



## Licensing, Health and Safety and General Purposes Committee

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Monday, 21 March 2011</b>
<b>Time:</b>	<b>6.00 pm</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Committee Room 1 - Wallasey Town Hall</b>

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### AGENDA

**1. MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members are asked to consider whether they have personal or prejudicial interests in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state what they are.

**2. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 2)**

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2011.

**3. APPLICATION TO ALLOW A FIXED STEP TO BE FITTED TO HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLES (Pages 3 - 12)**

**4. REVIEW OF MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE DRIVERS (Pages 13 - 22)**

**5. AMENDMENT TO MEMBERSHIP OF LICENSING PANEL**

Further to minute 35 (10/1/11) the Committee is requested to appoint a replacement for Councillor Tom Anderson on the Licensing Panel.

**6. DRAFT SEXUAL ENTERTAINMENT VENUE POLICY (Pages 23 - 40)**

**7. CONSULTATION - MINIMUM PRICE FOR ALCOHOL (Pages 41 - 152)**

**8. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS ACCEPTED BY THE CHAIR**

To consider any other business that the Chair accepts as being urgent.

## LICENSING, HEALTH AND SAFETY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Monday, 10 January 2011

Present: Councillor S Taylor (Chair)

Councillors G Ellis K Wood  
WJ Davies D Roberts  
S Niblock J Salter  
T Anderson R Wilkins

Deputies: Councillors P Johnson (in place of I Lewis)

### 32 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to consider whether they had personal or prejudicial interests in connection with the item on the agenda and, if so, to declare them and state what they were.

No such declarations were made.

### 33 MINUTES

**Resolved - That the minutes of the meetings held on 13 September and 8 November 2010 be approved.**

### 34 LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT 1982

The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management submitted a report which sought the approval of Members to the proposed adoption of the amendments to Schedule 3 of The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 made by Section 27 paragraph 2(2) of Schedule 3 to the Policing and Crime Act 2009, in order that it may be recommended to Council for final approval on the 14 February 2011 and for the provision to come into force on the 1 April 2011. Approval was also sought to recommend to Council that any application under the above amended legislation be delegated to this Committee for determination.

Councillor Kate Wood was content with the recommendation in paragraph 12.1 of the report.

**It was moved by Councillor Kate Wood and seconded by Councillor Tom Anderson that -**

“Upon resolving to adopt the amendments to Schedule 3 of The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 a further report be brought to this Committee

presenting a draft policy in respect of applications for both sex establishments and sexual entertainment venues”

**The motion was put and carried (10:0).**

**It was further moved by Councillor Sue Taylor and seconded by Councillor Kate Wood that -**

“(1) Members of this committee approve and recommend to Council for final approval at its meeting on the 14 February 2011 the adoption of the amendments to Schedule 3 of The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 made by Section 27 paragraph 2(2) of Schedule 3 to the Policing and Crime Act 2009 in order for the provision to come into force on the 1 April 2011.

(2) Members recommend to Council that any application under the above amended legislation be delegated to this Committee for determination.”

**The motion was put and carried (10:0).**

**Resolved (10:0) -**

(1) That Members of this committee approve and recommend to Council for final approval at its meeting on the 14 February 2011 the adoption of the amendments to Schedule 3 of The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 made by Section 27 paragraph 2(2) of Schedule 3 to the Policing and Crime Act 2009 in order for the provision to come into force on the 1 April 2011.

(2) That upon resolving to adopt the amendments to Schedule 3 of The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 a further report be brought to this Committee presenting a draft policy in respect of applications for both sex establishments and sexual entertainment venues.

(3) That Members recommend to Council that any application under the above amended legislation be delegated to this Committee for determination.

35 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Councillor Sue Taylor informed Members that Councillor Tom Anderson had resigned from the Licensing Panel and would be replaced in due course.

**Resolved - That this be noted.**

## WIRRAL COUNCIL

### LICENSING HEALTH AND SAFETY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

21 MARCH 2011

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>APPLICATION TO ALLOW A FIXED STEP TO BE FITTED TO HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLES</b>
<b>WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF LAW HR AND ASSET MANAGEMENT</b>
<b>RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:</b>	<b>COUNCILLOR SUE TAYLOR – COMMITTEE CHAIR</b>
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>NO</b>

#### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for Members to consider an amendment to the conditions of fitness for Hackney Carriage Vehicles to permit a fixed step to be fitted to Hackney Carriage Vehicles where the top tread for the entrance exceeds 38cm in height from ground level.

#### 2.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

- 2.1 That Members consider whether to amend the conditions of fitness for Hackney Carriage Vehicles to permit a fixed step to be fitted as an alternative to the moveable intermediate step where the entrance to a Hackney Carriage Vehicle exceeds 38cm.

#### 3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 3.1 It is a requirement for this Committee to determine any change in policy.

#### 4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The current Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence conditions of fitness state that where the top tread for the entrance to a Hackney Carriage exceeds 38cm then a moveable intermediate step must be provided at each entrance into the passenger compartment. The intermediate step must be encased beneath the vehicle. When not in use and whenever the vehicle is in motion the step must not extend outwards beyond the vertical line of the bodywork. The step must be covered with a suitable non-slip surface with the edges of the step highlighted yellow. The purpose of the condition is to assist access into and egress out of the vehicle.

4.2 The following vehicles are currently required to comply with this condition:

- Cab Direct Peugeot E7
- Patons Fiat TW200
- JAG VW Eurocab
- JAG Mercedes T1 Eurocab

These vehicles all have a top tread for the entrance to the vehicle exceeding 38cm and they are currently fitted with moveable intermediate steps.

4.3 It has been reported to the Licensing Service by a Proprietor who owns a number of these vehicles and also undertakes repairs on such vehicles, that a number of these type of vehicles have required new steps to be fitted due to damage and failure of the retraction mechanism. It is reported that this is a common problem due to dirt clogging the mechanism and damage from driving over speed bumps. The availability of replacement steps is limited and delays are experienced in making repairs and getting the vehicle back on the road.

4.4 The Proprietor has also reported that a fixed step can be fitted to these vehicles to allow the same assistance with access and egress. Members are therefore requested to consider an amendment to the conditions of fitness as referred to in paragraph 2.1.

4.5 A fixed step, when fitted, does not protrude any further out from the bodyline than the wing mirrors of the vehicle. The position of the fixed step does not interfere with the ramps when they are deployed.

4.6 There are over 90 licensed Hackney Carriage Vehicles which are required to be fitted with intermediate steps. This represents more than 30% of the fleet.

4.7 A vehicle will be available for Members to inspect prior to the start of the meeting and photographs of 2 examples of fixed steps fitted to vehicles are attached to this report.

## **5.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

5.1 A change in policy should not provide additional risk to passengers.

## **6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

6.1 The Committee can elect not to change the current policy.

## **7.0 CONSULTATION**

7.1 Other neighbouring local authorities who license this type of vehicle do not have specific requirements regarding the type of step fitted to them.

## **8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS**

8.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

## **9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS**

9.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

## **10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 A decision of this Committee may be subject to legal challenge.

## **11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

## **12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

## **13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 There are no planning implications arising from this report.

**REPORT AUTHOR:** *Margaret Calvert*  
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## **REFERENCE MATERIAL**

Photographs of vehicle fitted with a fixed step

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## WIRRAL COUNCIL

### LICENSING HEALTH AND SAFETY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

21 MARCH 2011

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>REVIEW OF MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE DRIVERS</b>
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF LAW, HR AND ASSET MANAGEMENT</b>
<b>RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:</b>	<b>COUNCILLOR SUE TAYLOR – COMMITTEE CHAIR</b>
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>NO</b>

#### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for Members to review the current medical requirements for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers.

#### 2.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

- 2.1 That Members consider adopting more frequent medical checks for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers.

#### 3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 3.1 Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers must be fit and proper persons when granted a licence and throughout its duration. Medical checks are used to determine the physical fitness of a driver.

