

**ALCOHOL LINKED ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR**

**1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1.1 This Committee has previously received a report detailing the present position regarding the challenges and issues surrounding Youth on Wirral. At the conclusion of their scrutiny into that report Members requested a report detailing the levels of anti social behaviour associated with alcohol.

**2.0 BACKGROUND**

2.1 Alcohol misuse associated with anti social behaviour amongst adults and young people on Wirral is experienced as much during daytime as evening and night time hours. Interventions to minimise the negative impact alcohol has on behaviour take place at locations where analysis indicates that alcohol related anti social behaviour will take place. This analysis is based upon information gathered from crimes and incidents reported to Police, and Community Patrol Officers. Also from people presenting at Arrowe Park Accident and Emergency Department with alcohol related injuries. Education on the dangers associated with improper use of alcohol takes place amongst the suppliers and users of alcohol. Where education is ignored enforcement of legislation and situational measures are taken to reduce the impact of alcohol fuelled anti social behaviour. Despite this multi faceted approach the trend in alcohol related incidents shows a rise over the last year.

2.2 The alcohol related anti social behaviour detailed within this report is confined to reports of anti social behaviour made to Merseyside Police and Wirral's Community Patrol Service only. Merseyside Police operators note at the time the incident is reported that it is one involving alcohol and this report makes use of that facility. This system of identifying alcohol related incidents at the time the report is made is in its infancy in respect of Community Patrol.

**3.0 PRESENT POSITION**

3.1 In the year to February 2007 anti social behaviour by adults accounted for 38% of the total and 62% involved young people.

3.2 The largest category of anti social behaviour involving adults is behaviour involving nuisance neighbours and anecdotal evidence from Wirral's anti social behaviour team is that around half of this behaviour involves alcohol. 98% of anti social behaviour involving young people reports young peoples' rowdy and inappropriate gathering. It is not possible to assess what percentage of these reports involve alcohol.

3.3 Incidents involving alcohol are evenly spread between daytime and night time. 47% of all alcohol related incidents take place between 7am and 7pm each day and the remaining 53% occur after 7pm. The trend for anti social behaviour incidents involving

alcohol taking place between April 2006 and February 2007 shows a slight downward trend with numbers reducing from a level of 40 incidents per week at the start of the year to a level of 35 incidents taking place during the final week of February.

- 3.4 Based upon intelligence and reports they receive, the Trading Standards Department conduct a number of test purchasing operations throughout the year. During these operations a young person below the legal age to purchase alcohol, supervised by Trading Standards Officers, attempts to make a purchase of alcohol from the targeted premises. During the first four months of this year, 75 attempts have been made to purchase alcohol using this method. On only 14% of these occasions has a sale been made and on each occasion this has resulted in a prosecution of the offending premises. Whilst any purchase of alcohol using this method represents a failure in the system, it is pleasing to note that the number of occasions when a successful purchase has been made is reducing year on year.
- 3.5 There are seven Alcohol Exclusion Zones in place on Wirral which provides Police Officers with the power to seize alcohol and report for summons people consuming alcohol outdoors within the designated area. During the first four months of this year 22% of all alcohol related incidents took place within the designated exclusion zone areas.
- 3.6 Public perception of alcohol and its link to anti social behaviour is measured annually using the Citizens Panel survey. In the latest survey 4.1% of the respondents answering believed that under age drinking in streets and parks was a problem. A second question asked if drinking alcohol most concerns you in your local area. 55.2% of the total respondents indicated that it did.

#### 4.0 **INTERVENTIONS TO REDUCE ALCOHOL RELATED ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR**

- 4.1 Techniques used to reduce the level of anti social behaviour involving alcohol include situational measures, education and enforcement of the law.

##### 4.2 Situational Measures

- 4.2.1 These include removing people from flash points for alcohol related anti social behaviour. Queues for transport home at club and entertainment centres are reduced by the provision of a late night bus service operating from the major night time entertainment centres on Wirral which, for a modest charge, removes an average of 3,400 revellers per month. A strong pub watch scheme has operated with currently 124 members existing across Wirral. Benefits of membership include the exclusion from all member premises of people who have behaved in an anti social or criminal way in any one of the licensed premises who are part of the scheme. This exclusion can last for a period of up to two years. The properly managed sharing of information, including photographs or excluded people amongst pub watch members, ensures the effectiveness of the banning order. 61 people are currently excluded from entering licensed premises on Wirral through this pub watch scheme.

