few people lived there. In the residential area there were some concerns about off licences and perceived problems of underage drinking and anti-social behaviour.

An example of activity to engage in alcohol licensing matters and the challenges faced

The researchers followed a case at the Licensing Board meeting which started some months earlier when a regular Community Council meeting agreed that they would object to an off-licence application from a local restaurant. The Community Council established a sub-committee of four members to draft the objection letter. The applicant attended the Community Council meeting to explain the reasons for the application and to answer questions from members – this

level of engagement by an applicant was not reported by other community councils during this research. Some members of the Licensing Board visited the applicant's premises in the week of the Board meeting. One Community Councillor and a local resident were present at the Board meeting to object.

The Community Councillor who presented their objection to the Board had previously been in the Burgh Court and was not overawed or intimidated by the setting. They did feel that the acoustics were poor and would have preferred to see the faces of all those speaking to the Board (the LSO, Police and Building Control sit with their back to the public). The Community Councillor was a confident public speaker but pointed out that others may not be so comfortable speaking in the setting which was described as "old fashioned". The Community Councillor was "disappointed" with their presentation to the Board and felt they had taken too literally the Chair's direction not to raise new matters and in hindsight could have explained their objections further, emphasising their concerns more fully. The Community Council had objected to the applicant's inclusion of provision covering sporting events, and the Community Councillor highlighted that the applicant's lawyers reference to this during the hearing, as referring to chess among patrons, could be viewed as disingenuous. Overall the Community Councillor felt they had learnt from the experience and would be better if they were involved in a future objection. They were aware that Board decisions were guided by law and they had to strike a balance between the economic benefits and the community disbenefits. They were impressed by how seriously and responsibly the Board took the meeting although overall it was more legal than they were expecting.

An interesting observation was made by the Community Councillor about an imbalance of power when commenting that the applicant has more to lose if their application is not successful as it is their livelihood, the community do not have as much to lose and went so far as to say it was "not the end of my career if we lose". The interview noted that the applicant did not speak to the board.

Ultimately, the application was approved with conditions.

In this case the Community Councillor was at the Board meeting from 9.30 and did not leave until the end of the meeting at 8pm. They were surprised that another application for a temporary or occasional licence at the same premises was heard much later in the day which the Community Council was "totally unaware of" – they assumed this application was made as a fall back.

A local resident who objected to the application withdrew their objection at the Board meeting when the applicant's lawyer told the Board that a specific element of the application had been withdrawn. The resident had made an unnecessary journey and the Community Councillor raised a possible issue in terms of fairness whereby an applicant can include elements which objectors prepare a case about which could eventually be unnecessary if the applicant withdraws the specific element. The Community Councillor noted that applicants could, if they so wished, adopt a blanket approach allowing them some freedom to fine tune their application up to the time of the hearing whereas objectors have to have a fully formed case at the time of the objection and cannot make changes or introduce new evidence thereafter.

Suggested changes to strengthen the community voice in the licensing process

The following suggestions were made to strengthen the community's voice in the licensing process:

- The length of the meeting was described as not being conducive to community input and it was suggested meetings should be held at night.
- In noting that the applicant did not speak to the Board, the Community Councillor commented that it would be fairer if the applicant had to address the Board directly and was not represented by lawyers.
- Alternatively, the Community Councillor suggested that the Community Council also had legal representation which they felt “could be very helpful”.
- Guidance for community reps attending Board meetings would be particularly helpful if it contained practical information on what happens at the meeting, what objectors could and could not discuss, and how to present an objection.
- It was felt information about the Board meeting was limited – they only found a copy of the agenda by chance and were unaware it was available on the web beforehand. The Community Councillor would have welcomed it being more readily available on the day for example with someone handing out copies or having a copy pinned to a wall.
- They also felt that information provided to the public during the meeting was poor, for example when the Board retired to discuss applications they did not know how long this would take and whether they had time for a comfort break or a coffee. They suggested the Clerk could have told the public there would be a break of at least 15 minutes so they had some idea of how long they would have.
- More broadly, they suggested residents and community organisations being able to sign up to be notified about alcohol licensing applications in their area.