#### 4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 It is a requirement that an applicant for a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Driver Licence is a fit and proper person to hold such a licence and subsequently remain a fit and proper person whilst holding that licence.
- 4.2 In accordance with section 57(1) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 the Council may request such information it considers necessary to determine whether conditions should be attached to the licence.
- 4.3 The provisions of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s57(2) specifically allow a local authority to require a medical certificate certifying that the applicant for a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Driver Licence is physically fit to undertake that role.

- 4.4 The current requirements for a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Driver Licence are:
- Vocationally Related Qualification (VRQ)
  - Knowledge test pass
  - Satisfactory driving licence
  - Satisfactory Disclosure (Criminal Record Bureau check)
  - Satisfactory medical
- 4.5 Once licensed Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers are not required to undertake a further medical check until they reach the age of 65 years, when medical checks are required annually on renewal of the licence.
- 4.6 The Department for Transport (DfT) Best Practice Guidance states:
- ‘It is clearly good practice for medical checks to be made on each driver before the initial grant of a licence and thereafter for each renewal.’
- 4.7 The renewal period for driver licences may be up to three years. The recommendation made by the DfT for the frequency of medicals to be at each renewal is therefore not necessarily on an annual basis.
- 4.8 In September 2010 the Local Government Regulation (LGR) published a standardised conditions template following a review undertaken by the LGR Working Group. This Group was made up of representative from each region in England and Wales as well as the Institute of Licensing (IoL) and National Association of Licensing and Enforcement Officers (NALEO). The template is intended to act as a guide and sets out minimum standards. In respect of the requirement for medicals the template sets out the following minimum standard:
- ‘All drivers, regardless of age, should have Group 2 medical checks on initial application and at regular intervals thereafter’
- 4.9 Group 2 medical checks are required for holders of Light Goods Vehicle (LGV) or Public Carriage Vehicle (PCV) licences. These licences are renewable from age 45 years and every 5 years thereafter until the age of 65 years, unless restricted to a shorter period for medical reasons. Licences are renewable annually from the age of 65 years.
- 4.10 It is recognised by the General Medical Council that passengers of taxi and private hire vehicles have expectations of a safe driver and reliable service and that “Drivers need to meet the physical and mental demands of the task...”
- 4.11 Members are asked to consider the following options with a view to adopting one of the options as an amendment to the requirement to medical checks to be undertaken by licensed drivers.
- 4.11 **Option 1** is to require medical checks to be undertaken on initial application and every three years to coincide with the current requirement for three yearly Criminal Records Bureau checks.

- 4.12 **Option 2** is to require medical checks on initial application and subsequently every five years from the age of 45 years until the age of 65 years, when checks would be undertaken annually. This would be in line with Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) requirements for LGV and PCV drivers.
- 4.13 **Option 3** would be to require medical checks on initial application and annually on renewal of their licence.
- 4.14 The fees charged by General Practitioners for medical examinations are typically between £100 and £140.

## **5.0 OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITIES**

- 5.1 The frequency of medicals imposed by other local authorities on Merseyside are as follows:

Knowsley: initial application, age 50, age 55, age 60, age 65 and then annually

Sefton: initial application, age 45, age 55, age 65 and then annually

Liverpool: initial application, age 45, age 50, age 55, age 60, age 65 and then annually

St Helens: initial application, age 45, age 55, age 65 and then annually

## **6.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

- 6.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

## **7.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 7.1 This report provides a number of options for consideration by Members of this Committee.

## **8.0 CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 The Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) support amendments to the current medical requirements which was discussed at the meeting held on 9 November 2010. The minutes of that meeting are attached at Appendix 1.

## **9.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS**

- 9.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

## **10.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS**

10.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

## **11.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 A decision of this Committee may be subject to legal challenge.

## **12.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

## **13.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

## **14.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

14.1 There are no planning implications arising from this report.

14.2 There are Community Safety implications as Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Drivers should be fit and proper persons when granted a licence and throughout its duration due to their involvement with the general public.

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## **APPENDICES**

Minutes of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Joint Consultative Committee meeting dated 9 November 2010

**WIRRAL PRIVATE HIRE / HACKNEY CARRIAGE  
JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

**9 November 2010**

Present:

Councillor S Taylor (Chair)  
M O'Donnell  
C Clayton  
M Calvert  
J Smith  
P Barton  
A Holmes  
A Norbury  
J Dunne  
C Jordan  
A Thomas  
N Brierley  
T Brougham  
R Kelly

Licensing, Health & Safety, General Purposes Committee  
Law HR and Asset Management Department  
Law HR and Asset Management Department  
Law HR and Asset Management Department  
Technical Services Department  
Technical Services Department  
Merseyside Police  
Merseylearn  
Argyle Park  
Wirral Satellite Cars  
Wirral Satellite Cars  
Unite (Private Hire Section)  
Independent Hackney Carriage Drivers Association  
Independent Hackney Carriage Drivers Association

**1. APOLOGIES**

Action

Councillor J Salter	Licensing, Health & Safety, General Purposes Committee
R Beresford	Law HR and Asset Management Department
K Abraham	Law HR and Asset Management Department
S Atkins	Technical Services Department
M Byrne	Heswall Taxis
M McGhee	Hackney Carriage Night Drivers

**2. MINUTES**

The minutes were approved.

**3. MATTERS ARISING**

Item 4

PB reported that he had contacted Merseytravel regarding the bus shelters removed from taxi ranks and he had been advised that the advertising company used advertising revenue from the shelter to clean and maintain the shelters but the initial capital to provide a new shelter had to be provided by Merseytravel and this capital is not available at the present time.

Item 8

MOD reported that no comments had been received regarding driver medicals.

#### **4. RANKS - UPDATES**

PB reported that the Wallasey Road rank was now up and running and there had been no complaints.

CC advised that he had received a call from a Moseley Avenue resident who complained that there was still some level of over ranking. However, the complainant had accepted that the situation had improved.

RK reported that private cars still park on the Liscard Crescent rank. CC advised that Sgt Garrigan had issued a considerable numbers of tickets to vehicles obstructing the rank.

ST asked for feedback from GG and MM regarding the use of ranks in Liscard.

JS reported on the major development work taking place in Birkenhead. He advised that it was scheduled to take about 46 weeks to complete. He advised that he had consulted trade representatives regarding the rank issues during this work.

JS advised that there would be some inconvenience to drivers and passengers using the Yates' rank, however the Milton's rank was being increased and temporary ranks were being set up. One temporary rank was to be set up by Motorbility on Oliver Street and signs were to be erected directing the public.

RK confirmed that meetings had taken place with the trade and there was recognition that there were limited places where ranks can be placed.

RK asked that Parking Services act leniently towards drivers during this period. JS assured members that he had spoken to SA who was aware of the difficulties resulting from the development work.

MOD requested that trade representatives communicate the reasons for the temporary changes to the trade.

JS advised that laminated drawings would be displayed on hoardings.

#### **5. ENFORCEMENT**

CC advised that he had spoken to John Bamber regarding illegally plying for hire operations in Liverpool. John advised that he did not prosecute the large numbers reported by the trade. He also reported that John was impressed with the operations undertaken on Wirral and although John continues to offer his support to Wirral that at this time he could not offer anything to improve the way the operations are undertaken.

CC reported on the two operations undertaken since the last JCC. The first one involved Police Officers and Parking Services as well as Wirral Enforcement Officers. Six fixed penalty notices were issued for parking offences and that police vehicles were used to stop phvs in the Conway Street area. During the operation a number of drivers and customers were spoken to but evidence of illegally plying for hire was not detected.

The second operation used undercover Police Officers to detect illegally plying for hire. Two drivers were found to pick them up without being pre-booked. The behaviour of one of the drivers during one of the journeys was so concerning that their licence was suspended with immediate effect.

AN advised that the Council's dress code had been reported to his members at a recent branch meeting and he asked how the Council expected to enforce it.

CC advised that a newsletter was going to be issued to all drivers which would include information regarding the dress code. He re-stated the enforcement position as stated at the last JCC. In that the initial objective was to inform and educate drivers of the dress code and not target drivers in relation to their dress to take enforcement action.

