

Scottish Borders Local Licensing Forum Survey

Susan Walker

ADP Development Officer

ADP Support Team

March 2015

Contents

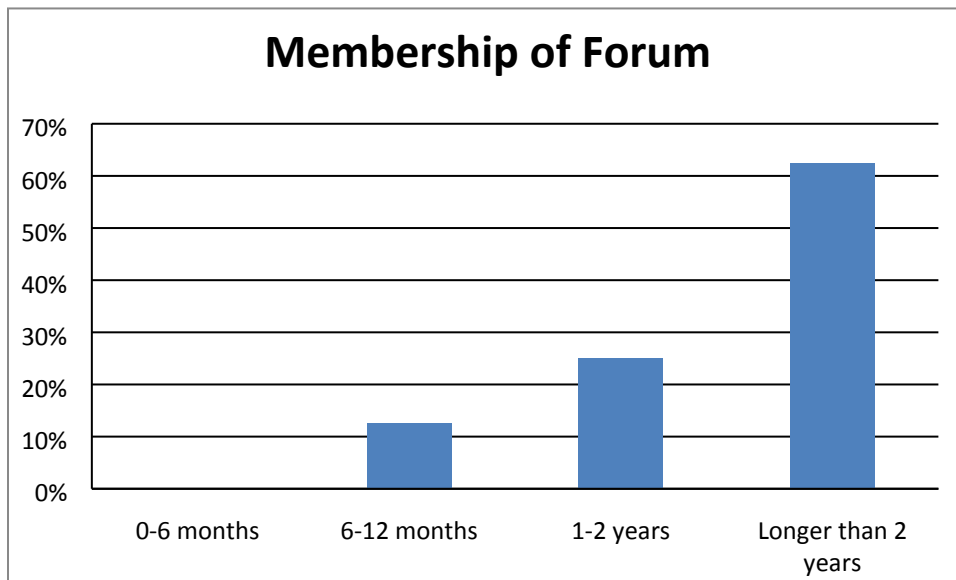
- 1. Introduction 3
- 2. Length of time on Forum 3
- 3. Communication with Forum members..... 4
- 4. Communication with members of community..... 5
- 5. Communicating with Licensing Board 6
- 6. Data, research and evidence 7
- 7. Leadership 8
- 8. Role of Forum 9
- 9. Training needs 10
- 10. Other comments made..... 12

1. Introduction

Scottish Borders Licensing Forum (Forum) agreed to carry out a self assessment questionnaire on 27th January 2015 to help identify any developmental needs. Each member of the Forum was asked to complete the survey online to help identify how they feel the Forum is currently performing and where individual members feel more information and support would enable the Forum to function better. The benefit of completing the survey allows members to remain anonymous and present their opinions about the Forum. A total of 8 responses were received which was a 50% response rate. This report collates the responses received and will be presented to the Forum on 24th March to enable members to reflect on the survey responses and identify areas for improvement and action.