5 Areas for further development

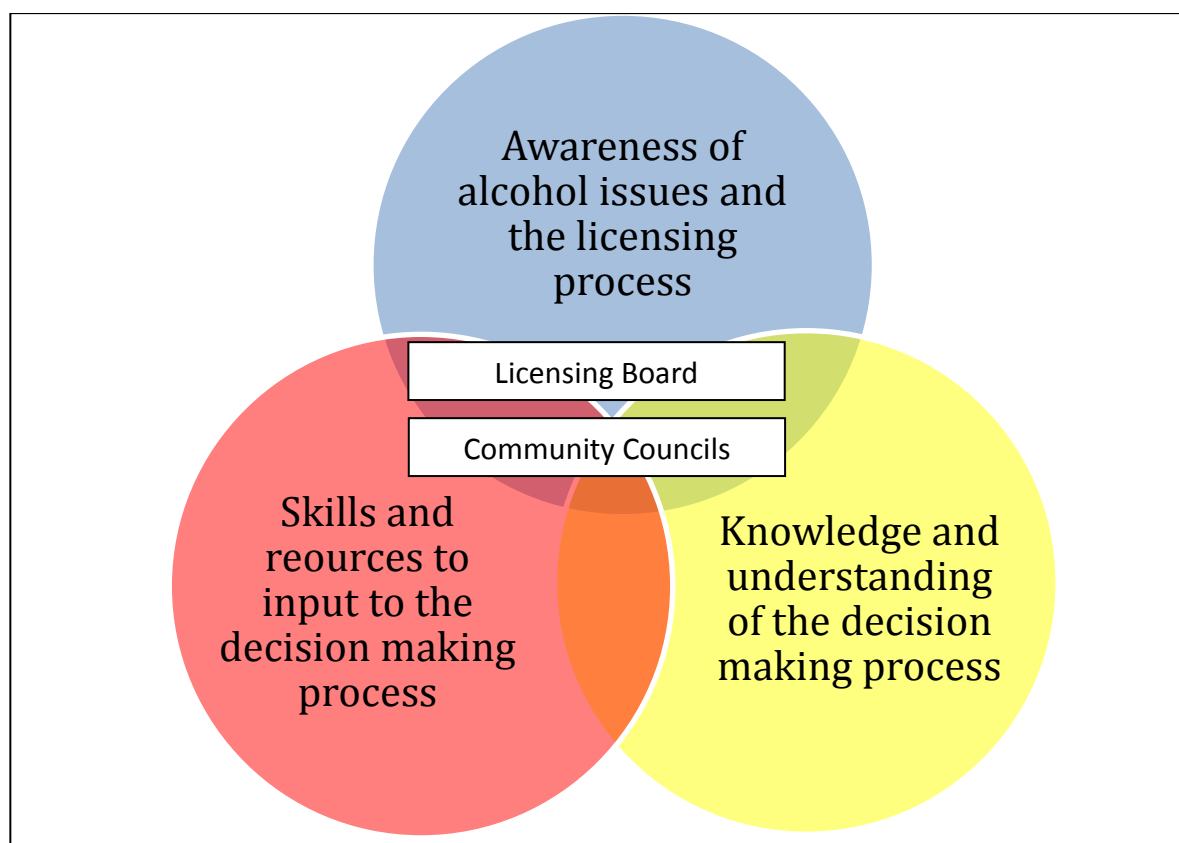
Chapters 3 and 4 described a wide range of views and experiences on the engagement of communities in the licensing process in Glasgow. This chapter summarises the information and distils it into three clearly identifiable issues for further development.

Overview

The key factors identified as inhibiting community engagement in the licensing process in Glasgow are:

- 1) Awareness of alcohol issues and the licensing process.
- 2) Knowledge and understanding of the decision-making process.
- 3) Skills and resources to engage in the process.

These issues are shown below with the Licensing Board and Community Councils placed at the centre of the diagram emphasising their pivotal role in the licensing process and their relevance to the three areas for further development.



Awareness

This research has identified that the community's awareness with regard to alcohol issues and the licensing process in particular can be variable. There are three main issues around awareness – awareness of alcohol issues, of the licensing process including the community's role within it, and of specific licensing applications – which are summarised below.

Awareness of alcohol issues

Although respondents to the community survey displayed a strong interest in alcohol issues and awareness of negative impacts on their communities, those that responded to the survey may not reflect the interests of other community councils in Glasgow. The survey was widely promoted and the website received over 300 hits but only 1 in 7 of these completed the survey. Results suggest that communities may only take an interest in alcohol issues when a particular problem arises.

Awareness of the licensing process

Where there was an interest in alcohol issues among the community, our overall conclusion was that awareness of the licensing process and the role the community has in it was limited. Some community organisations are very much aware and engaged – this unsurprisingly tended to be the result of direct experience, mainly in objecting to licensing applications. Even with experience some communities talked of their involvement as being a learning experience and a journey. There was greater awareness of licensing applications than other aspects of the process such as the Policy Statement, the Licensing Forum and licence reviews.

Awareness of specific licensing applications

It became very apparent during study that awareness of specific licensing applications relates directly to the notification process. Stakeholders and community consultees highlighted that it was entirely possible that communities could be unaware of a licensing application in their area. Specific issues focused on:

- Posting of applications online which require internet access, IT skills and knowledge of where to look
- Notifications of new or amended licence applications are limited to premises within four metres of the applicant (the statutory requirement)
- Notices placed on premises requesting a new or amended licence tends to include large amounts of information in a format that does not grab the attention of passers-by and can be displayed in an inaccessible position
- Notification of new or amended licence applications sent to community councils can be an issue if there is no active community council in that area. If one does exist information may not be distributed by the community council contact to other members of the organisation or to external organisations. Reliance on community councils as the only community related consultee excludes other organisations, such as resident groups, that may have an interest in licensing issues such as tenants and residents associations.

Knowledge and understanding

This theme relates to communities with an interest in participating in the licensing process, particularly regarding an application. Their limited knowledge and understanding of the process tended to impede their engagement or the effectiveness of their input. Three key issues are summarised below.