##### 4.3 Education

- 4.3.1 Education used to reduce the levels of alcohol related anti social behaviour takes place amongst licensed premises, young people and the general public. Best Bar None is a scheme introduced across Wirral in 2006 with the aim of improving the management of licensed premises and to recognise and reward those premises achieving the high standards.

- 4.3.2 Pubs, bars and clubs across Wirral were invited to submit applications for accreditation and to compete for the "Best" titles. Following the assessment phase, the top three

scoring premises went before a panel of judges to determine the Best Bar, Pub and Club and their runners' up. Once the category winners had been decided upon they were then judged against each other to determine the overall Best Bar None for Wirral 2006. An Accreditations ceremony took place where the Mayor presented all successful premises with plaques. Gold Accredited premises were presented with tickets for the Wirral Tourism Awards for Excellence event, were the winners of each category would be presented with the plaque for being best in category. The overall winner and "Best Bar None" for Wirral 2006 was announced. The winners were: Best Pub – The Red Cat in Greasby; Best Bar – Café Bar Cuba in Hoylake and the Best Club was Playas Lounge in New Brighton.

4.3.3 All non-accredited premises have received written feedback on their performance and the areas where improvement may be made and a 'Best Practice' booklet is now available.

4.4 The Drugs and Alcohol Team (DAAT) have commissioned outreach youth workers to engage young people in identified anti social behaviour and alcohol hotspots, and to offer advice and alternative forms of activity for the young people.

4.5 Wirral's Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy has secured funding which will be directed towards marketing campaigns throughout the year. The aim of the campaigns will be to highlight the dangers associated with the excessive and inappropriate use of alcohol. This year the funding will support research in relation to under age sales of alcohol being completed by the Trading Standards Department.

#### 4.6 Enforcement

4.6.1 A close working relationship exists between the Trading Standards and Licensing Divisions within the Council and Police Licensing Department. Joint inspections of licensed premises takes place with regular visits to those premises deemed to be high risk. The combination of the different powers available to the various agencies brought together in a focussed visit has greater impact than single agency visits done separately. Enforcement of the various powers has resulted this year in three licensed premises being called in for a review of their licence, and six premises being served with temporary closure orders preventing them from trading for breach of their licensing conditions.

4.6.2 Police Officers have the power to seize alcohol from under age young people and where alcohol is being consumed in a prohibited zone. So far this year an average of 44 seizures are made per week. The alcohol seized covers the full spectrum of intoxicants and is seized from all areas of the Borough.

#### 4.8 Performance Indicators Linked to Alcohol Related Anti Social Behaviour

4.8.1 A number of strategies exist which are directly linked to the inappropriate use of alcohol and the consequences that it may bring. Wirral has an Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy which focuses upon three key areas:

- Identification and Treatment;
- Young People;
- Crime, Disorder and Community Priorities

The Action Plan is managed by the Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT). The DAAT is also required to produce a Young Persons Substance Misuse Plan. Managed by the Youth Offending Service this includes action being taken to reduce the negative impact of alcohol on young people. Finally the Woodchurch Neighbourhood Element which began work in April 2006, includes alcohol as one of its four key outcome areas. The Woodchurch Neighbourhood Management Board have commissioned work associated

with the inappropriate use of alcohol which includes interventions for treatment, education and diversionary activity for young people.

- 4.9 Performance indicators are being developed within the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy linking anti social behaviour to alcohol consumption/misuse but this is the only strategy making that direct link.

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5.0 **FINANCIAL & STAFFING IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no financial and staffing implications arising from this report.

6.0 **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no equal opportunities implications arising from this report.

7.0 **LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no local agenda 21 implications arising from this report.

8.0 **LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no local Member support implications arising from this report.

9.0 **HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There are no human rights implications arising from this report.

10.0 **COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 Inappropriate use of alcohol does bring with it negative consequences for the levels of anti social behaviour and crime on Wirral. It is an area constantly under review when determining tactics and a great deal of partnership working is underway in order to achieve success.

11.0 **PLANNING IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 There are no planning implications arising from this report.

12.0 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 12.1 There are no background papers to this report.

13.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

- 13.1 This Committee note the contents of this report.

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This report was prepared by Steve McGilvray who can be contacted on 606 5485.