MC

AN reported that the banning of tracksuit bottoms was a concern as drivers find them very comfortable to drive in.

ST gave examples of other long distance drivers who do not wear tracksuit bottoms and advised that there are other forms of comfortable trousers.

## **6. LICENSING HEALTH AND SAFETY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE UPDATE**

MOD reported that the Committee had approved the appointment of Halcrow to undertake the survey. She advised that she had been asked to consult the JCC regarding timescales.

CJ enquired as to what a demand survey entails.

MOD provided details of what is involved in a survey that seeks to establish whether there is any unmet demand for taxis.

RK suggested that February/March would be the best time for the survey.

NB remarked that November was a quiet month.

AN suggested that once the trade were aware that a survey was taking place, there would be a rush for plates. He advised that if the issue was closed plates would have a value and that would create problems.

ST suggested that the rank surveys take place in February but all the other preparatory work could start in January.

MOD advised that following a request from Liscard trade reps a HCV tariff increase had been agreed by Members and was to be advertised in the newspaper.

MOD advised that AN had made a presentation to the Committee regarding driver training that informed Members there was funding still available. Members resolved that the training requirements were to remain the same.

CJ advised that there is a problem with funding as there is very little left and no new funding was available.

AN advised that if drivers got in touch with him he could direct them to available training places. He also advised that he was to set up workshops to advise drivers regarding training.

MOD reported that two applications were considered by the Committee to licence vehicles as Hackney Carriages that were over 3 years old and both applications were refused.

RK advised that he could not understand the finality of the cut off point for HCV licences and suggested that perhaps the driver did not understand.

CJ stated that although he is normally in favour of this type of thing he did not think that the penalty fits the crime in this particular case. He suggested the financial penalty was very high for this driver.

MOD explained the legal process and that the applicants have a right to appeal against the decision to refuse a HCV licence.

CC reported that a procedure had been set up to contact drivers/vehicle proprietors prior to expiry of their licences where arrangements had not been made to renew them.

## **7. DRIVER MEDICALS**

MOD stated that a review of the medical requirements for drivers was to be undertaken. She explained that currently new applicants are required to obtain a satisfactory medical report prior to being issued with a licence and they are not required to undertake a further medical until they reach age 65.

AT suggested that more frequent medicals should be required as a driver gets older. He suggested that this should be done every 3 years.

NB suggested medicals should be undertaken every 5 years and then every 2 years from age 60.

RK and TB both suggested medicals should be undertaken every 5 years.

JD suggested the frequency should be every 3 years after age 45.

CJ was supportive of more regular medical checks for drivers and suggested

that there should be some form of counselling service also provided for drivers.

AN agreed with CJ and suggested that due to the sedentary nature of the job, drivers live a very unhealthy lifestyle. He suggested that drivers undertake an annual "MOT" which could be facilitated by the big firms.

MOD reported that the DfT Best Practice guide suggests that one doctor should be doing all medicals for licensed drivers.

MOD summed up the members' responses as an initial medical, further medicals at 3 or 5 year intervals and age is a factor in determining the frequency.

## **8. REPORTS FROM INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS**

There were none.

## **9. NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 27 January 2011 at 10.00am in Committee Room 1.

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## WIRRAL COUNCIL

### LICENSING, HEALTH AND SAFETY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

21 MARCH 2011

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>DRAFT SEXUAL ENTERTAINMENT VENUE POLICY</b>
<b>WARD AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL WARDS</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF LAW, HR AND ASSET MANAGEMENT</b>
<b>RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:</b>	<b>COUNCILLOR SUE TAYLOR – COMMITTEE CHAIR</b>
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>NO</b>

#### **1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Members approval of the Draft Sexual Entertainment Policy in order that it may be circulated for consultation.

#### **2.0 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 To seek Members approval of the Draft Sexual Entertainment Policy in order that it may be circulated for consultation.

#### **3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 Whilst there is no statutory requirement to have a Sex Licensing Policy, such a policy could be relied upon should there be a legal challenge in respect of decisions made relating to licensing sex establishments.

#### **4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 On 10 January 2011, Members of the Health and Safety and General Purposes Committee approved the adoption of the amendments to Schedule 3 of The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982, made by Section 27 paragraph 2(2) of Schedule 3 to the Policing and Crime Act 2009, so that the provision will come into force on the 1 April 2011.
- 4.2 The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 Schedule 3 allows the Council to control by way of its licensing regime, sex establishments in the form of sex cinemas and sex shops.
- 4.3 The Policing Crime Act 2009, Section 27, defines a new category of sex establishment namely 'sexual entertainment venue' which provides the means for local authorities to regulate lap dancing clubs and similar venues under Schedule 3 of The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 and gives local authorities more powers to control the number and location of these type of premises.

- 4.4 Upon resolving to adopt the amendments of Schedule 3 of The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 Members of the Health and Safety and General Purposes Committee have agreed to put in place an appropriate policy to deal with applications for both sex establishments and sexual entertainment venues. A draft Sexual Entertainment Venue policy can be found at appendix 1 for Members consideration.
- 4.5 If Members approve a draft policy then prior to the determination and adoption of the policy the Licensing Authority will consult with the following:
- a) Chief Officer of Merseyside Police
  - b) Fire Authority
  - c) Local Safe Guarding Children Board
  - d) Local Weights and Measures Authority
  - e) Planning Authority
  - f) Environmental Health Division
  - g) Local Residents
  - h) Existing and future potential holders of sex establishment licences
  - i) Holders of Premises Licences under the Licensing Act 2003

## **8.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

- 8.1 If a policy is not agreed then this could result in a lack of transparency, accountability, certainty and consistency in respect of decision making.

## **9.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 9.1 There is no provision for other options to be considered.

## **10.0 CONSULTATION**

- 10.1 Should Members agree a draft the consultation referred to in paragraph 4.5 will be undertaken.

## **11.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS**

- 11.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report but such groups may make objections in relation to licensing applications for such premises.

## **12.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS**

- 13.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report. The consultation process will be undertaken within budget and current resources.

## **14.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 14.1 There is no statutory requirement to have a Sex Licensing Policy, however such a policy could be relied upon should there be a legal challenge in respect of decisions made relating to licensing sex establishments. The decision of this Committee may be subject to legal challenge.

## **15.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 15.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

15.2 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)  
Is an EIA required?

Should Members approve a draft policy then an Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken.

**16.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

16.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

**17.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

17.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

**REPORT AUTHOR:**           **Margaret O'Donnell**  
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**APPENDICES**

Draft Sexual Entertainment Policy

**REFERENCE MATERIAL**

Draft Sexual Entertainment Policy

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

Council Meeting	Date

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# **Draft Sexual Entertainment Venue Policy**