Grounds for objecting

This research found that the community's knowledge and understanding of the grounds for objecting to a specific licensing application tended to be limited. Case study 3 described how one community council had adopted a policy of objecting to all applications in their area which they felt justified with but this general stance was perceived by some stakeholders as

counterproductive. Consultation with other community representatives found that triggers for objecting tended to be very local concerns about issues such as noise, antisocial behaviour and underage drinking, with community groups not always aware of the need to link the objection to one of the five licensing objectives.

There was limited knowledge that an application for an alcohol licence could be approved with conditions that met the community's concerns. A number of community representatives held the view that the only solution was to oppose the application in full. Many alcohol licence applications are approved with specific conditions, sometimes informed by community concerns, and greater understanding of the process may help the community formulate their position at the outset.

Ways to object and their effectiveness

The research found the community's knowledge and understanding of how to object and the effectiveness of different means was an area for further development. Letters of objection tended to be the main mechanism reported by community councils, despite the fact that a personal appearance at the Licensing Board meeting to support the objection increases the strength of the objection. It appears community objectors are often reticent to appear in person because of logistical issues of attending the meeting and/or because the process is intimidating. There was limited use of residents' surveys, petitions or engagement with local elected members.

Although there are a number of ways of objecting to a licence some are perceived as being more effective than others. Broader stakeholders and LSOs identified that appearing in person at Board meetings was the most effective means of influencing licensing decisions. Others suggested that letters from individual community members can be more effective than letters from Community Councils (on the grounds that the latter are statutory consultees whereas the former are presumed to have been more proactive in objecting), and petitions and pro-forma letters that only require signatures were seen as the least effective means. The lack of clarity and consistency around this issue, in itself, poses challenges for the community to be able to make the best use of their limited resources to influence this agenda.

Licensing Board meetings

The community experiences identified that attending a Board meeting can be daunting, particularly for those with no previous experience of the setting or the format of the meeting. There was limited awareness of the Licensing Board's Guide for Applicants and Objectors which includes information on the meeting.

Skills and resources

As with the above issue, this relates to participation in the licensing process, particularly objecting to specific premises applications.

This research identified that a high degree of literacy, digital competency, organisational and public speaking skills are required to engage and effectively influence the licensing process, for example to:

- Write an effective objection letter linking it to the Policy Statement and objectives.
- Source and interpret evidence to support an objection.
- Effectively present a case at a Board hearing.

Communities also require resources to engage and effectively influence the licensing process.

Relevant issues include:

- Time to prepare an objection.
- Time and resources to consult the wider community.
- Time to attend and prepare for a Board meeting.

6 Strengthening the community voice in the licensing process

Overview

This chapter sets out potential methods of strengthening the community voice in the licensing process, based on suggestions that emerged during consultation with community representatives and wider stakeholders. The possible solutions are divided into two key groups:

- 1) Developing a community facing licensing process.
- 2) Support for communities in order to assist their engagement in licensing processes.

The possible solutions include a range of short, medium and longer term developments, adjustments that could be achieved at a local level within existing resources, and fresh approaches that would require input at a national level linked to new policies and/or legislative amendments.



Community Facing Licensing Process

In general communities:

- Have competing local priorities which can limit their potential to engage in licensing matters.
- Limited understanding of how to participate effectively in the licensing process.
- Challenges in accessing information and attending licensing board meetings.
- Limited resources to respond to local licensing applications within the timescale available.

The suggestions associated with making the process more community facing can be viewed as a re-imagining of the system. These ideas represent a move towards a model in which community members are viewed as an integral stakeholder in the process, and thereby encouraged to participate – as opposed to being seen as an opt-in party that most commonly only becomes involved to object to specific applications. The proposed solutions aim to address barriers to participation and make the process simple, clear and engaging for the community. A number of possible solutions are presented in the table below, linked to stakeholders that could potentially be involved in delivering change, and an indicative timescale.

COMMUNITY FACING SOLUTIONS			
Ref	Solution	Stakeholders	Timescale
1	Broader notification process , including (1) – expanding the radius for notifications beyond the statutory requirement of four metres; with suggestions of the 20 metres used in planning, or the 500 metres (200 metres in the City Centre) cited in the Licensing Policy Statement to establish the applicant’s locality (2) simplifying notification content – less content, with clear instructions on making objections; (3) tailored notifications which provide contact details of who to contact to support or object, who to turn to for support in responding including the Community Council, and the local agencies that receive notifications (3) present notifications in an eye-catching format, for example larger, brighter posters or via billboards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glasgow City Licensing Clerks and LSOs • Community representatives – to be involved in the design of engaging outputs (such as notification posters and billboards) • Scottish Government - amendments to legislation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short term • Longer term to amend legislation
2	Involvement of broader range of community groups and organisations in the notification process , above and beyond community councils and local councillors. These could include tenants and residents associations, alcohol recovery groups, youth groups, and parent councils. Development to include a proactive approach to include tenants and residents associations and parent councils, as well as a widely advertised opt-in system to enable other interested parties to receive notifications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glasgow City Licensing Clerk • Community representatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short term
3	Accessible website – at present it takes seven clicks to get from Glasgow City Council’s main page to licensing matters. A bespoke, user friendly website with frequently updated content could be seen as a mechanism for enhancing engagement in the process. List notifications on the website and create a RSS feed so that anyone who signs up via social media will get an automatic update once a notification is created. Include user-friendly, detailed and practical online resources and guidance for those who wish to object to a licence application (see Support for Communities).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glasgow City Council • Glasgow City Licensing Clerks and LSOs • Community representatives – to be involved in the design of accessible information access. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium term
4	Accessible Board meetings . Developments could include (1) later starting times to enable attendance outwith working hours (2) separating meetings into smaller more accessible ‘chunks’ to facilitate community involvement e.g. hearing premises and personal licence applications separately or considering applications on a geographical basis; (3) reduced formality, including changes to the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glasgow Licensing Board and Clerks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short and medium term

