

LICENSING COMMITTEE: 6 February 2007

Report of the Chief Strategic Planning and Environment Officer

ALCOHOL MISUSE ISSUES – DPPW REPORT.

1. Background

1.1 Excess drinking in towns and cities in Wales can lead to unsafe streets, an increased fear of crime and can have a highly negative impact on communities. Where town centres are unruly it has consequences for not just the residents living in the area, but also has a detrimental effect on our tourism industry and other business investments. The huge strain on Police and Health care services as a result of excessive alcohol consumption is well recognised. The Directors of Public Protection in Wales (DPPW) have addressed issues around excess drinking and helping to manage the night-time economy in a recent report.

1.2 The report seeks to highlight the contribution of the public protection services to public safety and health protection and improvement in relation to excess alcohol consumption and other aspects of the night-time economy. The report provides valuable information on the use of alcohol in Wales and a copy of the report is attached as Appendix A for the information of members of the Committee.

1.3 A number of notable practices have been identified in the report all of which have been implemented in Cardiff, including:

- Early advice to residents utilising Councillor involvement.
- Evidence informed mediation to agree appropriate licence conditions.
- Use of non glass and polycarbonate glass initiative.
- Public Safety Campaigns raising awareness of issues relating to use of alcohol.
- Spike it campaigns to reduce drink spiking crime and health issues.
- Trading Standards Alcohol Harm Campaigns to Schools
- Seminars to licence holders.
- Issue of advice packs in respect of licensed premises.
- Targeting Alcohol Related Street Crime initiatives.
- Joined up Intelligence Gathering to identify underage sale issues.
- Partnership multi agency approach to enforcement visits.

1.4 The evidence and notable practice provided in the report will assist in developing local alcohol harm reduction strategies and approaches to managing the night time economy and highlight and illustrate the consequence of public protections interventions in the arena. The report makes it clear that the enforcement and

educational activities carried out help improve the local urban environment thereby attracting more investment and increasing tourism potential, so crucial to the Welsh economy.

2. Achievability

This report contains no equality personnel or property implications.

3. Legal Implications

- 3.1 All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council eg. standing orders and financial regulations; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

4. Financial Implications.

- 4.1 The licensing service is required to be self financing with all expenditure being met from fees and charges which are set nationally. The report has no direct financial implications.

5. Recommendation

- 5.1 It is recommended that the report be noted.

SEAN HANNABY

3 January 2007

CHIEF STRATEGIC PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT OFFICER

This report has been prepared in accordance with procedures approved by Corporate Managers.

Background Papers: None

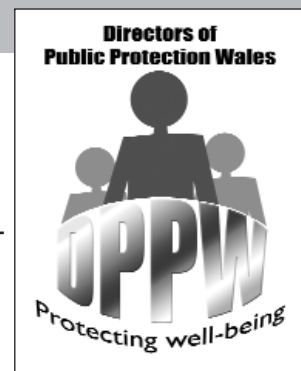
APPENDIX A



Directors of Public Protection Wales



Public Protection services:
addressing alcohol misuse issues



The Directors of Public Protection Wales (DPPW) is the collective organisation of officers heading up public health protection services within local authorities, with the following Mission Statement:

"To protect personal, environmental, economic and social well-being through policy, regulation and education. By these means to create a safe living and working environment for the communities we serve"

Public Protection services include all aspects of licensing, environmental health and trading standards. DPPW has two constituent Heads of Service groups - Wales Heads of Environmental Health and Wales Heads of Trading Standards. Under these groups, there are a selection of specialist/technical panels, and groups focusing on generic aspects of delivery such as training, enforcement, and performance management. We also have representation on an extensive range of fora, advisory groups and steering committees.

This report is the first in a series highlighting Public Protection Services approach and activity around four priority areas (alcohol misuse, smoking, nutrition and liveability) agreed at the DPPW meeting of the 9th September 2005. It was compiled with the support and input of all 22 Local Authority representative members of the DPPW.

The authors would welcome your feedback on the report:

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October 2006

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Foreword - Phil Walton, DPPW Chair



Problems associated with excessive alcohol consumption are now well documented. Excess drinking in towns and cities in Wales can lead to unsafe streets, an increased fear of crime and can have a highly negative impact on our communities. Where town centres are unruly it has consequences for not just the residents living in the area, but also has a detrimental effect on our tourism industry and other business investments. The huge strain on Police and Health care services as a result of excessive alcohol consumption is well recognised.

We believe the publication of this report is timely with the launch of a hard hitting national campaign, called 'Know Your Limits' in October 2006, by the Department of Health and the Home Office. Here in Wales, we seek to contribute positively to the misuse of alcohol agenda.

Public Protection services provided by Local authorities play a significant role in addressing issues around excess drinking and helping to manage the night-time economy. As Directors and managers of these services we recognise this role, have responded positively to it, and are continuously looking to maximise the impact of our services on improving the quality of life of the citizens and communities we serve. This approach is mirrored in the Officers working in Licensing, Environmental Health and Trading Standards teams. We are working together internally, for example through the new licensing regime, and through our response to the Making the Connections agenda have also now forged closer links with other agencies within the 'Welsh public service', for example the Police, Health care services and youth groups. In addition we have a key role in our direct dealings with the licensed trade.

This report seeks to highlight our contribution to public safety and health protection and improvement in relation to excess alcohol consumption and other aspects of the night-time economy. It is intended to illustrate how we can work together to make a difference within Wales, and help Officers at a local level tackle this significant and (typically) growing problem.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Philip Walton', written in a cursive style.