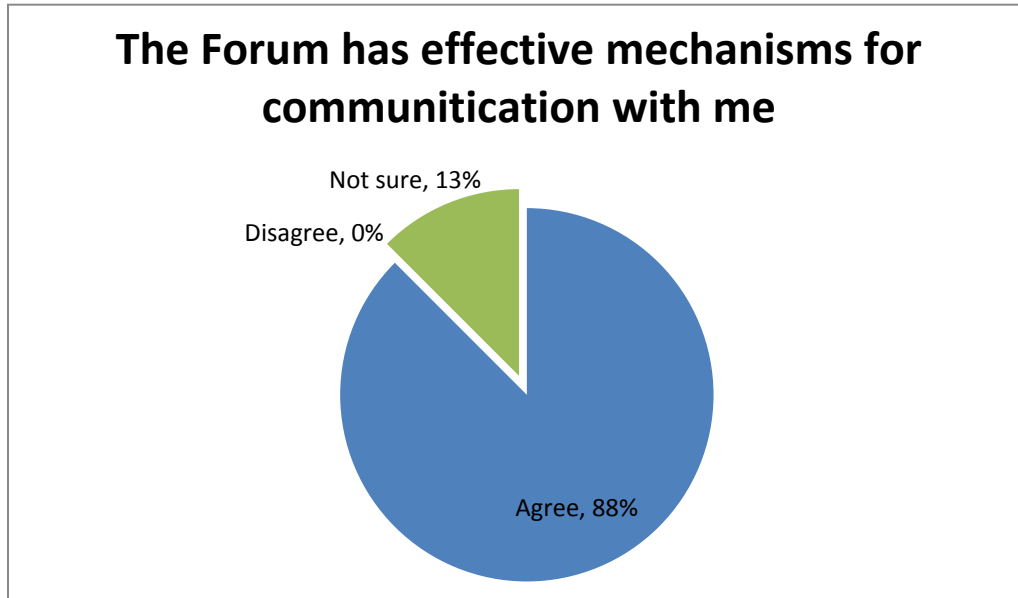
2. Length of time on Forum

The majority of respondents (5) who responded to the survey had been a member of the Forum for longer than 2 years.



3. Communication with Forum members

Members were asked if they felt the Forum has effective mechanisms for communicating with them. The large majority (7) felt that the Forum did.



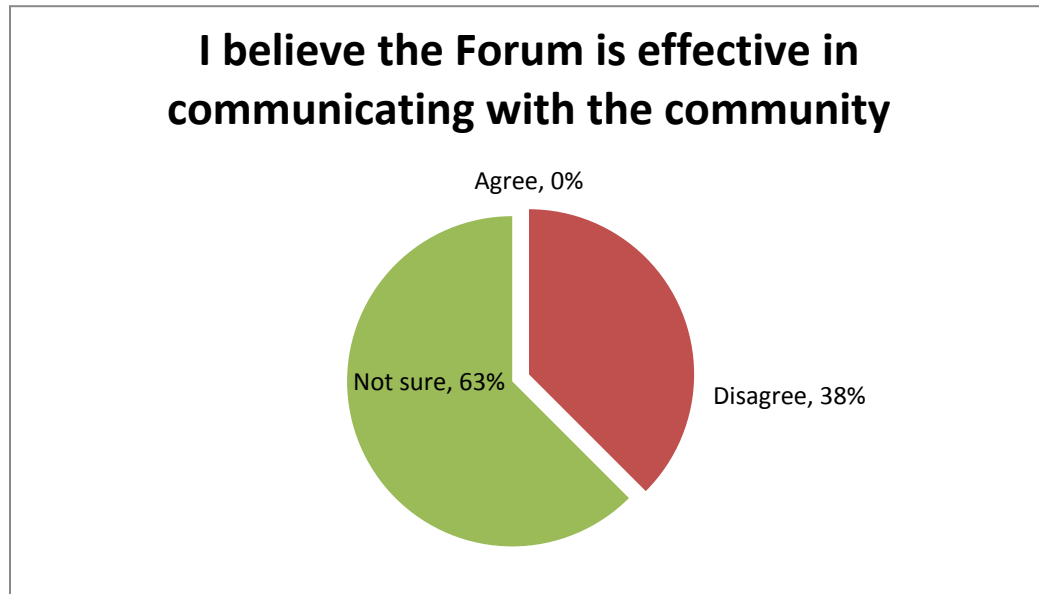
Email was felt to be the most effective method via Admin Support in SBC who can ensure that all information is passed through them. The webpage hosted on SBC was also highlighted as a useful resource to provide an overview of the Forum. However, one participant highlighted previous issues with email communication not being received.

Summary of Improvement suggestions:

- Large documents to be provided on paper copy
- Ensure all members have access to emails
- Request email receipt to ensure everyone has received information
- Ensure email distribution list regularly reviewed to ensure up to date and active

4. Communication with members of community

Results showed that respondents were either unsure (5) or did not feel (3) that the Forum was effective in communicating with members of the community.