	language used and a more welcoming (less Court-like) venue (4) adopting an approach that allows community members a greater voice in the process – for example, permitting to responses to new evidence presented by applicants at Board meetings (4) requiring applicants to speak so that there are many voices in the process – not just formal parties (solicitors, board members) and community representatives.		
5	Champion the success of consultation that occurred in the development of Glasgow’s Licensing Policy statement and other community objections which have resulted in conditions to or rejection of premises applications. This would encourage greater participation from community groups in future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glasgow City Council • Community representative bodies • Other stakeholders such as NHS GG&C, Police Scotland, Glasgow City ADP, Community Safety Glasgow, relevant third sector organisations and umbrella groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short and medium term
6	Re-considering Glasgow City’s overprovision policy including proactively gathering community views and ensuring they are reflected in the Policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glasgow Licensing Board and Clerks • Glasgow Licensing Forum • Community representative bodies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium term
7	Revisit the role and membership of the City’s Licensing Forum to reflect good practice identified in other local authority areas. For example this might include having the forum chaired by a community representative, or appointing additional community members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glasgow Licensing Board and Clerks • Glasgow Licensing Forum • Community representative bodies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium term
8	Detailed and accessible data – greater data gathering, and sharing, so that representatives can easily view pertinent information about the impact of alcohol at specific local levels. This could include alcohol-related data on crime and health.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police Scotland • NHS GG&C • Glasgow City ADP • Community Safety Glasgow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium term
9	Develop local place-based responses to alcohol availability and impact, for example community statements on preferences with regards to alcohol sales in their area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community representatives bodies • GCPH • AFS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium term
10	Provide detailed feedback to community representatives so they understand reasons for successes/failures of objections, the extent to which representations have been reflected in Board’s deliberations and see the results of their efforts; for example licence refusals or modifications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glasgow Licensing Board and Clerks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short term
11	Consider a locality approach so that Licensing Board activity links more closely with local areas such as the three City sectors, and hold licensing meetings within these localities to raise the profile of licensing, make it easier for communities to attend and more likely that	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glasgow Licensing Board and Clerks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium term

	they will engage in the process.		
12	Develop an “it’s your community” app to engage residents and ask them to capture data – for example images, or diaries, about alcohol’s impact on the local area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glasgow City Council • Community representatives bodies • GCPH • AFS 	• Medium term
13	Changes to education would serve to inform young people about alcohol’s impact on communities, their ability to influence licensing and explain the links between availability and consumption as part of their learning at school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glasgow City Council • Scottish Government 	• Longer term

Many of the above changes can be taken forward on a best-practice basis, with a view to amending legislation to make changes mandatory where necessary.

Some of the suggestions outlined above align with other research that has explored public access to, and engagement with, civil justice systems. For example, the Civil Justice Advisory Group considered designs to improve access to justice (Consumer Focus Scotland, 2011), with similar recommendations to many of the solutions identified above, including:

- Recommendation 1: “A system-wide user-focused approach should be taken...looking beyond the courts to the wider civil justice system”. This aligns with broader, non-licensing board specific Solutions 5, 7, 8, 9 and 13.
- Recommendation 4: “A web-based system should be created, bringing together information on rights, responsibilities, sources of self-help and advice...which would guide people through the resolution process”. This aligns with the steps outlined in Solution 3.
- Recommendation 15: “The full range of relevant interests should be given the opportunity to provide sufficient input into the future civil justice reform”. This ties in with Solution 2.

Solution 4 links to one theme of the Scottish Government’s consultation on potential changes to the licensing process. This identified a general desire not to increase the formality of the Board meetings with some responses suggesting that legal representation was not required; there was support for guidance on Board meetings on the conduct of hearings as well as guidance for objectors (which would include the community) and applicants.

It is also worth highlighting that some of the solutions identified above have already been implemented in other areas. For example the Licensing Board in Dundee City has introduced an overprovision policy that includes a ‘rebuttable presumption’, which effectively introduces a presumption against granting new licences with the exception of the waterfront area of the City which is being re-developed. To gain a new licence outwith this area, new licence applications need to present a convincing case that overcomes this presumption. The policy follows a report from Dundee ADP that identified costs and negative impacts from alcohol use upon crime, disorder and health. A small number of stakeholders felt that there was sufficient evidence now to allow Licensing Boards across Scotland to take a stand that there were enough licensed premises and adopt a position where no more licences would be approved, other than in exceptional cases. They suggested new applications should only be approved if an existing licence had been revoked or surrendered by the current holder, or if an existing licence was transferred. There was a recognition however that such an approach would potentially be subject to legal challenge and could create a market for licences which could be detrimental.