Philip Walton
Chairman
Directors of Public Protection Wales

1. Introduction

Alcohol related problems are significant in Wales. Excessive consumption has a detrimental effect on our towns and cities, and can have adverse effects on people's sense of well being, their sense of safety and their health.

Addressing the impact of excess consumption does not rest with a single agency. A significant number of organisations have an interest regarding alcohol consumption, advising through health promotion, controlling persons and premises, dealing with the consequences for both victims and offenders and treating acute incidents and chronic disease.

All activity in this area takes place in the context of Health Challenge Wales - the national focus of efforts to improve health and well-being. Reducing alcohol and other substance misuse is a key theme of Health Challenge Wales, as are reducing infection, including Sexual Transmitted Disease, and promoting mental health and well-being - both of which link to alcohol misuse.



Health Challenge Wales

A small amount of alcohol (1-2 units a day) can be good for you - drinking in moderation can therefore be part of a healthy diet.

Regularly drinking more than the recommended sensible drinking levels can damage your health.

The sensible drinking levels are:

- No more than 3 to 4 units of alcohol per day for men, and no more than 21 units a week
- No more than 2 to 3 units of alcohol per day for women, and no more than 14 units a week
- A unit of alcohol is:
Half a pint of ordinary strength beer or lager
- One pub measure of spirits
- A small glass of wine

This report identifies the contribution of Public Protection services to this topical 'alcohol issue'. It is timely with the transferring of liquor licensing from Magistrates to Local Authorities from 24th November 2005. As well as highlighting our contribution, the report seeks to show examples of where Public Protection Officers, be they in Licensing, Environmental Health or Trading Standards, have worked with other organisations to make a positive contribution to the quality of life of the citizens and communities we serve. The contribution of Public Protection Services to these aspects of the 'health and wellbeing' and 'community safety' agendas cannot be underestimated.

2. Alcohol: effects and consequences

2.1 Positive contribution

Alcohol plays an important role in our society. Over 90% of adults in the UK population consume alcohol and it is widely associated with pleasure and relaxation. It also makes a substantial contribution to the UK economy, with the alcoholic drinks market generating approximately one million jobs; excise duties on alcohol raising £7 billion per year and contributing 3% to our Gross Domestic Product. The pub and club industry turns over £23 billion a year. (Cabinet Office Strategy Unit 2003). If these figures are extrapolated specifically for Wales, making the reasonable assumption that our situation is much the same as the UK average.



Figure 1

Jobs in Wales	50,000
Excise duty to Exchequer	£350m pa
GDP contribution	3%
Pub & club takings	£1,150m pa

At an individual level alcohol can have a positive impact on health. For example, a small amount of alcohol (1-2 units a day) can help protect against heart disease. Drinking in moderation can therefore be part of a healthy diet. At a community level alcohol consumption often goes hand-in-hand with some form of focused social interaction - be it recreational or through special occasions. In relation to the areas covered in this report there may also be a cultural benefit to this social interaction because of musical performances - all these factors illustrate a positive impact that alcohol can have on the individuals and community well-being.

2.2 Contributory factors

It is widely acknowledged that alcohol is a contributory factor to crime, fear of crime and ill health. Alcohol may have these impacts directly but typically there are more complex interactions between, inter alia, environmental, cultural, social and individual factors that exacerbate or mitigate this impact. For example, crime can lead to alcohol misuse because of the availability of money (proceeds of crimes) or to reduce guilt. Misuse of alcohol (and other substances) is often associated with mental health problems resulting from interactions between the above factors, with around a third of those with a serious mental illness misusing substances (commonly alcohol). Similarly, evidence from recent work by Heddle Dyfed-Powys Police confirms that alcohol related crime is most prevalent on weekends between the hours of 23:00 - 02:00 and is most common in 18 - 25 year olds males - all factors that the media frequently portray - and that compounds peoples' fear of crime. For the purposes of this report, we highlight some of these negative consequences of excess alcohol consumption (and interaction between these factors) as a way of considering approaches that Public Protection professionals are already taking, and can further develop, to maximise their impact in improving the existing situation. The following illustrates some of the consequences of interactions around alcohol misuse at the individual level and attempts to quantify (solely in financial terms) 'the cost of a night out'.

THE COST OF A NIGHT OUT

During an office night out, an incident occurs during which the group's nominated driver is assaulted following an altercation with a teenager who has consumed an excessive quantity of alcohol. The victim sustains a broken jaw, damaged teeth and severe lacerations to his face. The emergency services are summoned. The assailant is arrested and the victim is conveyed by ambulance to the A&E Department at the local hospital

Estimated cost of dealing with this incident

Victim		Assailant	
Activity	Cost	Activity	Cost
Ambulance summoned and patient conveyed to hospital for treatment	£300	Arrested by 2 police officers and taken to police station	£200
2 sessions of dental treatment	£300	Detained in custody suite and processed	£200
6 weeks sickness absence from work	£2,400	Due to drunken state, individual is detained in cells overnight. Bailed the following morning	£500
2 visits as out patient to assess treatment	£500	Formal interview	£150
Received in A&E and examined by specialist detained overnight for observations	£1,000	Arresting officers collect statements from 4 witnesses and prepare and submit report	£1,000
Transferred to specialist unit for facial reconstructive surgery	£10,000	Report forwarded and considered by CPS	£100
2 days recovery in hospital	£1,500	Serious nature of incident requires court hearing including 1 pre trial review	£700
		2 adjourned hearings	£200
		Trial in magistrates court but guilty plea	£500
		Report prepared by Probation Service	£150
		Sentencing hearing	£500
		Administration and supervision of order for 50 hours community service	£750
Total	£16,000	Total	£4,950

