

**Safer and Stronger Communities
Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

16 February 2015

**Alcohol Harm Reduction –
Strategy Consultation and Update**



Report of Anna Lynch, Director of Public Health

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Members of the Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee with progress of the implementation of the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy 2012-15 and to consult Members on the proposals for the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy 2015-17 for County Durham.

Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy 2012-15

2. The Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy 2012-15 was implemented from November 2012 and sought to:

“To reduce the harm caused by alcohol to individuals, families and communities in County Durham while ensuring that people are able to enjoy alcohol responsibly.”

3. The strategy was separated into three distinct themes of prevention, treatment for recovery and control underpinned by eight objectives of the strategy:
 1. To use targeted approaches to raise public awareness in County Durham of the harm caused by alcohol by promoting consistent messages about drinking.
 2. Provide specific targeted training and education to support individuals, professionals, communities and local businesses to address the harm caused by alcohol.
 3. Engage with children and young people to develop age and gender specific information, activities, services and education to prevent alcohol related harm.
 4. Increase the gathering, sharing and use of intelligence to reduce the number of alcohol related incidents and alcohol related offending impacting upon communities.
 5. Engage with licensees and target licensed premises where necessary to ensure that licensed premises are managed responsibly.

6. Ensure a coordinated approach to policy development, planning and adoption of legislation.
 7. Commission and deliver effective treatment and recovery services in line with national guidance and undertake work to identify the needs of particular groups where the data is limited e.g. pregnant women.
 8. Involve and support young people, families and carers (including young carers) living with alcohol related issues in order to break the cycle of alcohol misuse.
4. Work has been undertaken in relation to the implementation of the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy including:
- Responding to the Government's Consultation on Minimum Unit Price;
 - Examining the feasibility of the implementation of Early Morning Restriction Orders (EMROs) and a Late Night Levy (LNL).
 - Establishing a Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP) in Peterlee to tackle young people drinking alcohol building on the original CAP in Stanley.
 - The implementation of Operation ARIES has rolled out the concept of CAP across all neighbourhood policing areas in County Durham.
 - Emphasis on proxy provision of alcohol to under-18s and together with enforcement activity directed towards people supplying under-18s with alcohol.
 - There have been a number of multi-agency enforcement operations which have focused on licensing checks and test purchases. This has led to a number of reviews of licence premises across the County. In 2013 there were 9 reviews with 5 licences revoked. In 2014 there were 11 reviews with 3 licences revoked. To date in 2014/15 there have been 2 reviews which are on-going.
 - The Wear Community Alcohol Project was established following the funding provided from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) through Baroness Newlove. Diversionary activity was established in the area, led by the local communities, as well as education on alcohol throughout the schools and with parents, enhanced enforcement activity including alcohol seizures and test purchasing. Baroness Newlove visited the County in February 2013 to look at progress in the project.
 - The Baroness Newlove project provided the ability to try and develop new things. A leaflet on alcohol for parents and carers was developed locally and has now been rolled out across County Durham.

- Durham County Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Children and Young People undertook a review of alcohol and under 18s. Recommendations included:
 - i. Encouraging school governing bodies to refresh of their policies on alcohol and substance misuse.
 - ii. Reminding NHS Foundation Trusts in the North East are reminded of their clear duty to share information where children are at risk, in this instance young people who attend Emergency Departments with alcohol related injuries.
 - iii. Consider how to increase awareness among parents of the dangers of alcohol to their children and advice about safe drinking under 18.
 - iv. Continue to support the work of Balance in its quest to make changes in minimum unit pricing of alcohol, alcohol advertising and changes to licensing legislation.
 - v. Raise the issue of alcohol sales and advertising in cinemas where films are rated as U or PG.
 - vi. Ensure a 'Think Family' approach is used when parental alcohol and/or substance misuse is identified.

- *An Alcohol: What's the Price Event* was held in December 2012 in Durham City market place featuring a large number of partner organisations. The event received positive feedback from the public who were pleased to see that the Partnership is addressing alcohol.

- In December 2014 the police and partners launched a #deaddrunk campaign targeting drunk pedestrians and motorists to increase awareness of drunk people walking home after a night out.