More fundamentally, a small number of stakeholders felt that the Scottish Government should review licensing legislation. Their preferred solution was to place the onus on applicants to provide a compelling case for approval rather than the current situation whereby objectors need to present a case not to approve the application. We are aware that some changes to licensing are proposed in the [Air Weapons and Licensing \(Scotland\) Bill](#) which is currently progressing through the Scottish Parliament.

Some of the potential solutions presented are unlikely to be welcomed by all stakeholders. For example, shorter Board meetings and/or a locality approach that led to more meetings would have implications for Board members, solicitors, police, and health.

The proposed solutions are intended to address this study’s aims of strengthening the community voice in the licensing process in Glasgow. It is noted that some of these proposed solutions are already working in other areas, providing an opportunity to share best practice.

Support for Communities

To effectively input into the licensing process communities are required to:

- Know what responding to an application involves.
- Understand what evidence is relevant, and able to gather and present it in an effective format.
- Meet the timescales by which objections must be submitted.
- Potentially have the time and skills to work in partnership with other interested parties.

The following suggestions for how to support community can be viewed as a way to redress imbalances, for example currently much of the professional resource in the process works on behalf of applicants, who are represented by skilled and experienced solicitors. Such ideas represent a move towards an egalitarian model in which no stakeholder group has an inherent advantage in terms of the resources at their disposal. These solutions are presented in the table below, linked to stakeholders that could be involved in implementation and the potential timescale in which developments could occur.

SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITIES			
Ref	Solution	Stakeholders	Time scale
A	<p>Practical information and guidance would address the awareness issues and confusion about participation in the licensing process. This information should be practical, detailed and user-friendly with information about the type of evidence that Boards find useful and relevant in their deliberations; it could also include examples of successful objections and details. It might also include details of the pitfalls of particular types of evidence (for example, petitions) – to discourage community representatives from reliance on techniques that are not perceived as carrying equal weight thereby preventing a misuse of time and resources. A summary of the Policy Statement should also be included in, or accompany, the guidance.</p> <p>The guidance could also incorporate mechanisms for influencing alcohol availability in the local area, for example seeking a review of an existing premise;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glasgow Licensing Board and Clerks • Glasgow Licensing Forum • Community representatives – to be involved in the design of engaging outputs (such as notification posters and billboards) • Glasgow City Council • Police Scotland • NHS GG&C • Glasgow City ADP • Community Safety Glasgow • AFS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium term

	<p>channelling complaints about a premise to LSOs and police officers so that they may gather evidence about an establishment; or considering planning mechanisms to restrict alcohol sales in any new developments.</p> <p>Another suggestion linked to practical matters was the creation of a video to explain what the process of making a representation at Licensing Board meeting entails, so that community representatives are more familiar with the format of the day. This might include examples of the language used by solicitors, where to sit, and who to address responses to.</p>		
B	<p>The provision of professional resources and support would serve to address the mismatch in resources of community representatives compared to those of applicants. This could be achieved through the establishment of a new role, or a realignment of LSO's current activity, to provide professional support to communities. Linked to this point, it was suggested that removing the cap on licensing fees could create a funding source to pay for the community resource. Alternatively external funding was suggested or funding from CPP partners to deliver on the SOA outcomes of reducing the availability of alcohol in communities. The post could be hosted by one of the CPP's public sector partners or a third sector partner such as Glasgow Council on Alcohol. A more radical suggestion was to consider adopting a system similar to 'planning gain' or developer contributions whereby approval came with conditions attached which delivered community benefits.</p> <p>Potential areas of activity include securing legal advice, assisting members of the public to navigate the licensing system and supporting the preparation of robust submissions to the Board. This support worker could adopt a role similar to the work performed by the in-court advisor in the civil justice system. One consultee suggested that removing solicitors from the licensing process would also result in a fairer system.</p> <p>Greater use of existing resources could be made and there is scope to increase signposting to these channels. Examples include Strathclyde University's Law Clinic, which provides free legal assistance to people in Glasgow, advice services across Glasgow including CABx and Law Centres, as well as the use of the Ripple Effect researchers to help gather community views.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glasgow LSOs • Glasgow CPP partners • Community representatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium term
C	<p>Additional training could address community representatives' challenges when engaging in licensing matters, helping to: overcome issues such as a lack of understanding of processes, learn from others'</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glasgow City Council • Glasgow CPP partners including NHS GG&C (Health Improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium term