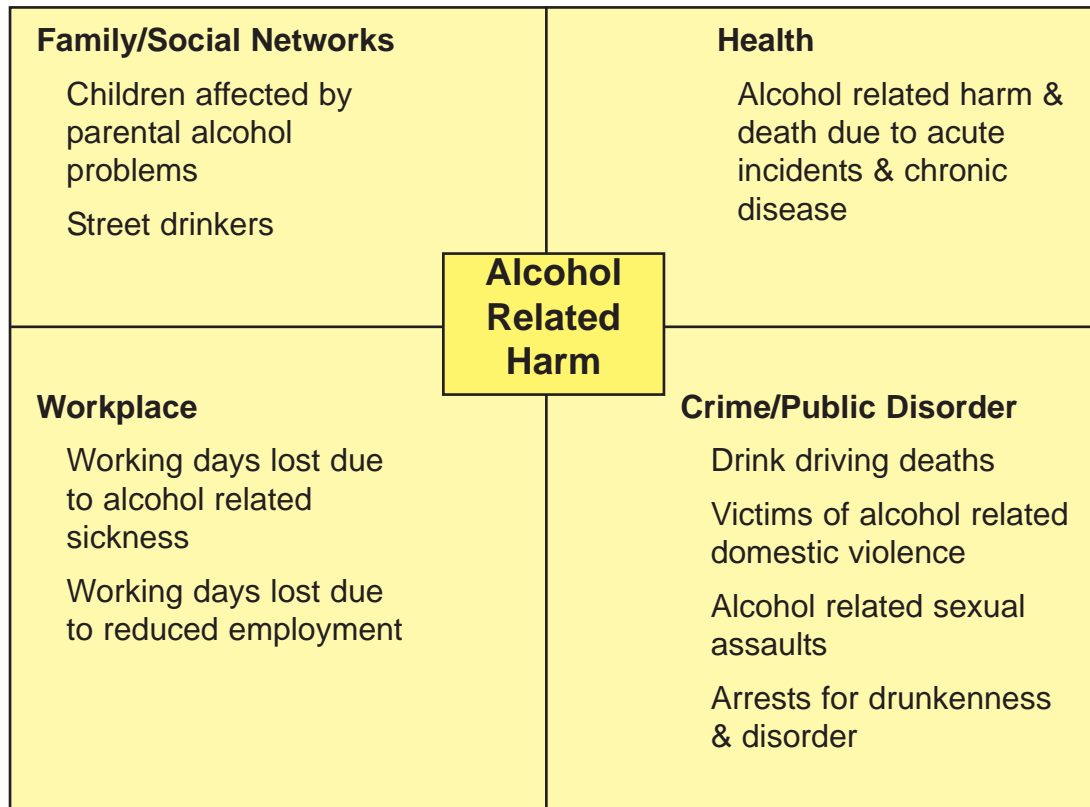
TOTAL COST OF INCIDENT £20,950

Ref - Huw Williams, Assistant Director Environmental Services, Cyngor Sir Ceredigion County Council

2.3 Negative impacts

The above example demonstrates the consequences of excessive drinking - a scenario that our police, ambulance, health care and local authority services are unfortunately all too familiar with. Less apparent than this example are the effects on workplaces and family and social networks, and ultimately commercial productivity, social cohesion and quality of life. The Cabinet Office's Strategy Unit (2003) summarised the consequences of alcohol related harm as follows:-

Figure 2



Costs associated with these harms, on a more macro level, are provided in Figure 3 below. The UK figures are extrapolated to determine what this means for Wales. It can be assumed our costs are comparable to the UK average.

Figure 3

	<u>UK</u>	<u>Wales</u>
Total cost	£20 b/yr	£1,000 m/yr
Health care services bill	£1.7b	£85m/yr
Crime/public disorder bill	£7.3b	£365m
Workplace bill	£6.4b	£320m
Premature deaths	22,000	1,100

There is an array of information provided by the National Public Health Service (NPHS), Institute of Alcohol Studies (IAC), Alcohol Concern, and Police Service, for example to confirm the magnitude of the negative impact alcohol is having on Welsh society. A selection of the more startling and relevant alcohol related figures, from these services, are as follows -

Figure 4 - some facts and figures

In the 11 - 15 year old age range Welsh pupils have highest use of alcohol in the EU

alcohol is a factor in a half of all violent crimes, a third of all domestic violence incidents, and quarter of all suicides.

Alcohol = 9.2% of disease burden in developed countries, compared to 7.4% for obesity, 1.8% for illicit drugs use, and 12.2% for tobacco,.

UK teenagers reported problems from drinking - 21% reduced attainment, 15% sex related, 12% fighting

16% of all road deaths are the result of an individual being over the legal limit

116,000 NHS staff are victims of alcohol related violence each year, (this correlates to 5,800 in Wales alone)

Police reported (in June 05) a 14% rise in assaults in or near licensed premises in one year

28% of our alcohol is consumed by people who are drinking it in risky binges

binge drinkers are 3 times more likely than regular drinkers to get involved in incidents such as fights, thefts or vandalism

These figures illustrate the significant body of evidence suggesting 'alcohol' is a topic we need to tackle in Wales, and tackle as a 'Welsh Public Service' through work with inter alia the Police, Health care and Youth services.