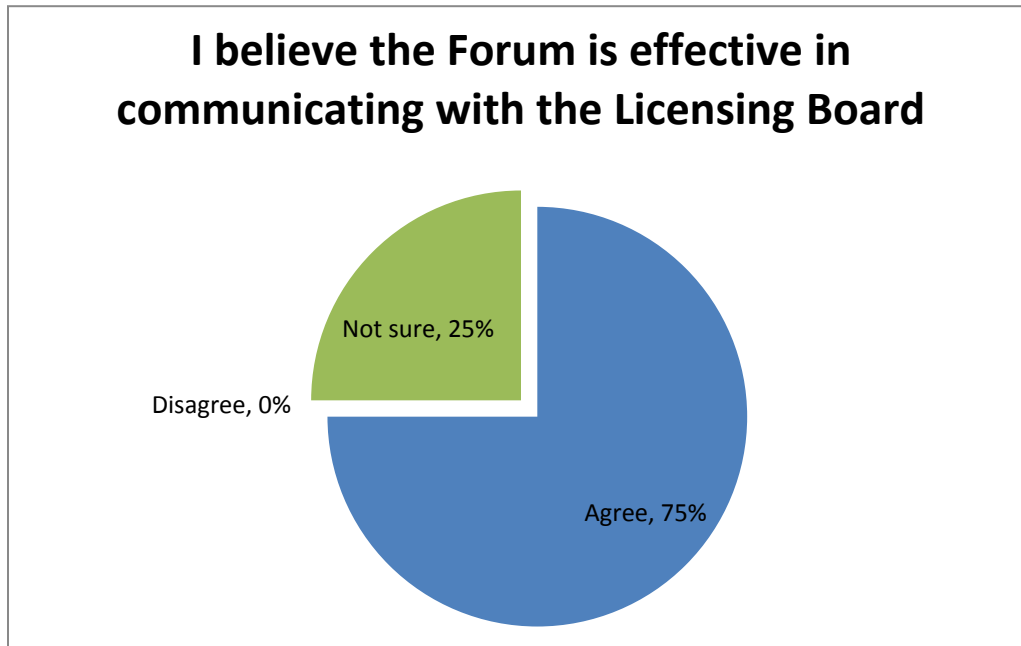
Respondents noted that they were unclear about whether members of the community were aware of the Forum and its role and that comments from the community were not actively sought. Respondents highlighted various previous attempts to do this via website, articles in media, local conference and community council attendance .

Summary of Improvement suggestions:

- More advertising through local media
- Contribute to local community council newspapers and seek feedback
- Improve the involvement of representatives from wider community
- Find out where would be best to inform community about Forum
- Explore how other LLFs are able to bring community views to the table
- Ensure webpage kept up to date with access to minutes etc.
- Briefing note to Community Councils with role of Forum, activities and how they can feed in concerns about licensing from community to Forum
- Follow up on Community Learning and Development representation

5. Communicating with Licensing Board

The majority of respondents (6) felt the Forum is effective in communicating with the Licensing Board however a quarter of respondents were unsure.



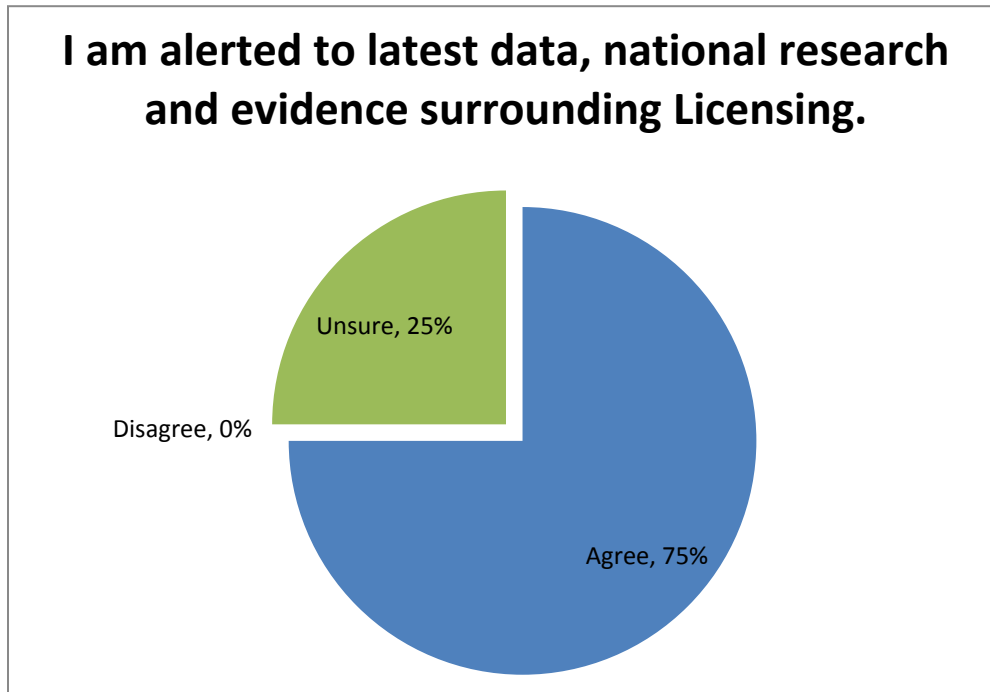
The joint meeting between the Licensing Board and the Forum was highlighted as a helpful process to inform each other of work undertaken in previous year. Respondents highlighted that most board members were both interested in what the Forum was reporting and ‘had some previous knowledge of previous topics which was encouraging’. However some respondents were not sure whether this is as effective as it could be and in particular one participant felt there was still some work to be done to help the board understand how things are ‘at the coal face’. That said, respondents noted that the annual meetings had improved over time with positive dialogue.