March 2011

**Wirral Licensing Authority  
Town Hall  
Brighton Street  
Wallasey  
CH44 8ED**

**0151 691 8043**



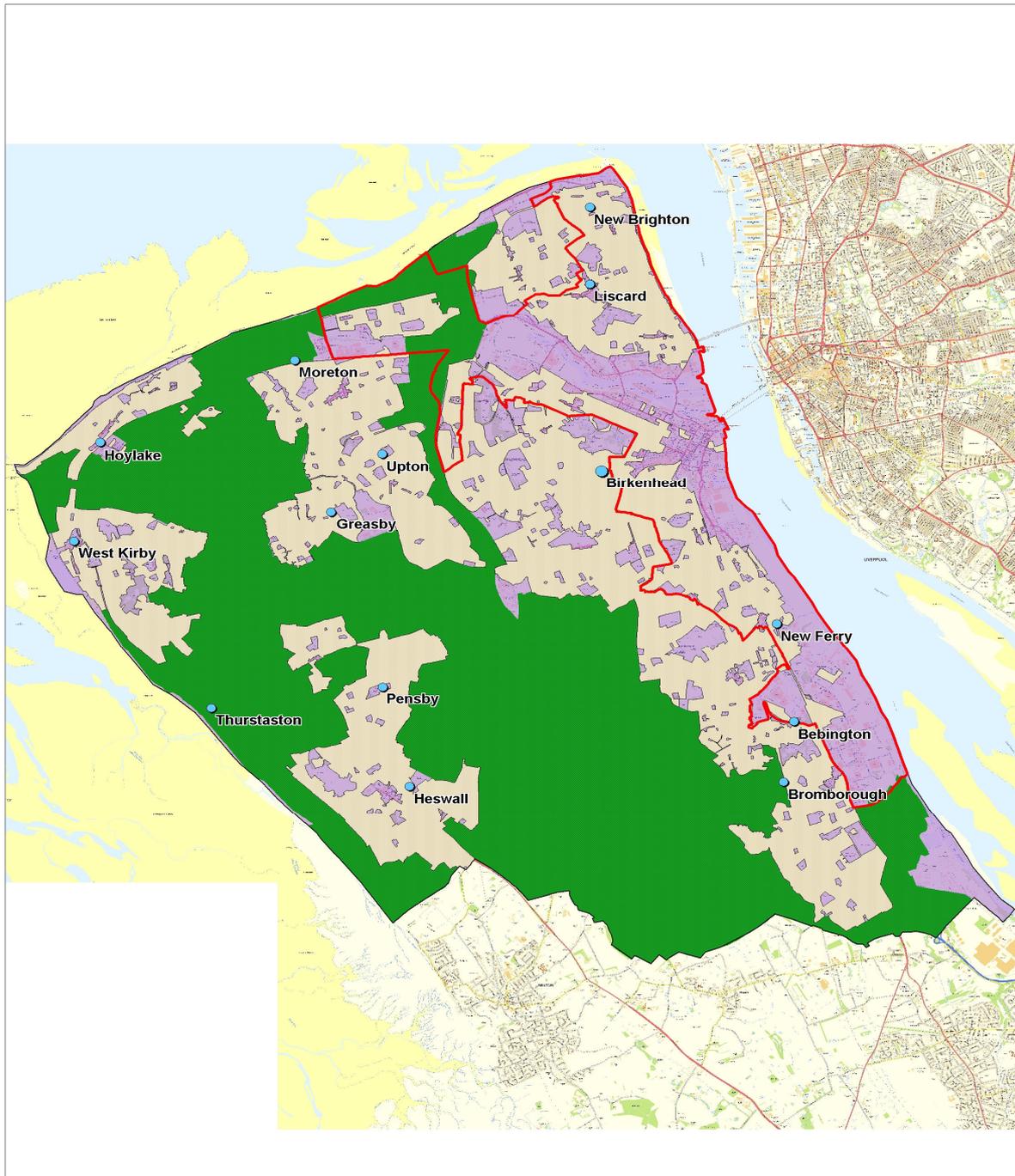
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# 1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Wirral Borough Council is situated in the County of Merseyside, which contains no district Councils, but 5 metropolitan councils: Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral. The Council area has a population of 310,200 (ONS 2007 midyear population estimates) making it the second largest after Liverpool in the County in terms of population. In terms of area it is the largest in Merseyside, covering 60.1 square miles. The Borough is mainly urban in outlook, with 32.85 square miles (54.66% of the borough) covered in Residential, Industrial or Commercial buildings. The key provided identifies the urban / rural areas as well as regeneration priority areas.



- Regeneration Priority Area
- Primarily Residential Areas
- Rural/Greenbelt Areas
- Other Urban/Developed Areas

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## 2. PREFACE

- 2.1 Wirral Council has adopted Schedule 3 to the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 (as amended by section 27 of the Policing and Crime Act 2009) so that sex shops, sex cinemas, and sexual entertainment venues in the Borough can be licensed. In this policy, such premises are referred to as “sex establishments” unless stated otherwise.
- 2.2 The 1982 Act and the 2009 Act can be viewed at [www.opsi.gov.uk](http://www.opsi.gov.uk).
- 2.3 Consultation on this policy will be carried out between 21 March 2011 and 21 May 2011.
- 2.4 Consultation was conducted with local residents; existing and future potential holders of sex establishment licences in the Borough; the statutory responsible authorities under the Licensing Act 2003; and holders of premises licences under the Licensing Act 2003 in the Borough.
- 2.5 In developing this policy, account was taken of the legal requirements of the 1982 Act and the duties under
- (a) section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to take all reasonable steps to reduce crime and disorder within the Borough;
  - (b) the Regulators’ Compliance Code (set out under the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006) not to impede economic progress by the regulations we set out and to particularly consider the impact of regulations on small businesses; and
  - (c) the Provision of Services Regulations 2009 to ensure requirements are:
    - (i) non-discriminatory
    - (ii) justified by an overriding reason relating to the public interest
    - (iii) proportionate to that public interest objective
    - (iv) clear and unambiguous
    - (v) objective
    - (vi) made public in advance, and
    - (vii) transparent and accessible
- 2.6 This Statement of Licensing Policy sets out the Council’s requirements for premises to be licensed as sex establishments and sexual entertainment venues within the means of Schedule 3 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 (As Amended).

### **3. DEFINITIONS**

#### **3.1 Definition of Sex Shop**

A “sex shop” is defined as any premises, vehicle, vessel or stall used for business which consists to a significant degree of selling, hiring, exchanging, lending, displaying or demonstrating –

- (a) sex articles; or
- (b) other things intended for use in connection with, or for the purpose of stimulating or encouraging –
  - (i) sexual activity; or
  - (ii) acts of force or restraint which are associated with sexual activity.

#### **3.2 Definition of Sex Cinema**

A “sex cinema” is defined as any premises, vehicle vessel or stall used to a significant degree for the exhibition of moving pictures, by whatever means produced, which –

- (a) are concerned primarily with the portrayal of, or primarily deal with or relate to, or are intended to stimulate or encourage –
  - (i) sexual activity; or
  - (ii) acts of force or restraint which are associated with sexual activity; or
- (b) are concerned primarily with the portrayal of, or primarily deal with or relate to, genital organs or urinary or excretory functions.

but does not include a dwelling-house to which the public is not admitted.

#### **3.3 Definition of Sexual Entertainment Venue**

A “sexual entertainment venue” is defined as any premises at which relevant entertainment is provided before a live audience for the financial gain of the organiser or the entertainer.

“Relevant entertainment” means –

- (a) any live performance; or
- (b) any live display of nudity;

which is of such a nature that, ignoring financial gain, it must be reasonably assumed to be provided solely or principally for the purpose of sexually stimulating any member of the audience (whether by verbal or other means).

The definition of relevant entertainment is expected to apply to the following terms of entertainment as they are commonly understood:

- Lap Dancing
- Pole Dancing
- Table Dancing
- Strip Shows
- Peep Shows

- Live Sex Shows

Relevant entertainment is not restricted to the above defined terms of entertainment and will be considered with regard to the nature of the entertainment, not the name it is given.

#### **4. MAKING AN APPLICATION**

- 4.1 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 (As Amended) provides a maximum licence period of one year. The authority may grant a shorter licence if it thinks fit. A shorter period may be granted for example where a licensee wants a licence for a limited period for a trade exhibition or a show.
- 4.2 An application for the grant, variation, renewal or transfer of a licence must be made in writing to the Licensing Authority together with the application fee in accordance with the requirements set out below.
- 4.3 There are three separate notice requirements:
  1. The applicant must, within seven days after the date of the application, publish an advertisement in a local newspaper circulating in the local authority's area. A suggested form of advertisement is available on request from the Licensing Section.
  2. Where the application is in respect of premises the applicant must display a notice of the application on or near the premises where it can be conveniently read by the public. The notice must be displayed for 21 days starting with the date of application. Again a suggested form of notice is available on request.
  3. The applicant must send a copy of the application to the Chief Officer of Police no later than seven days after the date of the application. Where the application is made electronically it is for the Local Authority itself to send the copy within seven days of receipt of the application.
- 4.4 The application form can be used for grant, variation, transfer and renewal applications. Applicants must provide their name, address, age (where the applicant is an individual), the premises address and the proposed licensed name of the premises.
- 4.5 Applicants must, at the time of submission of a new grant or variation application, provide a scheme showing the exterior design for consideration by the Licensing Authority before the premises are opened for business in order to ensure that the exterior design of the premises shall be such that the interior of the premises is not visible to passers-by.
- 4.6 In addition applicants must, at the time of submission of a new grant or variation application, provide a plan showing the interior layout of the premises and where relevant entertainment will take place for consideration by the Licensing Authority.
- 4.7 Applicants for Sexual Entertainment Venues must also submit a copy of their "club rules". Such club rules must contain the required conduct of performers which shall include for example, no sex acts, no giving or taking phone numbers (including exchange of business cards).
- 4.8 Such club rules will form part of the licence (if granted) and may be subject to amendment by the Licensing Authority prior to approval.