So what are we doing, and what more can we do?

3. The contribution of Public Protection services

In most Welsh Unitary Authorities, Licensing, Environmental Health and Trading Standards service teams sit within the same Division or Department. Services are very much 'joined up' when considering issues around 'alcohol control'. This section of the report considers the work of each professional discipline with examples of notable practice already in place, then outlines existing partnership arrangements, again with examples worthy of note. In all cases these are examples of Notable Practice and not an exhaustive list, much of this activity is occurring in areas additional to that noted in the report. It's also recognised that Officers worked very effectively with Members throughout the period of Licensing transition - particularly in 2005 but also with the continuing new licensing applications in 2006.



3.1 Licensing Services

As stated previously, responsibility for Liquor Licensing transferred from the Magistrates to Local Authorities from 24th November 2005. All Public Protection services across Wales responded positively to this new opportunity, and worked hard in processing the premises and personal licence applications in readiness for this key date.

The overall aim of the Act was to modernise the legislation governing the sale and supply of alcohol and public entertainment licensing. All local authorities developed a Statement of Licensing Policy detailing how they will deal with applications and providing advice and guidance to all involved in the licensing process.

Licensees were required to apply for a new licence from the Local Authority, even if not seeking extended opening hours by 6th August 2005. Applicants had to have regard to the above mentioned Local Licensing Policy Statements, and state how they planned to comply with the 4 licensing objectives, being -

- The prevention of crime and disorder
- The protection of public safety
- The prevention of public nuisance, and
- The protection of children from harm

In early 2006, DPPW conducted a survey of all Welsh Local Authorities to determine the numbers of licences processed and how they had responded to the new challenges that came about with the implementation of the Licensing Act 2003. The numbers of licenses dealt with by Local Authorities, as at January 2006, is provided in figure 5.

Figure 5 *Welsh Facts and figures, January 2006*

		Total Number	<u>Same hrs</u> <u>(%)</u>	<u>Extended hrs</u> <u>(%)</u>	<u>24 hrs</u>
1.	Blaenau Gwent	280	121 (43%)	157 (56%)	2
2.	Bridgend	400	227 (57%)	171 (43%)	2
3.	Caerphilly	585	235 (40%)	347 (42%)	3
4.	Cardiff	1235	625 (51%)	589 (48%)	21
5.	Carmarthenshire	926	583 (63%)	333 (36%)	10
6.	Ceredigion	427	85 (20%)	339 (79%)	3
7.	Conwy	648	336 (52%)	308 (47.5%)	4
8.	Denbighshire	420	210 (50%)	209 (50%)	1
9.	Flintshire	507	125 (25%)	378 (74.5%)	4
10.	Gwynedd	962	625 (65%)	331 (34%)	6
11.	Merthyr	224	101 (45%)	122 (54%)	1
12.	Monmouthshire	418	209 (50%)	208 (50%)	1
13.	Newport	464	198 (43%)	263 (56.5%)	3
14.	NPT	528	264 (50%)	262 (50%)	2
15.	Pembrokeshire	1041	463 (44%)	577 (55%)	1
16.	Powys	966	368 (38%)	594 (61%)	4
17.	RCT	786	456 (58%)	327 (42%)	3
18.	Swansea	1004	700 (70%)	300 (30%)	4
19.	Torfaen	241	148 (61%)	91 (38%)	2
20.	Vale of Glamorgan	399	229 (57%)	166 (42%)	4
21.	Wrexham	396	154 (39%)	234 (59%)	8
22.	Ynys Mon (Anglesey)	396	208 (52%)	185 (47%)	3
	WALES TOTAL	13,253	6,670	6,491	92
	Percentage	-	50%	49%	<1% (0.7%)

Licensing Officers processed this glut of applications, which involved significant negotiations with the statutory consultees, namely the Police, Fire Service, Environmental Health, Trading Standards, Planning and Social Services, as well as with local residents.

Despite certain national media stories to the contrary, figure 5 illustrates there is no '24 hour drinking free for all' in Wales. Premises with 24 hour licences to sell alcohol represent less than 1% of the total number of licensed premises, and these are predominantly certain major supermarkets. Some will retain a 24 hour licence but only use it at certain times, eg at Christmas, in response to increased customer demand.

Officers and Members were therefore able to minimise the potential negative impact on communities by working with those premises which applied for some extensions to existing drinking times, for example opening to 1am or 2am on Friday and Saturday nights. Variations in these numbers extending their hours across Wales are provided in column 3 in figure 5, (excluding 24 hour opening) and represented 49% of the total applications.

Notable Practice -

City & County of Cardiff Early Public Involvement in Licensing decisions

In Cardiff the Licensing Section advised local ward Councillors of every application to vary a licence and in many cases the Councillor issued information letters to local residents and attended residents meetings to provide advice on the details of the application and on how to make their views known and have them taken into account.

Of the 6,583 applications (varied hours) dealt with in Wales, in the majority of cases officers sought to reach agreement, wherever possible, between what applicants and 'responsible authorities' or other 'interested parties', (e.g. residents) wanted. Licensing Officers worked hard to ensure that applicants were made aware of these concerns - so that they could take reasonable steps to address them or amend the application. Only when agreement could not be reached were applications referred to Licensing sub committees for determination. For example, in Conwy following representations at the application stage, four proceeded to a hearing and the vast majority (205) were resolved through the mediation work of the Licensing Officers.