Summary of Improvement suggestions:

- Joint Training (3 respondents suggested)
- Discuss in the Forum what would be helpful to receive from the Licensing Board. (? quarterly report to Forum on statistics that were presented at previous annual report)
- Progress suggestions to have 2 annual meetings with the Licensing Board (One for scrutiny and one for training/discussion)
- Ask the Licensing Board what they would find helpful from the Forum
- Revisiting the roles of each and refreshing joint training where the interface could be reinforced and built on
- Continued communication

6. Data, research and evidence

The majority of respondents(6) felt they were alerted to latest data, national research and evidence surrounding Licensing. However a quarter of respondents were unsure.



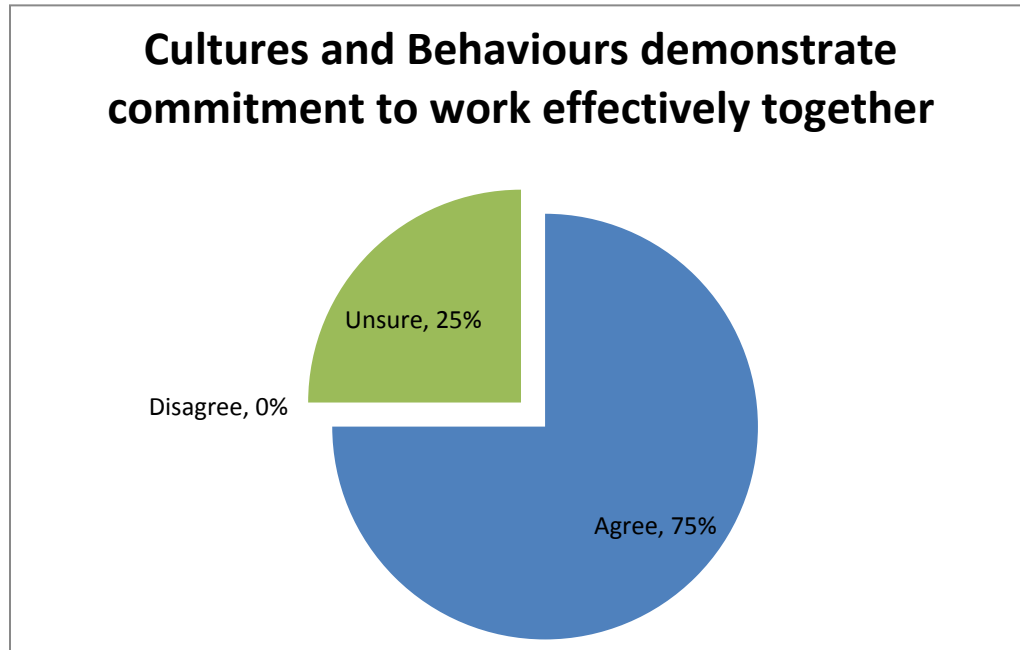
Regular bulletins from Alcohol Focus Scotland, health statistics and consultations were identified by respondents. However it was noted that one participant had identified some interesting studies whilst conducting their own research but had not been alerted to this via the Forum.

Summary of Improvement suggestions:

- Ensure members have access to internet/emails
- Consider development of E-Newsletter for Board and Forum on latest **local** licensing news e.g. update on alcohol profile, test purchasing, responsible drinking initiatives, Best Bar None.