- 4.9 Officers of the Licensing Service may, as part of the application process, visit the locality of the premises to establish whether there are any characteristics of the locality which may require consideration by the Licensing Health and Safety and General Purposes Committee.
- 4.10 With regards to online application tacit authorisation does not apply to new grant applications for Sexual Entertainment Venue licences. This means the applicant must wait for the Licensing Authority to determine the application before they can operate a Sexual Entertainment Venue.

## **5. FEES**

- 5.1 The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 (As Amended) permits the authority to set a reasonable fee. The Council's Licensing Health and Safety and General Purposes Committee will set licensing fees in respect of sex shops and sex cinemas under the then 1982 Act to recover the costs of carrying out the licensing function under that Act namely: administration (including any hearings or appeals), inspection and enforcement.
- 5.2 The above process is also applicable to the function of licensing Sexual Entertainment Venues and the appropriate fees for applications will be available on the Council's website at: [www.wirral.gov.uk](http://www.wirral.gov.uk).
- 5.3 It must be noted that application fees must be paid in full at the time of submission of the application and that these fees will be reviewed annually during normal budgetary processes.

## **6. MAKING OBJECTIONS TO APPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 (As Amended) permits a wide range of persons to raise objections about the grant, renewal, variation or transfer of a Sexual Entertainment Venue licence. Objectors can include residents, resident associations, trade associations, businesses, Councillors (providing they do not sit on the Committee or Sub-Committee considering that particular application) or MPs. The Police are a statutory consultee for all applications.
- 6.2 Objections must be made in writing (email is acceptable) no later than 28 days after the date of the application to the Licensing Authority and should include the following:
- the name and address of the person or organisation making the objection
  - the premises to which the objection relates
  - the proximity of the premises to the person making the objection, a sketch map or plan may be helpful to show this
- 6.3 Objectors should limit their objection to matters which are relevant to the statutory grounds for refusal as set out in the 1982 Act. The grounds relevant to the majority of objectors are as follows:

That the grant or renewal of the licence would be inappropriate:

- having regard to the character of the relevant locality, or

- the use to which any premises in the vicinity of the premises, vehicle or vessel or stall in respect of which the application is made.

Any objections received by the Licensing Authority which do not relate to the grounds set out in the 1982 Act will be rejected by the Licensing Authority. Where objections are rejected the objector will be given written reasons.

- 6.4 The Licensing Authority will not consider objections that are frivolous or vexatious or which relate to moral grounds (as these are outside the scope of the 1982 Act). Decisions on whether objections are frivolous or vexatious will be made objectively by the Licensing Authority and where objections are rejected the objector will be given written reasons.
- 6.5 A vexatious objection is generally taken to be one which is repetitive, without foundation or made for some other reason such as malice. A frivolous objection is generally taken to be one that is lacking in seriousness.
- 6.6 Objections will be considered by the Licensing Health and Safety and General Purposes Committee determining the application. The applicant will be informed of any objections received in respect of their application and the objection(s) will become public documents. (However, objector's personal details such as name, address and telephone number will be removed.) A copy of the hearing procedure will be sent to the applicant and any objectors prior to the hearing.

## **7. DETERMINATION OF AN APPLICATION**

- 7.1 All applications for the grant of a Sexual Entertainment Venue licence will be determined by the Licensing Health and Safety and General Purposes Committee. Valid objections to any application will be considered by the Licensing Health and Safety and General Purposes Committee or delegated to a Licensing Sub Committee at the hearing to consider the application. Applicants and objectors will be given an equal opportunity to state their case in accordance with the Licensing Health and Safety and General Purposes Committee's procedure for hearings, which is available from the Licensing Service.
- 7.2 The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 (As Amended) provides five mandatory grounds and four discretionary grounds for refusal of a Sexual Entertainment Venue licence. Each application for a Sexual Entertainment Venue will be decided upon its own merits and the Licensing Authority will give clear reasons for its decisions. Any decision to refuse a licence MUST be relevant to one or more of the following grounds:

### **7.3 Mandatory grounds for refusal**

Specific mandatory grounds for refusal of a licence are set out in paragraph 12(1)(a to e) of Schedule 3 in the 1982 Act. A licence cannot be granted:

- (a) to any person under the age of 18 years
- (b) to any person who is for the time being disqualified due to the person having had a previous licence revoked in the area of the appropriate authority within the last 12 months

- (c) to any person, other than a body corporate, who is not resident in an European Economic Area or was not so resident throughout the period of six months immediately preceding the date when the application was made; or
- (d) to a body corporate which is not incorporated in an European Economic Area; or
- (e) to any person who has, within a period of 12 months immediately preceding that date when the application was made, been refused that grant or renewal of a licence for the premises, vehicle, vessel or stall in respect of which the application is made, unless the refusal has been reversed on appeal

#### 7.4 Discretionary grounds for refusal

The only discretionary grounds upon which the Council may refuse an application for the grant or renewal of a licence on one or more of the grounds specified in Schedule 3 paragraph 12(3) are that:

- (a) the applicant is unsuitable to hold the licence by reason of having been convicted of an offence or for any other reasons
- (b) if the licence were to be granted, renewed or transferred the business to which it relates would be managed by or carried on for the benefit of a person, other than the applicant, who would be refused the grant, renewal or transfer of such a licence if he/she made the application himself/herself
- (c) the number of sex establishments, in the relevant locality at the time the application is made is equal to or exceeds the number which the authority consider is appropriate for that locality
- (d) that the grant or renewal of the licence would be inappropriate, having regard:
  - (i) to the character of the relevant locality; or
  - (ii) to the use to which any premises in the vicinity are put; or
  - (iii) to the layout, character or condition of the premises, vehicle, vessel or stall in respect of which the application is made

7.5 If none of the above applies to the applicant and no objections have been received and there are no other statutory grounds for refusal, including that the application does not exceed any permitted numbers, the application will be granted by way of delegated authority.

### 8. UNSUITABILITY OF AN APPLICANT

8.1 In respect of 7.4(a) and (b) above with regard to the unsuitability of an applicant to hold a licence, the criteria for Members to consider are:

- that the Operator is honest
- that the Operator is qualified by experience to run the type of sex establishment in question
- that the Operator understands the general conditions
- that the Operator is proposing a management structure which delivers compliance with the operating conditions e.g. through managerial competence,

- presence, a credible management structure, enforcement of rules internally, a viable business plan and policies for welfare of performers
- that the Operator can be relied upon to act in the best interests of performers e.g. in how they are remunerated, the facilities they enjoy, how they are protected and how and by whom their physical and psychological welfare is monitored
- that the Operator can be relied upon to protect the public e.g. transparent charging, freedom from solicitation
- that the Operator can show a track record of management of compliant premises, or that he/she will employ individuals who have such a track record

## **9. NUMBER OF SEXUAL ENTERTAINMENT VENUES**

- 9.1 As set out within paragraph 7.4(c) above, paragraph 12 of Schedule 3 provides that a Local Authority may refuse an application if it is satisfied that the number of sex establishments or of a particular kind in the relevant locality at the time the application is made is equal to or exceeds the number which the authority consider is appropriate for that locality. The Council is able to determine that the appropriate number for a locality is nil.
- 9.2 The Council may choose to set a guidance upper limit on the number of Sexual Entertainment Venues which it considers appropriate in any locality within the Council's administrative area but each application will be considered on its merits.