	experiences of engaging in licensing matters and appreciate the skills required. Training needs assessments for new Community Councillors would also serve to identify any development needs required to engage in licensing. This could include the development of a booklet for representatives to take away and refer to when making objections.	Officers) or Glasgow City ADP	
D	There is also potential to apply lessons from related policy areas with organisations such as Planning Aid Scotland and the Scottish Community Development Centre having undertaken work to identify the approaches, routes and resources required to engage and support communities in matters that affect them at a local level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GCPH • AFS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium term
E	Closer working across stakeholder groups – this idea emerged at the shared solutions workshop as a route to bring about collective ownership of the agenda to increase the community voice in licensing, and remove any perception of potential bias from one party i.e. NHS GG&C or the Licensing Board. Suggestions included the formation of a steering group to ensure that stakeholders continue to view an increased community voice in the process as a priority. Closer working would also provide a route to share the costs of providing additional support to communities across agencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community representatives – to be involved in the design of engaging outputs (such as notification posters and billboards) • Glasgow City Council • Police Scotland • NHS GG&C • Glasgow City ADP • Community Safety Glasgow • Glasgow Licensing Forum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short and medium term

The solutions outlined above align with other research that considers the nature of public or community engagement in legal frameworks. The Civil Justice Advisory Group also recommended the development of an in-court advice service that is similar to the proposed professional resource described as Solution B: “There is strong evidence that in-court advice services, where they exist, have been viewed as a great success by all involved, including clients, sheriffs, solicitors, advice agencies and court staff...We believe that in-court advisors have an important role to play, not only in providing assistance to unrepresented litigants during the court process, but also in performing a triage function in directing litigants or potential litigants to other appropriate sources of advice or methods of dispute resolution” (Consumer Focus Scotland, 2011).

Glasgow’s potential community support solutions also link in with conclusions reached in ‘Facing Up To Legal Problems report – a preventative approach to addressing disputes and their impact on individuals and society’ (Consumer Focus Scotland, 2012). This document explored the notion of a person’s ‘legal capacity’ and identified many of the challenges that emerged during our consultation with communities and stakeholders about licensing; such as knowledge, skills, attitudes and access to resources. Consumer Focus Scotland’s publication concludes that “these factors combined to form a unique set of circumstances specific to that individual, which meant that problems which appeared to be quite similar could involve very different reactions in different people”. As the experiences and case studies in chapters 3 and 4 illustrate, our research identified that response by communities differed depending on their skills, resources and experiences. It is arguable that community-facing solutions would therefore contribute to the development of ‘licensing capacity’ in a consistent and more equitable way across communities.

It is also worth highlighting that some of the solutions identified above have already been implemented in other areas. For example, linked to Solution A - Aberdeenshire Council has produced [online guidance](#) that asks representatives to state how the granting of an alcohol licence would be consistent with the licensing objectives and/or the local overprovision policy. In other areas without the volume of applications that exists in Glasgow, LSOs are able to take on a more proactive role supporting the community.

7 Conclusions

Glasgow Centre for Population Health and Alcohol Focus Scotland commissioned this research to consider how to strengthen the community voice in alcohol licensing decisions in Glasgow. Comprehensive, mixed methods research identified community experiences and views of engaging in the process to date and these views have directly informed possible solutions put forward in this report. While the issues and possible solutions are based on research in Glasgow, the key messages should be relevant to stakeholders across Scotland with an interest in alcohol licensing.

Gathering community views was an integral part of this research and we are grateful to the community representatives who took the time to take part in the survey, follow-up telephone interviews, depth interviews and shared solutions workshop. Their experience of the licensing process presented in chapter 3 and 4 was enlightening and showed that the community is involved in all aspects of licensing in Glasgow from the development of the Policy Statement to meetings of the Licensing Forum, although the primary involvement comes from objecting to premises licence applications in their areas. The fact that the community has engaged in licensing was commendable, in our opinion, in light of some of the negative experiences and views reported during this research. Three main areas for further development were identified and discussed in chapter 5 pertaining to awareness of alcohol issues and the community's role in the licensing process, knowledge of how to participate in the process and an understanding of how to do so effectively, and having the skills and resources to participate. Possible solutions relate directly to these three areas and proposals for a community facing licensing process and support for communities were discussed in chapter 6.

The possible solutions to strengthen the community voice in alcohol licensing decisions in Glasgow have implications for all organisations with an interest in licensing issues. We recognise that some of these implications could be viewed negatively by stakeholders in comparison to the existing situation and it is emphasised that the possible solutions are presented as a starting point for discussion. During any future discussions we would request that stakeholders reflect on the findings of this report and consider the community's perspective as well as their own, respecting the fact that the possible solutions were formulated to try to strengthen the community voice in the process. We were encouraged by the overall impression among stakeholders that the Licensing Board would welcome greater input from the community and that this could make a difference to the decisions. We were also greatly encouraged by the views of representatives from Police Scotland and NHS GG&C who were very supportive of assisting the community to strengthen their voice and, through greater co-operation and support, strengthening the overall voice of objectors, where relevant.

During any future discussions about the findings of this research and, in particular, the possible solutions, we would also refer Community Planning Partners such as Glasgow City Council, Glasgow ADP, Community Safety Glasgow, Police Scotland, and NHS GG&C, to the Single Outcome Agreement outcome they signed up to deliver to reduce the accessibility of alcohol in Glasgow's communities.