7. Leadership

The majority of respondents (6) felt that the overall culture of the Forums and the behaviours typically displayed by individual members demonstrate a commitment to work together effectively. A quarter of respondents were unsure.



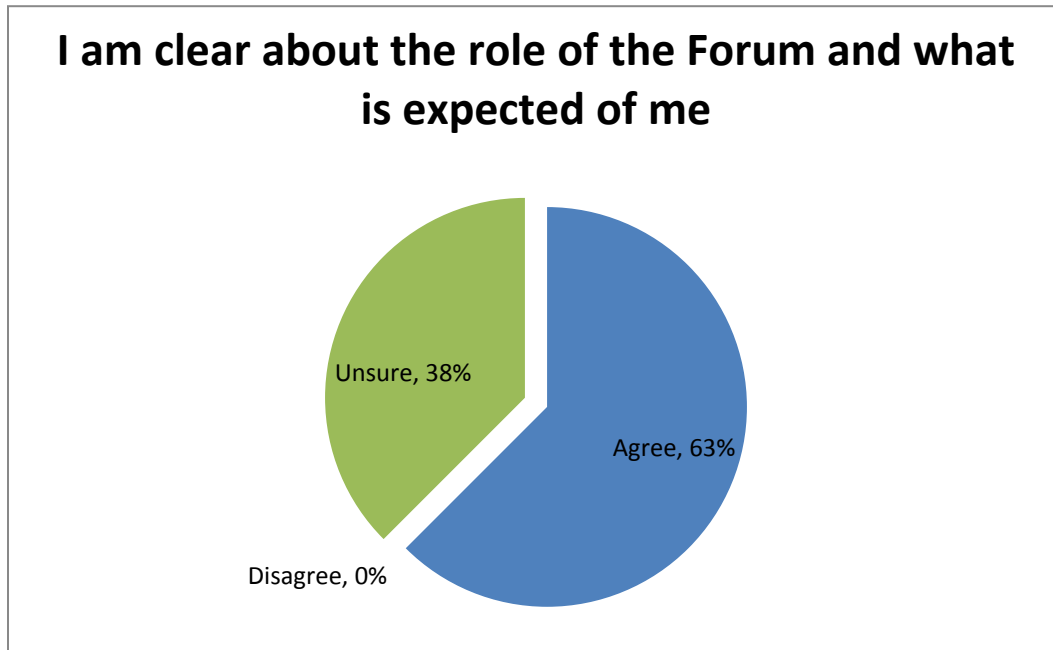
Respondents noted that all members share ideas and there are open and constructive discussions that take place in the Forum meetings. Members are willing to listen to issues/concerns objectively and the Chair recognises what is said. Previous joint work by members was identified and respondents felt there was a good mix within the Forum. Some members were recognised by respondents as 'being more proactive (potentially because of their jobs)' and having staff who work closely with the Board in attendance (LSO and Clerk) was also found to be helpful in discussions.

Summary of Improvement Suggestions:

- Induction training for new members (3 respondents suggested)
 - Group training very beneficial, not sure a DVD would have same effect
 - Could include meeting other Forum members and the different roles e.g. LSO, Trade, Police, Health
- Regular CPD for all members including revisiting the role of the Forum
- As part of the role of the Forum, look at events/sessions which are designed to support the local licensing trade.
- Important that new Forum members are given opportunity to ask questions and feel safe in doing so as well as longer term members.
- Switch off /silence mobile phones

8. Role of Forum

Members were asked if they were clear about the role of the Forum and what is expected of them. 62% (5) of respondents agreed with this however 38% (3) of respondents were unsure.



Some respondents commented that although they were clear on the role of the Forum they were not so clear about what is expected of them other than attend meetings and to possibly get involved in ongoing activity of the Forum. Previous personal license training has also helped understanding for some respondents. One participant commented that 'sometimes I feel we cover more areas than I expected to cover' however it was unclear from this response if this was viewed as positive or not.