## **10. RELEVANT LOCALITY**

- 10.1 With reference to paragraph 7.4(d) 'relevant locality' for the purposes of paragraph 12 of Schedule 3 of the Act means:
- (i) in relation to the premises, the locality where they are situated, and
  - (ii) in relation to a vehicle, vessel or stall, any locality where it is desired to use it as a sex establishment.
- 10.2 In considering if the grant, renewal or variation of the licence would be inappropriate, having regard to the character of the relevant locality or to the use of which any premises in the vicinity are put, the Licensing Authority shall consider, among other considerations, whether the grant of the application would be inappropriate, having regard to:
- (a) the fact that the premises are sited in a residential area
  - (b) the premises are sited near shops used by or directed to families or children, or no frontages frequently passed by the same
  - (c) the premises are sited near properties which are sensitive for religious purposes e.g. synagogues, churches, mosques, temples
  - (d) the premises are sited near premises or areas which are sensitive because they are frequented by children, young persons or families, including but not limited to educational establishments, leisure facilities such as parks, libraries or swimming pools, markets and covered markets
  - (e) places and or buildings of historical/cultural interest, tourist attractions

- 10.3 The Council will consider the extent of the locality on a case by case basis taking into account the particular circumstances of each case. However, the Council will not seek to define locality as the whole of the Council's administrative area or an entire town.
- 10.4 When hearing an application for the grant of a Sexual Entertainment Venue licence, the Committee shall have regard to the guidelines set out above but subject to the overriding principle that each application will be determined on its merits.
- 10.5 The Council would (normally) expect that applications for Sexual Entertainment Venue licences for permanent commercial premises should be from businesses with planning consent for the property concerned.

## **11. LICENCE CONDITIONS**

- 11.1 The Council intends to adopt standard conditions in respect of sex shops and sexual entertainment venues, which will apply to all respective licences granted, unless such conditions have been expressly excluded or varied. These proposed standard conditions will be provided separately.
- 11.2 However, following a hearing, the Licensing Health and Safety and General Purposes Committee may attach further conditions to a licence, considered necessary and proportionate in the public interest including, but not limited to, the interest of public policy, public security, public health or the protection of the environment. This could include conditions restricting the opening and closing times of the premises.

## **12. DURATION OF LICENCES**

- 12.1 Unless a shorter period is specifically stated, all licences will be granted for one year, which shall be the maximum duration of any licence.

## **13. WAIVERS**

- 13.1 The Council will not normally grant a waiver for a sex establishment licence but will consider applications on their individual merits. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate exceptional circumstances in justifying why the licensing requirement should be waived.
- 13.2 Applications will be considered by the Licensing Health and Safety and General Purposes Committee, or delegated Sub-Committee thereof, and reasons shall be given of the decision taken.

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## WIRRAL COUNCIL

### LICENSING HEALTH AND SAFETY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

21 MARCH 2011

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>CONSULTATION – MINIMUM PRICE FOR ALCOHOL</b>
<b>WARD AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL WARDS</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF LAW, HR AND ASSET MANAGEMENT</b>
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>NO</b>

#### **1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to report back to Members on the results of the consultation on a minimum price for alcohol.

#### **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 Members are requested to consider the results of the consultation and make any recommendations that are considered appropriate to Cabinet.

#### **3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 The Liverpool City Region Cabinet is seeking the views of its constituent authorities in respect of proposals to seek a local by-law to enforce a minimum price for alcohol.

#### **4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 On 13 September 2010, Members of the Licensing Health and Safety and General Purposes Committee agreed that the Council seek views on the introduction of minimum pricing for alcohol from members of the public, partner agencies, those organisations that support individuals with alcohol addiction and community and voluntary groups.
- 4.2 The Mersey City Region Safer, Healthier Communities Board and the Cheshire and Warrington Health and Wellbeing Commission are working with partners across the Northwest region to implement a minimum pricing strategy for alcohol. This is part of an overarching strategy to reduce alcohol related harm (including crime and anti-social behaviour), to contribute to improving health and to reduce health inequalities across the region.
- 4.3 The Alcohol Scrutiny Report (Wirral, December 2010) that reviewed access to alcohol by young people in Wirral supported (recommendation 10) the principle of minimum unit pricing for alcohol and requested the Council to engage positively in the process to introduce a regional minimum price for alcohol in the Merseyside Region.

4.4 In January 2011, the Home Office announced plans to set a minimum price for alcohol in England and Wales. The intention is to place a ban on sales of alcohol below the rate of duty plus VAT. The measure works out at 38p for a can of weak lager and £10.71 for a litre of vodka.

## 5.0 THE CONSULTATION

5.1 The consultation was carried out by making a questionnaire available on the council's website and via copies available at the network of One-Stop Shops. A total of 1028 responses were received from these sources. The consultation period began in September 2010 and closed on 18 February 2011.

5.2 Invitations to participate were sent to 46 partner agencies and those organisations that support individuals with alcohol addiction and community and voluntary groups. A full list of these consultees is attached at appendix 1. The responses received from such organisations (11) can be found at appendix 2.

5.3 Appendix 3 contains the contributions (33) from local residents, residents associations and similar bodies.

5.4 The coverage of the proposed minimum pricing for alcohol consultation by the Wirral Globe prompted several comments. These responses can be seen in appendix 4.

5.5 Below is a summary of the responses for each question made via online questionnaire and the Council One Stop Shops.

5.6 **Questions 1 – 3** - are personal details of the individual who completed the questionnaire.

5.7 **Question 4** – Which of Wirral's neighbourhoods do you live in?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Bebington or Clatterbridge	9.1%	91
Bidston, St James or Claughton	4.5%	45
Birkenhead, Tranmere or Rock Ferry	24.7%	247
Bromborough or Eastham	6.1%	61
Heswall, Pensby or Thingwall	5.1%	51
Hoylake, Meols, West Kirby or Thurstaston	7.0%	70
Leasowe, Moreton or Saughall Massie	8.0%	80
Liscard or Seacombe	7.4%	74
New Brighton or Wallasey	8.1%	81
Prenton or Oxtan	8.6%	86
Woodchurch, Greasby, Frankby, Irby or Upton	6.7%	67
I am visiting Wirral	0.6%	6
I work in Wirral but don't live here	2.1%	21
Other (please specify)	1.9%	19
	<i>answered question</i>	<b>999</b>
	<i>skipped question</i>	<b>29</b>

5.8 **Question 5** – What is your relationship to Wirral Council?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Resident	86.2%	846
Member of staff	23.2%	228
Licensed premises	0.3%	3
Off-license premises	0.2%	2
Partner agency/organisation	0.9%	9
Voluntary/community organisation	2.3%	23
Other (please state)	1.7%	17
<i>answered question</i>		<b>982</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>46</b>

5.9 **Question 6** – If you are answering on behalf of a business or organisation please tell us its name

Birkenhead YMCA  
Bargain Booze Ltd.  
Horse & Jockey  
CAS

5.10 **Question 7** – To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

A minimum unit price should be introduced for alcohol sold in licensed premises in Merseyside and Halton.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Agree strongly	18.1%	178
Agree	21.0%	206
No strong opinion	16.2%	159
Disagree	19.8%	194
Disagree strongly	24.9%	244
<i>answered question</i>		<b>981</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>47</b>

5.11 **Question 8** – To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

A minimum unit price should be introduced for alcohol sold in off licences in Merseyside and Halton.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Agree strongly	23.9%	234
Agree	20.3%	199
No strong opinion	13.7%	134
Disagree	18.4%	180
Disagree strongly	23.7%	232
<i>answered question</i>		<b>979</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>49</b>

5.12 **Question 9** – What do you think are the main issues arising from alcohol in your neighbourhood?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
No issues	28.6%	275
Anti-social behaviour	53.0%	509
Young people drinking outside	47.7%	458
Violence	31.8%	306
Noise disturbance	42.7%	410
Criminal damage	34.1%	328
Other (please specify)		116
<i>answered question</i>		<b>961</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>67</b>

The following are free text responses which have been summarised for Members convenience.