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Appendix 1: LSO survey



Strengthening the community voice in Glasgow's alcohol licensing process

Licensing Standards Officers' Survey

Why have I been asked to complete this survey?

This is a national survey of Licensing Standards Officers, conducted by Iconic Consulting. It is part of research commissioned by the Glasgow Centre for Population Health to identify barriers and facilitators to community engagement in alcohol licensing matters.

The questions cover the following themes: current forms of community involvement in alcohol licensing; examples of effective practice; and views on ways to support public participation in licensing decision-making processes.

What do we mean by community engagement in licensing processes?

Community engagement is activity undertaken by the public to convey opinions on alcohol licensing matters. For example, this includes consultation responses; expressing support or objections to licensing applications/amendments in letter or person; or by forming/signing a petition.

Important information about this survey:

The survey takes around 15 minutes to complete.

Your response will be reviewed solely by Iconic and treated with the utmost confidence so please feel free to be candid. All responses will be aggregated when presented, with any examples anonymised, so that findings cannot be linked back to individuals.

If you require assistance with completion of the survey or have any questions please do not hesitate to get in touch. In the first instance contact Lorraine Simpson, lead researcher at Iconic via lorraine@iconic-consulting.co.uk or 0131 235 2012.

Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey.

Participant profile

1. Job title (blank box)
2. Local authority (drop down list)
3. Which Department/Service is the LSO post based in? (blank box)
4. The LSO role is part time in some areas, with the officer(s) having additional responsibilities in their day-to-day work. Is your LSO role:
 - Full-time
 - Part-time
 - a. If your LSO role is part-time, approximately how many hours of your total working week are allocated for licensing support work? (blank box)

How do communities engage with the licensing process in your area?

5. In your area, which groups within communities tend to engage with the licensing process?

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Individual members of the public				
Elected members				
Local traders				
Community Councils				
Other resident groups (e.g. community groups, local housing associations, parent councils)				
Trader representative groups				
Other (please describe below)				

6. What usually are the reasons that trigger or motivate public engagement in alcohol licensing matters (blank box for comments)
7. Are specific resources/processes in place to encourage or facilitate community engagement in licensing processes? Please outline below (blank box for comments)
8. Which (if any) of the following methods are used by the public to engage with your local licensing board?

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Response to policy statement development or consultations				
Letters from the public (for example to support or object to new				

licences/ amendments)				
In person representation at licensing hearings				
Engagement with relevant bodies (for example Alcohol Forum or Alcohol & Drug Partnerships)				
Other (explain below)				

9. In your experience, which of the above is the most **effective** way of influencing the outcomes of decision-making process, and why?

(blank box for responses and comments)

10. To what extent do agree with this statement “there is **general awareness** among the community that it is possible to participate in alcohol licensing decision making processes in this area“?

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

11. Please assess the following in terms of their role as a barrier or facilitator to public participation in licensing decision-making processes in your area:

	Significant facilitator to engagement	Minor facilitator to engagement	Minor barrier to engagement	Significant barrier to engagement	Not important
Notification process for new licence applications/amendments					
Timescale for new licence applications/amendments					
Public awareness of the right to input into licensing matters					
Level of interest in					

licensing matters					
Perceptions of public ability to influence outcomes					
Formality of licensing process					
A wish to remain anonymous					
The licensing board's regard for community input					
Other					

12. Do you feel existing channels for public representations in licensing processes are effective?
- Yes the channels are effective
 - No – if so, what could be improved? (suggestions below)

13. Are there examples of good practice in community engagement in the alcohol licensing process in your area? If so, please provide some brief details.

Other comments

14. If you would like to add comments on the survey or issues related to community engagement in the alcohol licensing process please use the box below
15. We would like to follow up some of the issues raised here in a short telephone interview with a small selection of respondents. Would you be happy to be contacted by phone? Yes/No. If yes, please provide a contact telephone number

Appendix 2: LSO survey responses

Responses to the LSO survey were returned by individuals in the following local authorities:

- Aberdeenshire
- Angus
- Argyll & Bute
- Clackmannanshire
- Dumfries & Galloway
- Dundee
- East Ayrshire
- East Lothian
- East Renfrewshire
- Edinburgh
- Falkirk
- Fife
- Glasgow
- Highland
- Midlothian
- North Lanarkshire
- Orkney Islands
- Renfrewshire
- Scottish Borders
- South Lanarkshire
- West Dunbartonshire

Appendix 3: Community survey



Strengthening the community voice in Glasgow's alcohol licensing process

Survey of community groups

Why have I been sent this survey?

This is a citywide survey of community organisations, conducted by Iconic Consulting. It is part of research commissioned by the Glasgow Centre for Population Health to explore community engagement in alcohol licensing matters.

What do we mean by community engagement in alcohol licensing?

Community engagement is any activity by the public or community groups to express an opinion on licensing matters or influence licensing decisions. Examples include:

- raising awareness that local licensing applications are underway
- responding to consultations
- expressing a view (support or objection) on licensing applications by letter or in person
- representations to the local licensing forum or licensing board
- forming/signing a petition.