In all areas, applications were considered individually with regard to Local Licensing Policy Statements and the 4 licensing objectives. Intervention by Public Protection professionals often resulted in reduced hours or in the adoption of innovative and/or stringent conditions, be it for the sale of alcohol or for provision of music. For example in Caerphilly, of the 347 premises that sought extended hours for alcohol sale or music, 100 had their hours reduced through Officer and/or Member intervention. Similar figures were reported in other areas, illustrating the impact of Public Protection Officers and Licensing Sub-Committees. This approach had, and continues to have, a direct impact on improving safety and/or the quality of life of local residents and communities.

Great efforts were, and continue to be made to ensure that local people have been able to engage in the process and have their views taken into account. This offers clear demonstration of the way Public Protection Services in Wales continue to respond positively to the central policy driver of citizen- centred services, recently highlighted in Beyond Boundaries (the Beecham Report).

Notable Practice -

Ceredigion CBC Evidence informed mediation to agree licence conditions

As part of the preparation work leading up to the introduction of the Licensing Act 2003, data around public order offences was gathered. Analysis of the data revealed a considerable number of incidents which either gave rise to complaints or required police attendance, centred on hot food takeaway premises that were open late at night. Information about littering and accumulations of waste material in the vicinity of these premises was also collated. As part of the mediation that took place to facilitate the determination of applications, proprietors were

encouraged to put forward conditions to help prevent problems of the above nature. As a result a range of licence conditions have been formally adopted at different premises which has resulted in,

- 9 takeaway food premises having to clean an area of 20m in each direction outside the premises every 3 hours and 30 minutes after closing
- 6 takeaway food premises in Aberystwyth have conditions in place that require them to have CCTV systems in place to monitor the behaviour of customers. The systems are installed in accordance with Heddlu Dyfed Powys Police guidance. Combined with the town centre CCTV system, there is now comprehensive coverage of all the main streets in the town centre.
- 3 takeaway food premises have conditions in place that will require them to engaged door supervisors to ensure that customers behave in an orderly manner.

3.2 Environmental Health Services

Environmental Health Services are responsible for local authority responses to noise, work place health and safety and food safety (as well as other areas not directly connected to issues in this report), along with often broader local authority based health promotion/improvement activity.

A vision for Environmental Health 2012 published by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health in 2001 notes that Environmental Health Practitioners (EHP's) are the only local government professional considered to be a full-time 'public health practitioner' These professionals in Local Authorities work continuously to assess, correct and prevent the impact of 'stressors' on individuals and communities. In relation to alcohol misuse EHP's (and services) impact by addressing social, physical and psychosocial stressors.

Under the Licensing Act 2003 the 'responsible authority' for most premises, in respect of health and safety, is the local authority Environmental Health Service. In this regard Environmental Health Practitioners (EHP) check compliance for employees at work but also have regard to persons using licensed premises. So, for example, if a customer was attacked with a glass in a pub, the Council/EHP could pursue action under Section 3 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 because of the lack of reasonable precautions to protect that individual whilst using their premises.

Notable Practice - Swansea - Polycarbonate 'Glasses' Initiative

Licensing conditions requiring the use of polycarb 'glasses' have been imposed in some cases (under Licensing Act 2003) for key days surrounding sporting events. The initiative was pump primed with the purchase of £6000 worth of polycarb 'glasses' with old glass vessels being taken out of circulation and recycled. No public resistance to the scheme was reported; it was seen as good business sense by premises operators and many are now using them full time.

Broken glass, discarded by drinkers between pubs, can also lead to other injuries as illustrated here (serious laceration caused by stepping onto a broken wine glass stem located on the pavement). Promoting 'polycarb glass' policies in our bars and clubs (following the Swansea notable practice detailed above) again reduces the risk and costs of potential injuries.



Environmental Health Services continue to invest considerable effort into preventing the types of public nuisance (and anti-social behaviour) often associated with alcohol misuse and with 'problem' licensed premises. This work focuses on proactive and reactive noise monitoring and noise control in

relation to bars and particularly their night time activity. One example of the conflict of interest between night time revellers (seeking a good time), and local residents (seeking a peaceful night at home), is shown below.



Notable Practice - Carmarthenshire CC

Think Safe-Drink Safe

The aim of this campaign is to raise awareness of issues relating to alcohol. Specific groups (students, 13-14 year olds, men and women aged 18-30) are being targeted with specific messages (alcohol and violence, dangers of binge drinking, under age drinking, looking after your friends and getting home safely). The Council's graphic design section has come up with an eye-catching logo using the slogan "Think Safe, Drink Safe". The first part of the campaign saw 4 thought provoking posters sent to almost 900 licensed premises across the county.

EHP's are the Local Authority professionals spending the greatest time in 'workplaces' in Wales, and have regard to workplace health issues, including 'alcohol at work' policies. By ensuring employers are considering this aspect of their responsibility, we are going some way towards ensuring people are fit for work, with the consequent impacts on safety and productivity. With the substantial costs to individuals and to business productivity highlighted above in figures 3 and 4 there remains much to address in this area.

Notable Practice - Pembrokeshire CC

Spike-it Campaign

Public Protection Services run this campaign at Christmas and just before the Summer highlighting safe drinking and promoting the use of anti-spiking bottle tops. This initiative seeks to reduce the likelihood of drink spiking and so reduce the risk of crime as well as the likelihood of substance misuse and by reducing the risk of sexual assault of victims may also reduce the risk of transmission of Sexually Transmitted Disease. The initiative is run in partnership with the police and licensees (including door staff) and targets young female drinkers of 18-25 years.