5.13 **Question 9 continued** – Other issues arising from alcohol in your neighbourhood. (Free text)

Easy Access	14
Alcohol sold to drunks	2
Vandalism	6
Education	4
Safeguarding Issues for children	1
Opening Hours too Long	1
Health Issues	28
Pollution / Litter	6
Intimidation	5
Domestic violence	1

5.14 **Question 10** – If you support minimum alcohol pricing how do you think it will benefit your community? (Free text)

Reduce anti-social behaviour	93
Reduce health problems	15
Reduce people buying alcohol / less drinking	61
Reduce underage buying alcohol	72
Release more Police / NHS Resources	14

5.15 **Question 11** – If you are opposed to minimum pricing of alcohol, what alternative would you like to see to tackle alcohol related problems? (Free text)

More/Better Policing/Enforcement	77
Tougher penalties	69

Tougher penalties for sellers	4
Better education	85
Restrict availability	21
Revoke Licences	8
Restrict opening hours	26
More alcohol free zones	5
Cheaper soft drinks in licensed premises	3
Pubs offer hot drinks	3
Raise age to from 18 to 21 years	17
Provide facilities for young persons	16

5.16 **Question 12** – Do you have any other comments you would like to add? (Free text)

This question received over five hundred comments from which some themes emerged.

- i. Many respondents were concerned that the introduction of a minimum price would increase the price of alcohol to the detriment of the poorer in the community.
- ii. Some considered that the measure would penalise the majority for the transgressions of the few.
- iii. Others felt that the measure would not work and would lead to negative impacts such as, illegal alcohol being sold, purchases outside the by-law area.
- iv. Several contributors see the introduction of a minimum price as another stealth tax whilst others felt it would increase the profits of the retailers.
- v. Of concern to some was that the minimum price would have an adverse effect on the leisure industry and on the town centres especially Birkenhead.
- vi. A question was raised about the legality of a minimum price for alcohol was raised. It was argued by some contributors that such a measure would be contrary to European Union anti-competition legislation.

Please see appendix 5 for the text of the responses to this question.

5.17 **Question 13** – Office use only

5.18 **Question 14** – Are you?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Male	48.9%	457
Female	51.1%	477

<i>answered question</i>	<b>934</b>
<i>skipped question</i>	<b>94</b>

5.19 **Question 15** – What was your age on your last birthday?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Under 16	0.0%	0
16-24	8.3%	80
25-44	39.9%	384
45-64	41.5%	400
65+	9.3%	90
Prefer not to say	0.9%	9
<i>answered question</i>		<b>963</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>65</b>

5.20 **Question 16** – Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	9.6%	91
No	86.7%	819
Prefer not to say	3.7%	35
<i>answered question</i>		<b>945</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>83</b>

5.21 **Question 17** – Please tell us to which of the following ethnic groups you belong?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
White English	89.3%	851
White Other British	3.6%	34
White Irish	0.9%	9
Any other White background (please state below)	0.8%	8
Mixed White & Black Caribbean	0.4%	4
Mixed White & Black African	0.4%	4
Mixed White & Asian	0.3%	3
Any other Mixed background (please state below)	0.1%	1
Asian or Asian British (Indian)	0.1%	1
Asian or Asian British (Pakistani)	0.0%	0
Asian or Asian British (Bangladeshi)	0.2%	2
Asian or Asian British (Chinese)	0.1%	1
Any other Asian background (please state below)	0.1%	1
Black or Black British (Caribbean)	0.1%	1
Black or Black British (African)	0.0%	0
Any other Black background (please state below)	0.0%	0
Arab	0.1%	1
Gypsy/Romany/Irish Traveller	0.0%	0
Any other Ethnic Group (please state below)	0.2%	2
Prefer not to say	3.1%	30
Other (please specify)		13

<i>answered question</i>	953
<i>skipped question</i>	75

## **6.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

6.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

## **7.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

7.1 The report seeks Member consideration of the results of the consultation.

## **8.0 CONSULTATION**

8.1 This report contains the results of a borough wide consultation.

## **9.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS**

9.1 The consultation encompassed a range of organisations including the community and voluntary sector.

## **10.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS**

10.1 The consultation was carried out within existing budgets.

## **11.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 The by-law would need to take account of European Union anti-competition legislation.

## **12.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

12.2 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)  
Is an EIA required? No

## **13.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

## **14.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

14.1 The implementation of a minimum price for alcohol is intended to reduce the availability of the “cheap” alcohol which is a contributor to anti-social behaviour

**REPORT AUTHOR:** **Richard Leyland**  
Licensing Team Leader  
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## **APPENDICES**

- Appendix 1: List of organisational consultees

- Appendix 2: Copies of responses from consultees in Appendix 1
- Appendix 3: Copies of responses from local residents and residents associations
- Appendix 4: comments received as the result of press coverage.
- Appendix 5: Free text comment in response to question 12 of the questionnaire.

**REFERENCE MATERIAL**

- Nil

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

- A report was presented to the Members of the Licensing Health and Safety and General, Purposes Committee on 13 September 2010

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>

- The Chief Officer of Merseyside Police
- The Chief Officer of Mersey Regional Ambulance Service
- The Director of Technical Services
- Local Safeguarding Children Board
- Wirral Trading Standards
- Environmental Health (Health & Safety and Pollution Control)
- Residents of Wirral, through Council One Stop Shops and Wirral Globe
- Equity
- British Beer & Pub Assn, North West Region
- Musicians Union
- Guild of Master Victuallers
- Federation of Licensed Victuallers Associations
- Cinema Exhibitors Association
- British Retail Consortium
- British Institute of Innkeeping
- Bar, Entertainment and Dance Association
- Association of Licensed Multiple Retailers
- Wirral Chamber of Commerce
- Pub Watch
- Alcoholics Anonymous
- ARCH
- ARK
- Irish Community Care
- Advocacy on Wirral
- CWP Alcohol Services
- PCT/Adult Social Partnership Joint Post
- Phoenix Futures
- Wirral DAAT
- Wirral Drug Service
- PCT Mental Health
- PCT Housing
- Arrowe Park Hospital
- The Social Partnership
- Progress to Work
- YMCA
- Engagement PCT
- Forum Housing
- Wirral Link
- Housing & Regeneration (Wirral Council)
- Commissioner Health Action Areas PCT
- Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre
- Zero Centre
- Wirral Walk In Centres
- Wirral Medical Centres
- Wirral Change
- Connexions (Wirral)
- Wine and Spirit Trade Association

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THE WINE AND SPIRIT TRADE ASSOCIATION

**Response to Wirral Minimum Pricing Consultation by the Wine and Spirit Trade Association  
February 2011**

Submission by Sarah Davis on behalf of:

**Wine and Spirit Trade Association  
International Wine & Spirit Centre  
39-45 Bermondsey Street  
LONDON, SE1 3XF  
02070893871**

The Wine and Spirit Trade Association (WSTA) is the UK organisation for the wine and spirit industry representing over 330 companies producing, importing, transporting and selling wines and spirits. We campaign to promote the industry's interests with governments at home and abroad. We work with our members to promote the responsible production, marketing and sale of alcohol.

We are grateful for the opportunity to respond to this consultation.

**To what extent do you agree with the following statements?**

- **A minimum unit price should be introduced for alcohol sold in licensed premises in Merseyside and Halton.**
- **A minimum unit price should be introduced for alcohol sold in off license premises in Merseyside and Halton.**

Our concerns remain the same whether the proposal relates to all licensed premises or just the off-trade.

