

19 June 2015



Draft Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy

Report of Anna Lynch, Director of Public Health

Purpose of the Report

1. This report is to inform the Safer Stronger Overview and Scrutiny Committee on draft proposals for the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy (AHRs) 2015-20 and to seek their feedback and comments on the draft document.

Background

2. The Safe Durham Partnership launched its initial three-year Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy in July 2009 which was refreshed in 2012. This report introduces the third iteration of an Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy for County Durham.
3. A multi-agency Alcohol Harm Reduction Group was established to drive forward the implementation of the strategy. The group is accountable to the Safe Durham Partnership, but also reports bi-annually to the Health and Wellbeing Board and Children and Families Partnership. The Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy was underpinned by an action plan which has been reviewed annually.
4. In 2014 the County Durham Partnership identified alcohol as a cross cutting theme. The Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy has been reconfigured around all five of the Altogether themes.
5. In February 2015 members of the Safer Stronger Overview and Scrutiny Committee were amongst the first to be consulted on the development of the draft alcohol harm reduction strategy. At this time members supported the continued vision within the proposed strategy and the alignment to the wider 'Altogether' themes of the County Durham Partnership. The committee also unanimously support continued lobbying for minimum unit pricing.
6. The consultation for the draft strategy continues until 12th July 2015. Management teams within the authority, and wider stakeholders have now had an opportunity to shape the document into its current form.
7. The draft vision of the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy remains unchanged:

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

8. The draft vision is underpinned by six draft key objectives related to the five Altogether Themes:
 - Altogether Safer
Objective 1: To reduce the harm caused to communities by tackling alcohol related crime and disorder and vulnerability.
 - Altogether Healthier
Objective 2: To improve health inequalities and reduce early deaths in County Durham by reducing alcohol consumption across the population
 - Altogether Better for Children and Young People
Objective 3: To build resilience and develop a culture where children and young people choose not to drink alcohol; and to reduce the negative impact alcohol has on the lives of children, young people and their families through parental alcohol use.
 - Altogether Wealthier
Objective 4: To increase the number of competitive and successful people in the County Durham workforce by reducing the negative impact that alcohol has on work attendance and productivity, and,

Objective 5: To expand the night time economy offer through the promotion of responsible drinking practices and through the development and promotion of alcohol free alternatives.
 - Altogether Greener
Objective 6: To reduce the negative impact that alcohol has on the physical environment in County Durham.
9. There are three strategic actions which cut across each of the key objectives relating to minimum unit price for alcohol, restricting alcohol advertising and changing the licensing legislation.
10. There is a further period of consultation on the draft document until 12th July 2015. Durham County Council's Cabinet will formally endorse the document on 21st October 2015.
11. It is proposed that Task Groups will be established under each of the Altogether themes to drive forward the implementation of the strategy. A senior member of the Alcohol Harm Reduction Group will lead on each Altogether theme. Each Task Group will develop an action plan based on the high level actions included in the "to achieve our objectives we will" section of the strategy.

Recommendations

12. The Safer Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee is requested to:
- (i) Read and discuss the draft strategy; and
 - (ii) Provide comments, amendments or omissions in relation to the draft document to Kirsty Wilkinson (kg.wilkinson@durham.gov.uk) by 12 July 2015.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

Additional resources will be used to implement the strategy

Staffing

No adverse implications

Risk

No adverse implications

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

A Full EIA has been complete.

Accommodation

No issues

Crime and Disorder

Implementation of the alcohol harm reduction strategy will have positive impacts on the reduction of alcohol related crime and disorder.

Human Rights

No adverse implications

Consultation

A full plan for consultation has been developed.

Procurement

No issues

Disability Issues

No issues

Legal Implications

No issues