3.3 Trading Standards Services

Trading Standards Services enforce legislation designed to deal with the legal supply of products that are age restricted. Enforcement impacts on alcohol misuse in a number of ways - the protection of the health & well being of young people; the reduction of anti social behaviour and youth nuisance; and the protection of young people from harm. Education is also a crucial mechanism to control use of age restricted products - so that people that are legally entitled to buy them make informed choices to use them in a responsible manner.

Enforcement of the legislation at retail and business premises is carried out by:-

- Advice and information to businesses in the course of routine inspections
- Guidance on establishing staff training systems related to the sale of age restricted products
- "Test Purchase" operations using young people in controlled, supervised conditions to verify that traders are complying with the law
- The provision of "proof of age" cards to young people
- Press and public information to maintain public awareness of the importance of proper enforcement of legislation controlling the supply of age restricted products.

Trading Standards Officers regularly work with Police colleagues conducting alcohol test purchases through a national campaign. The results of the third 'Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaign' (AMEC) are summarised in figure 6 below.

Figure 6 - Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaign in run up to Christmas 2005

Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaign (AMEC) WALES 2005			
<u>Breakdown of Test Purchases by Premises Type</u>			
Premises Type	Actual Number of Test Purchases Attempted	Number of underage sales made	Percentage attempts resulting in a sale
Supermarkets*	285	42	15%
Other off-licensed premises	546	134	25%
(Total off-licensed premises)	(831)	(176)	(21%)
On-licensed premises	100	48	48%
Total Overall	931	224	24%

* National chains ie Aldi, Asda, BHS, Boots, Co-op, Debenhams, Iceland, Ikea, Kwiksave, Lidl, Marks & Spencer, Morrisons, Netto, Oddbins, Pioneer, Sainsbury's Somerfield, Tesco, Thresher, Victoria Wine, Waitrose

Intended Action Arising from 'AMEC 3' in Wales (as of 1.2.06)

Arising from the 224 sales:-

- 22 warnings issued
- 136 matters investigated with a view to prosecution
- 131 Penalty Notice Disorders issued
- 6 applications made for licence review

Figure 6 identifies a significant problem with 'on-Licensed' premises, typically the pubs and clubs. 48% of underage sales were made, the highest figure in the UK recorded during AMEC 3. Acting on these figures, Trading Standards and the Police repeated the exercise in May 2006 (figures not yet available). Appropriate action was taken as a result of these offences, including the serving of 131 Penalty Notice Disorders, which were often reported in the local media, and six applications for existing licenses to be reviewed.

As published in the South Wales Argus 12 October 2006, Trading Standards and Gwent Police that month seized large quantities of alcohol from underaged drinkers in Cwmbran. Alcohol was seized (as shown here) from 24 youngsters, some of whom were as young as 13 years old. Trading Standards and the Police stepped up their patrols in the run-up to Halloween and bonfire night, which the Police reported as notorious times of the year for disorder.



Consumer education of young people includes:

- Advice and information about the health and well being impact of age restricted products
- Social responsibility when legally entitled to use these products
- Financial and health advantages related to non use or educated use of age restricted goods
- The need to provide proper proof of age when requested

Notable Practice - Caerphilly CC

WASTED! ICT teaching resource

This resource covers substance misuse of tobacco, alcohol & solvents for key stage 4 pupils in Personal Social Education (PSE) lessons. It describes misuse of these products from a trading standards angle as well as health, general knowledge and effects on community and family. Compiled jointly by trading standards and P.S.E tutors. Consists of 2 one hour lessons - PowerPoint presentation on trading standards and under age sales for use on white boards, group activities, fact sheets and culminates in the 'WASTED! Quiz' on PC's to test pupil's knowledge gained in the lessons. It has received positive evaluation by tutors, pupils, police, community safety and health professionals.

Notable Practice - Wrexham CBC

Proof of Age Scheme

The Wrexham Proof of Age card was launched in October 1999. The scheme is a partnership involving Wrexham County Borough Council, North Wales Police and Wrexham's Yale College. Most secondary schools in the County Borough are also supportive of the scheme. The scheme became one of the first locally run schemes to be accredited to The Proof of Age Standards Scheme (PASS) in November 2003. PASS is government and industry backed and allows accredited schemes to use the PASS hologram on their cards. The hologram tells retailers that each card is a reliable and credible proof of age. Wrexham cards are provided free of charge to eligible young people living and working in Wrexham. It is estimated that 95% of all young people eligible to possess a card have one.

Business Education includes:

- Information packs for retailers regarding age restricted products
- Reminders through inspections and other enforcement activities about the importance of staff training that ensures the legal supply of age restricted goods.

Notable Practice - Flintshire CC

Proactive Business Advice

Free seminars were offered for those connected with off licences. These were run jointly with North Wales Police. The purpose of the seminars was to improve communication between the licensing trade and the enforcers and to offer advice and help in the areas surrounding the sale of products to those underage. During the seminars a video was shown from CCTV to demonstrate the effect of anti-social behaviour following abuse of alcohol. Also advice was given by the police on how to deal with aggressive customers. Trading Standards officers gave advice on due diligence systems. Some 50% of the off licences attended the seminars. Following open forums at the seminars an under 21 initiative was agreed and put into effect.