9. Training needs

The majority (7) of respondents felt they had sufficient knowledge, understanding and experience of current licensing law in Scotland. When asked if they would like more training on the following areas, the number of respondents who ticked yes is outlined below:

Topic: Licensing Law	Number of respondents who ticked topic as learning need
The purpose of licensing (e.g. to regulate sale of alcohol, the five licensing objectives)	1 (out of 6)
Scottish Borders Statement of Licensing Policy 2013 – 2016	2 (out of 6)
The different roles in licensing (e.g. the Licensing Board, Local Licensing Forum, Health Board, Police, Licensing Standards Officer)	1 (out of 6)
How licensing decisions should be made (e.g. using the statement of licensing policy, legal grounds for grant/refusal)	3 (out of 7)
Developing a statement of licensing policy (e.g. evidence and consultation)	5 (out of 7)
Conditions that can be attached to licensed premises (e.g. national mandatory conditions, local conditions, relation to the sale of alcohol)	2 (out of 7)

Again the majority (7) of respondents felt they had sufficient knowledge and understanding of alcohol issues. When asked if they would like more training on the following areas, the number of respondents who ticked yes is outline below:

Topic: Alcohol Issues	Number of respondents who ticked topic as learning need
The context of alcohol in society (economic impact, role of National and Local Government, advertising policy and impact, effects of drink driving laws)	2 (out of 7)
Impact of Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005	5 (out of 8)
Alcohol and public disorder (e.g. drinking patterns, licensed hours and outlet density, harm reduction measures for licensed premises)	3 (out of 7)
Alcohol and health (e.g. short- and long-term impacts of binge drinking and heavy drinking; level of alcohol use/health harm locally)	1 (out of 5)

Alcohol and social harm (e.g. impact on crime, communities, children, education, social work)	3 (out of 7)
Overprovision (e.g. links between availability of alcohol and alcohol harm)	2 (out of 7)
Strategies to reduce alcohol harm (e.g. population based approach, outlet density, harm reduction, harm prevention, minimum pricing, marketing)	3 (out of 7)

From the survey it appears the following areas of training would be of most benefit to members:

- Impact of Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005
- Developing a statement of licensing policy (e.g. evidence and consultation)
- How licensing decisions should be made (e.g. using the statement of licensing policy, legal grounds for grant/refusal)
- Alcohol and public disorder (e.g. drinking patterns, licensed hours and outlet density, harm reduction measures for licensed premises)
- Alcohol and social harm (e.g. impact on crime, communities, children, education, social work)
- Strategies to reduce alcohol harm (e.g. population based approach, outlet density, harm reduction, harm prevention, minimum pricing, marketing)

Format of training:

Face to face training with inputs from different speakers was the favoured method of delivery. However online and shadowing was also acceptable to some respondents.

	Yes	No	Unsure	Total Respondents
Face to face inputs	87.5% (7)	12.5% (1)	0	8
Online Training	43% (3)	43% (3)	14%	7
Shadowing	29% (2)	71% (5)	0	7

Timing of training:

From information provided, the most desirable timing for training would be afternoon, although 4 out of 5 respondents also noted a full day to be helpful.

	Yes	No	Total Respondents
Morning	80% (4)	20% (1)	5
Afternoon	100% (6)	0	6
Evening	0	100% (2)	2
Full Day	80% (4)	20% (1)	5

One participant highlighted the benefit of having a development day as follows:

- 10.00am – 3.00pm
- Inputs from variety of speakers
- lunch (networking)
- Improvement suggestions from needs identified from survey

10. Other comments made

Some more general comments were made as follows:

- I was fortunate that my job was in a licensed premise. I had also done my personal license holder training. Before joining the Forum, I done formal Forum training with other Forum members from throughout Scotland
- Training by way of speakers would be useful, although sessions would need to be fairly short to ensure retention span, costs would however have a big impact on this.
- The real decisions regarding alcohol misuse are being avoided by Politicians on all sides simply because tackling it would prove unpopular with the voting public. Things will continue in the current vein until either the government’s policies or the public’s perception changes.
- Nothing has been discussed about how the Forum can work with the Licensed Trade as in this economic climate this is important for all communities. Alcohol consumption is controlled on trade and more work should be undertaken to support this area. All data seems to be collected on medical issues and social aspects are being ignored. Hospitality employment is crucial in rural areas and should not be compromised.
- Consider bi-annual conference (previous one carried out in Nov 13) as part of CPD. Like to be made aware of any training for Forum members outwith Borders where other Forums would be attending.
- Some members have just stopped attending. Where this happens could there be an exit type exploration about their reasons for leaving to help identify any improvements required in Forum/understanding of role?