Important information about this survey:

The survey contains only 5 questions and takes no more than 5 minutes to complete.

Your response will only be seen by the research team and all findings will be anonymised so please feel free to be candid.

If you require assistance with completion of the survey or have any questions please do not hesitate to get in touch. In the first instance contact Lorraine Simpson, lead researcher at Iconic via lorraine@iconic-consulting.co.uk or 0131 235 2012.

Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey.

Participant profile

Which of the following best describes your organisation:

- Community Council
- Tenants/Residents Association
- Community group
- Voluntary organisation/charity
- Social enterprise
- Other (specify below)

Does your organisation operate across the city or in a specific area?

- Citywide
- Specific area(s) (if so, specify ward(s) or postcode)

Please rate the extent to which you feel alcohol misuse affects the community covered by your organisation:

- Significant impact
- Some impact
- Minor impact
- No impact

Do you feel existing channels for public representations in licensing processes are effective?

- Yes the channels are effective
- No – if so, what could be improved? (suggestions below)

Which (if any) of the following methods are used by your organisation to engage with the local licensing board?

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Response to policy statement development or consultations				
Letters from the public (for example to support or object to new licences/ amendments)				
In person representation at licensing hearings				
Engagement with relevant				

bodies (for example Alcohol Forum or Alcohol & Drug Partnerships)				
Other (explain below)				

In your experience, which of the above is the most **effective** way of influencing the outcomes of decision-making process, and why?

(blank box for responses and comments)

To what extent do agree with this statement “there is **general awareness** among the community that it is possible to participate in alcohol licensing decision making processes in this area”?

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Other comments

We would like to follow up some of the issues raised here in a short telephone interview with a small selection of respondents. Would you be happy to be contacted by phone?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please provide a contact name and telephone number

Appendix 4: Depth interviews with community representatives



Strengthening the community voice in Glasgow's alcohol licensing process

Community consultation

Introduction

Brief introduction describing the study aims and timescale. Emphasise that the research is focused on alcohol licensing only and is a feasibility study examining the community's voice in the process, including possible means of strengthening their engagement.

Highlight the key ethical issues (confidentiality, anonymity, and consent) and ask for permission to record the interview. The interview is expected to last up to 45 minutes.

Participant profile

Please provide an overview of your organisation (or their role if an individual). Probe for details of:

- aim of the organisation/individual role
- communities covered
- any formal involvement in the licensing process e.g. Forum member
- membership of any community engagement or representative body such as Glasgow/Local Community Planning Partnerships, Third Sector Forum, Community Reference Groups, Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector, CHEX, ADP Community Subgroup, Addiction Forums
- contact with the local Community Council(s) and City Councillors?

Interview questions

The Licensing (Scotland) Act came into effect in 2009 and introduced the public right to object or make representations to a Licensing Board about any application for, or significant variation to, a premises alcohol licence.

Did you know that the public had this right?

How might community groups/members of the public get involved in alcohol licensing processes? *Probe for details.*

In your view is it important that the community has an input to licensing matters? What are the potential outcomes?

Do you/your organisation have any experience involvement in alcohol licensing? *Probe for details:*

- *when*
- *why*
- *any support accessed*
- *outcome*
- *views on the process*
- What worked well, and why?

- If no, probe:
 - is this by choice (e.g. because you are not interested or don't see it as your role)
 - or due to other priorities – what are these?
 - Because you don't have the resources – what would it require?

What currently triggers community engagement in licensing matters – how is support/objection initiated? *Probe for triggers including awareness of the five objectives.*

Do you feel that there is public awareness that it is possible to influence licensing decisions? Do you know of people or organisations that are more aware than others? If so, which ones, and why do you think they are?

Different aspects of the licensing process may affect community involvement in licensing decisions. For ease of discussion we have developed a list of key factors (you can add to the list if you feel anything is missing). Please take a look at the list and indicate which elements encourage community involvement and why you feel they are effective. If you feel certain aspects have room for improvement, explain why, and suggest what can be done?

	Facilitates engagement	Room for improvement	Comments
Notification process for new licence applications/amendments			
Timescale for new licence applications/amendments			
Public awareness of the right to input into licensing matters			
Level of interest from public/community groups in licensing matters			
Perceptions of public ability to influence outcomes			

Formal aspects of licensing process (including lack of anonymity in representations)			
The licensing board's regard for community input			
Forums for representation (for example Licensing Forum, or Alcohol & Drug Partnerships)			
Civic structures for representation (for example Community Councils)			
Other			

To what extent do you feel the public is currently able to influence licensing decisions? Could anything be done to increase involvement and influence? Please describe.

We intend to develop a detailed case study of recent response by a community to an alcohol licensing decision. This will involve consultation with all the key stakeholders to find out about their experiences and review the outcome of the process.

Do you think the experience(s) you described would be useful for us to explore in our action research? If so, are you able to provide contact details for the key people involved? Are there other examples from elsewhere (including outside Glasgow) that you think it would be useful for the study to be aware of? If so, gather brief details.

Would you like to raise any other issues or make any final comments?

Thank you for taking the time to participate.