Notable Practice -

Blaenau Gwent CBC Training /Advice Packs for Licensed Premises

Advice packs have been sent to all premises licensed to sell alcohol in Blaenau Gwent, by Trading Standards. The packs contain a CD rom of Staff training materials and due diligence advice, Validate posters and information, and other posters to deter proxy purchasing. Approx 250 packs have been distributed.

3.4 Working in partnership

Examples of activities and approaches delivered through partnerships involving public protection services are too many to catalogue here, but some of the innovative examples worthy of note are:

Notable Practice -

Cardiff CC Turning intelligence into outcomes

The Cardiff Violence Prevention Group initiative Tackling Alcohol Related Street Crime (TASC) focussed attention on hot-spots determined by Police and A & E data - casualties in Cardiff have fallen by 30 per cent following this targeted multi-agency intervention. In the past two years the city has also had the lowest level of crime in its Home Office family of 15 similar cities and is ranked the fourth safest UK city compared with 55 others.

Jonathan Shepherd, professor of oral and maxillo-facial surgery at University Hospital, Cardiff as been central to much of this work and believes ""The local authority has been hugely influential in all this - in particular the licensing department..."

Notable Practice -

Flintshire CC Joined up intelligence gathering

Within Flintshire there is an effective Community Safety Partnership that operates a Joint Action Group involving numerous agencies and voluntary bodies. To enable the swift and efficient transfer of intelligence relating to potential sales of underage products including alcohol a dedicated e-mail address has been established underagesupplies@flintshire.gov.uk which is used by the agencies including the police. The quality of intelligence has permitted targeting of specific premises resulting in enforcement action taken to further prevent the sales of alcohol to those underage.

Notable Practice - Wrexham CBC

A Partnership 'NightSafe' Standard

The original Night-safe Standard was developed in 2001 by a broad partnership with representation from the Council, Police, Magistrates, Crown Prosecution Service, Security Industry and Licensees. It comprises of 13 key elements ranging from use of toughened glasses, CCTV and proof of age scheme. The standard aims to reduce the number of assaults and other incidents associated with alcohol misuse in Wrexham Town Centre; and improve the security and safety of people using the Town Centre at night. The Night-safe Standard is an established framework for partnership working which is successful at reducing alcohol related violence and antisocial behaviour, in the Town Centre. The revised Standard aims to assist Licence holders and enforcement agencies to agree minimum standards, which will effectively address the licensable objectives.

Notable Practice -

Newport CC Safer City - joined up premises visits

Environmental Health and Trading Standards officers have been participating in quarterly, night time enforcement sessions in conjunction with officers from the fire service and the police in Newport City centre - targeting the many pubs and clubs. Trading Standards, as per other Welsh LA's, have undertaken covert alcohol test purchases using young volunteers. EHP's, Licensing officers and the fire service have carried joint high profile inspections to clubs and pubs, checking door supervisors, health and safety, fire prevention, noise nuisance controls and compliance with licensing conditions.

Notable Practice -

Carmarthenshire and Swansea Public Protection Services

Have worked with Validate UK through a Crossing the Boundaries: Trading Standards Partnership, to produce a resource pack to assist local businesses in complying with consumer laws.

These few examples show Public Protection Officers are willing participants in partnership arrangements. Many have, or are working to produce, local alcohol harm reduction strategies with our local partners - police, NPHS, Youth Services, Health Alliances, Treatment Services etc.



3.5 Outcomes

What's it like for residents? - in early 2005, Monmouthshire CC Officers (Licensing & Legal) visited residents living on known pub routes - primarily determined by the mapping out 'hot spots' by Officers with local knowledge from both the Council and the Gwent Police. Residents were advised on the changes to licensed premises and possible impact on them.

Quote from one retired Chepstow resident, (aged 62):-

'I don't venture out of my home after darkness on weekends, due to marauding youths and yobbish behaviour. Friends don't come to visit me either'

This perspective underlines why and how Public Protection Services contribution to dealing with alcohol misuse (and the interactions with other factors outlined above), is so crucial to the well-being of citizens and communities.

Praise for the Swansea polycarb glasses initiative (mentioned above) has come from Mr Mike McCabe, Consultant Maxillofacial Surgeon at the A&E Unit, Morriston Hospital:

"Since the introduction of Polycarbonate glasses, I have been aware of a significant reduction in the number of serious glass related injuries.
This is clearly a very welcome and significant benefit, both in terms of the reduction in trauma to patients, and in terms of the costs to the Health Service and impact on service. I would offer this initiative my full support, and commend the Safer Swansea Partnership for its innovation and partnership approach to this issue"

The Challenge of changing behaviour - It is clear that there is an acceptance in current society that 'binge drinking' is the norm, with clear evidence of the consequences in most Welsh towns and cities. Public Protection Officers do not underestimate the challenge of attempting, in the longer term, to change the current drinking culture in Wales. This was recently (May 2006) illustrated by a report commissioned by Caerphilly CBC, conducted by the Trust for the Study of Adolescence (TSA). This report highlighted that young peoples motivation for drinking stems from a complex interaction of the factors highlighted in Section 2.2 above. Further, it demonstrates that young people think of excess drinking as a social norm; a way of escaping; and 'cheap' whereby it was considered 'weird' not to get drunk on a night out.