- Alcohol Free Band nights have been established in the Consett area building on the success of the nights in Stanley.

- A number of Staysafe Operations have taken place to take drunk and vulnerable young people to a place of safety to be collected by their parents or carers. Where alcohol is an issue, the young person and their family received an intervention by 4Real.

- The Alcohol Seizure Procedure was a finalist in the Problem Oriented Partnerships Awards in 2013 around Child Sexual Exploitation.

- East Durham Health Network implemented an "Eyes and Ears" campaign designed to increase intelligence around alcohol and young people as well as implementing a campaign around proxy provision.

- A social norms project has been implemented across the majority of secondary schools within the County designed to reduce young people's perception of alcohol use amongst their peers. Initial results indicate that the majority of young people do not drink alcohol regularly. This is in line with the picture nationally – more importantly they are more likely to go to their parents
- An Alcohol Diversion scheme was implemented in custody suites across County Durham in November 2013. There were 398 referrals received of which 94 attended the intervention delivered through 12 courses.
- Training has taken place with some doctors from A&E in relation to the implementation of the “Cardiff” model which records the location of assaults for people who end up in hospital.
- Alcohol related hospital admissions have, for the first time since 2003, started to reduce.
- Following a consultation undertaken by Age UK on our behalf action to raise awareness of the impact of alcohol on older people has begun in partnership with Age UK. This has seen the development of age-specific literature around alcohol and older people as well as training of Age UK “alcohol champions”.
- Consultation has been undertaken with men age 25-44 years who are the primary group where prevention activity is key to reduce alcohol admissions in the medium to long term. The findings from this consultation will be taken forward following the implementation of the new drug and alcohol service
- A Student Safety was established in 2014 to support the develop an Alcohol policy across the University, reduce the acceptability amongst college bars and student union for organised bar crawls, use social norms marketing campaigns to increase protective factors to help students to remain safe and latterly a river safety audit.

Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy 2015-17

5. County Durham Partnership adopted alcohol harm reduction as a cross-cutting theme in late 2014. As a result, it is proposed that the structure of the new strategy is focussed around the five Altogether themes underpinning County Durham Partnership: Safer, Healthier, Better for Children and Young People, Wealthier and Greener.
6. It is proposed that the vision for the strategy remains largely unchanged from the previous strategies:

“To reduce the harm caused by alcohol to individuals, families and communities in County Durham while ensuring that adults who choose to drink alcohol are able to enjoy it responsibly.”

7. It is proposed that the objectives of the strategy link with the objectives already in place for each of the five themes of County Durham Partnership which will lead to six objectives:
- I. To reduce the harm caused to communities by tackling alcohol related crime and disorder;
 - II. To reduce alcohol consumption to a level where health inequalities and early deaths due to alcohol in County Durham are significantly reduced;
 - III. To develop a culture where young people choose not to drink alcohol, where access to alcohol from friends, parents and siblings is minimised and the negative impact alcohol has on the lives of children, young people and their families is reduced;
 - IV. To reduce the harm that alcohol has on the workforce in County Durham to increase the number of competitive and successful people available for the local labour market;
 - V. To reduce the harm that alcohol has on the cultural and tourism ambitions for the County.
 - VI. To improve the environment by reducing the impact that alcohol, particularly alcohol related litter, has on the environment in County Durham.
8. Task groups will be established to develop and lead on the implementation of comprehensive action plans for each objective.

Recommendation

14. Members of the Committee are asked to:
- (i) Note the contents of the report; and
 - (ii) Discuss, comment and feedback accordingly.

Background Papers

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – Implementing new strategy will be based on existing resources there will be no additional funding to develop awareness raising campaigns etc. Where available, external funding opportunities will be sought to aid implementation

Staffing – None

Risk - None

Equality and Diversity/Public Sector Equality Duty – The new strategy is a population level strategy that will not discriminate against anyone due to their religion, race, gender, disability or age.

Accommodation - None

Crime and Disorder – Crime and disorder is a distinct section within the new strategy.

Human Rights – None

Consultation – A stakeholder consultation took place on 6th February 2015 and further consultation will be undertaken with AAPs and their youth forums.

Procurement – None

Disability Issues – None

Legal Implications – None