4. Tackling alcohol related harm together

4.1 Specific Alcohol Misuse Activity

The contributions of local authority public protection services to addressing alcohol misuse, as outlined and exemplified above paint a clear picture of impact and of potential. Specifically around alcohol misuse we see potential for our services to deliver improvements through:

- Increased collaborative working - opportunities around enforcing the Licensing Act 2003 perhaps through more use of protocols between agencies both within a unitary authority area, and across these areas.
- Using the Licensing Review process to engage communities in and provide a direct means of influencing the behaviour of licensed premises.
- Use and add to 'Being Part of It: the Contribution of Environmental Health to Health Challenge Wales'. This CIEH web based resource provides a showcase for good work that is already under way; good ideas and practical advice on taking forward initiatives - several of which also feature in this report.
- Research and development of an evidence base to catalogue the efficacy and efficiency of interventions around alcohol misuse - a clear link to the work of the National Public Health Service as the experts in this area. Much work already exists in this area - we need more effective ways of employing this knowledge.

4.2 Public Protection Services and the Late Night Economy

The South Wales Police and Welsh Local Government Association have done some very early work on managing the late night economy (LNE). A framework to facilitate a meshing together of different agencies plans and activities around this agenda is to be developed. The Assembly Government, WLGA and all police forces in Wales are starting to take this work forward and building on the early work.

There is a clear recognition of the roles that Public Protection Services have in helping manage the LNE and discussions have already taken place around how the DPPW can contribute to this framework. This report and the good practice it starts to draw out are a crucial building block to a successful integrated approach to managing this expanding element of modern day society.

Public Protection Services can bring much to the planning and co-ordinating of responses to the LNE - examples above readily demonstrate how we could tackle elements of the LNE such as substance misuse, crime, and anti-social behaviour. We should also lead others within local authorities in addressing the issues highlighted in Section 1 - for example encouraging early liaison between our licensing officers, planning colleagues and police Architectural Liaison Officers to ensure applications take full cognisance of Sec 17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998. We can and should continue to make connections with other agencies to 'prevent the impact of 'stressors' on individuals and communities' (outlined in Section 3.2, above)

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Public Protection Services are keen to continue our approach to the provision of citizen focused services and building Councils community leadership role. This is achieved by responding directly to public concerns such as those around alcohol misuse, and the interactions around it, that we have described in this report.

This report demonstrates the significant and pivotal role Public Protection services play in addressing alcohol misuse. In a climate of tight financial constraints our services delivered a smooth transition for the new Licensing regime.

We have catalogued 'notable practice' in producing effective early intervention which has had a significant financial benefit to other parts of the 'Welsh Public Service'. Further investment upstream (in prevention and early intervention) has potential to further reduce the service and financial impacts on emergency and care services.

Public Protection services continue to deliver 'better lives' for citizens and communities through the Environmental Health, Licensing and Trading Standards functions highlighted in the report. As such, we have potential to be the hub of activity in managing the night time economy, playing an integral part in crime and disorder reduction, community safety, and health improvement. We can and should work with partners to provide a coherent, integrated response to the challenges posed by increased alcohol availability.

To make this happen, and with cognizance of the Beecham Report, we make the following **recommendations**:

Local Public Protection services should:

- Communicate this report to Licensing Committees, other Elected Members; Directors of Public Health, Local Health Boards; Health, Social Care and Well-being partnerships and to their staff.
- Use the evidence and notable practice presented in this report to assist in developing local alcohol harm reduction strategies and approaches to managing the night time economy (and play a full part in delivering these strategies).
- Highlight and illustrate the consequence of our interventions in this arena - for example our enforcement and educational activities help improve the local urban environment thereby attracting more investment and increasing tourism potential, so crucial to the Welsh economy.
- Continue to gather evidence of the efficacy of our interventions in this area and share this with our partners
- Continue to work corporately as the DPPW to continuously improve our positive impact and share notable practice
- Continue to exploit (for the public good) the relationship we have with the local business community and our local knowledge and networks, for example seeking to engage employers on both alcohol and smoking harm reduction strategies and activities. This would be consistent with the findings of the Hampton Review.
- Play a full part in rolling out 'The Route to Health Improvement' - the WLGA programme to ensure local authorities are fulfilling their roles as health improvement agencies.
- Review our progress, reporting back to DPPW on how we have contributed to alcohol reduction, in 12 months time.

In relation to joining up our responses:

- the content of the report should be used to help create a shared understanding of need by being used in the Health Needs Assessment, as work on the next round of Health, Social Care and Well-being Strategies is commenced. Current strategies expire in March 2008, so work will commence on the content of the new '2008 and beyond' strategies in early 2007.
- Working with our partners we should seek to compile specific alcohol related data on crime (assaults, Anti-social Behaviour) and health treatment (A & E admissions, chronic disease) at local level, to enable us to measure the impact of our interventions. This impact should be measured through reporting to local Health, Social Care and Well-being and/or Community Strategy Partnerships.
- Further consideration should be given to developing 'tactical options' with our partners e.g. alcohol prohibition zones.

External partners (including the Assembly Government) should:

- Respond positively to Public Protection services' calls for a more joined up response to action to tackle alcohol misuse issues and to more effectively manage the night time economy.
- Recognise the pivotal role Public Protection services play in addressing these issues and invest proportionately in the prevention and early interventions we are championing.

We will continue to play our part in providing joined up solutions to the socially complex and financially draining issue of alcohol misuse.

References

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- Trust for the Study of Adolescence (TSA) - *Binge Drinking amongst people aged 18-25 in Caerphilly County Borough*; May 2006