Minimum pricing has been discussed and rejected by the UK Government at a national level. We believe that a minimum pricing policy at a local level would have unintended consequences for local businesses and would not solve problems of underage drinking:

- There are also strong precedents that minimum alcohol pricing is illegal under European and UK law. For this reason, Statutory Guidance issued under the Licensing Act states warns against blanket conditions on alcohol pricing that are likely to breach competition law<sup>1</sup>. The Department for Business has also released guidance to public bodies specifically stating that officials should not encourage businesses to make an agreement that places them in a position of potentially breaking competition law<sup>2</sup>.
- Many politicians have raised concerns that minimum pricing would penalise responsible consumers and those on low incomes. The Secretary of State for Health has referred to its "*regressive impact on low income families*"<sup>3</sup>. The former Home Secretary and Shadow Chancellor, Alan Johnson, said in early 2010

<sup>1</sup> Section 182 Statutory Guidance, Paragraph 10.38

<sup>2</sup> Competition Law: Issues which arise for business when the Government or lobby groups seek to encourage businesses to work together to deliver desired policy outcomes, Department for Business, April 2009

<sup>3</sup> Doctors should ask patients about their drinking more often, says NICE, 1<sup>st</sup> June 2010, The Telegraph

*"[minimum pricing] means those who are on low incomes who drink responsibly are affected"*<sup>4</sup>.

- Opinion research consistently shows the public is not in favour of minimum pricing. For example, the Government's recent opinion research on public perceptions of alcohol pricing found a consensus of respondents not wanting to see an increase in the price of alcohol<sup>5</sup>.
- Developing and enforcing a local pricing policy would require a significant level of new expertise and resources from local authorities. The Local Government Association already estimates that enforcing the licensing regime has cost local government over £100 million<sup>6</sup> more than their licensing income. This is a time of shrinking local Government budgets; councils will face an average loss of grant of 7.25%, in real terms, in each of the next four years. This is 26% in real terms between 2010-11 and 2014-15<sup>7</sup>. The burden of enforcement in an area of business where local authorities have not been involved before would be extremely large and it seems likely that enforcement officers would require new training on business and competition issues.
- Any local price intervention would most likely provoke legal challenges from businesses whose competitiveness is affected. This could result in large legal bills for the local authority with case law established over several years of uncertainty.
- Different local pricing measures would cause irritation for customers and chaos for business. Many large companies agree prices and discounts with suppliers nationally and even internationally. A patchwork of potentially hundreds of different prices across the UK would impose huge costs on national businesses.
- Local price restrictions would inevitably damage local businesses as consumers would seek alcohol at normal market prices from other sources. Many would travel to another area with different rules, potentially transferring their entire weekly grocery shop away from local stores. Equally, with internet sales, consumers can buy their alcohol online from a company based in area not subject to pricing restrictions, and still have it delivered to their door.

It is also worth noting that the Government is currently consulting on significant changes to licensing and is in process of working up a ban on selling alcohol below cost as well as considering changes to the UK alcohol taxation regime.

**If you are opposed to minimum pricing, what alternatives would you like to see to tackle alcohol-related problems?**

Price is not a silver bullet. As the Secretary of State for Health has stated, *"supply and price are far from the only factors in driving alcohol misuse. Demand and attitudes are crucial. We need to understand much better the psychology behind why different groups of people drink alcohol in excess."*

Experience shows that much can be achieved in co-operation with local businesses, who are part of the local community and the vast majority of whom will want to be part of the solution to any alcohol related problem. Community Alcohol Partnerships is a

<sup>4</sup> Alan Johnson: Minimum alcohol price will not solve drinking problems, Evening Standard, 19<sup>th</sup> January 2010

<sup>5</sup> The likely impacts of increasing alcohol price: a summary review of the evidence base, Home Office, January 2011, Pg. 15

<sup>6</sup> "Unfinished Business", Local Government Association, 2008

<sup>7</sup> Letter from Eric Pickles to Local Authority Leaders - Local Government and the Spending Review, 20 October 2010



THE WINE AND SPIRIT TRADE ASSOCIATION

scheme whereby retailers work together with police and local authorities to share information and training. There are now 29 schemes in operation in 11 counties, and the model has achieved excellent results. For example, when the projects in Kent were independently evaluated by Kent University it was found that criminal damage reduced on average 6% more than in non pilot areas in Kent. CAP is the type of proven project that shows what can be achieved by using existing powers and the resources of a range of local interest groups to tackled underage drinking. There are similar schemes that proved just as successful for handling the night time economy.

We would suggest that the Council's objectives could be achieved through such schemes more efficiently than by taking actions such as setting a local minimum price.

More information on Community Alcohol Partnerships, can be found in the attachment.



### **Working together against underage drinking and associated anti-social behaviour**

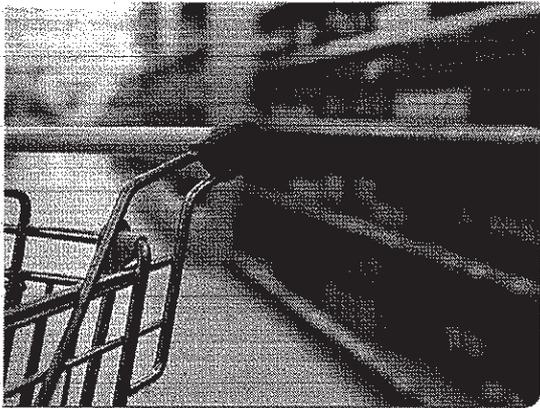
Underage drinking is a problem that can blight communities. The past five years have seen strides forward in training and investment by retailers to reduce sales of alcohol to the underage and surveys show that fewer young people are drinking. However, those who are drinking are consuming more and increasingly turning to other sources of alcohol, from getting it from older friends or relatives to asking strangers to 'proxy purchase' for them.

The complexity of this problem led retailers and local authorities to begin joint working on a project to address underage drinking from the demand side as well as the supply side.

Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP) projects bring together local retailers, trading standards, police, health, education and other local stakeholders to tackle the problem of underage drinking and associated anti-social behaviour.

CAP partners share information and training to encourage risk-based enforcement and resolve local problems swiftly and effectively. By acting as a first line of defence against underage sales of alcohol, retailers can help police and local authorities identify and tackle problem hotspots.

What started as a pilot in St Neots, Cambridgeshire is now being developed in a wide range of locations throughout the country. The independently evaluated project in Kent showed that CAP pilot areas saw a decline in offences of criminal damage some 6% greater than in non pilot areas in the county.



### **Working with retailers**

CAPs operate under the banner of the Retail of Alcohol Standards Group (RASG), a group of high street retailers who have worked together since 2005 to drive down underage sales. RASG members develop best practice and make it available to all retailers, and developed and implemented the highly successful Challenge 21 and Challenge 25 schemes.

As it became clear that better test purchase results were not reducing levels of underage drinking in local areas, RASG began working on the first CAP with Cambridgeshire County Council, testing how retailers could liaise with other local groups to address young people's demand for alcohol and tackle difficult issues like proxy purchasing (when adults buy alcohol on behalf of children). RASG gives local authorities a

channel of communication with head office staff at each RASG member company, allowing any problems with their stores at a local level to be sorted out quickly.

Since 2009, RASG has funded a dedicated CAP Officer to help launch and manage CAP schemes.

The officer leads on the operation of partnerships, resolving any problems with retailers and offering support through toolkits, signage, event organisation and local media management.

### **Achievements so far**

CAP was piloted in the market town of St Neots, Cambridgeshire and had a significant impact, substantially reducing the numbers of underage people found in possession of alcohol. Local police assessment indicated that incidents of anti-social behaviour declined by 42% over the course of the pilot period.

In 2009, Kent County Council launched pilot CAP projects in three areas: Edenbridge, Thanet and Canterbury. Independent evaluation by Kent University found criminal damage reduced on average 6% more than in non-pilot areas in Kent.

Public perception surveys also showed positive results on six identified measures: teenagers hanging around; people drunk and rowdy in public places; vandalism & graffiti; rubbish & litter; drugs; and anti-social behaviour.

The Kent University report found that CAP was a well managed solution to a difficult social problem. Encouraged by the results, Kent County Council are launching CAP projects county-wide.

There are now 20 CAP schemes running in 11 counties in England, as well as 1 in Scotland. All areas have differing local circumstances – but the key principles of CAPs are transferable to all towns and cities.

### **Working together with local groups**

The multiple effects of underage alcohol consumption mean that there are many local interest groups – involved – in reducing underage drinking.

By aligning the resources and priorities of these interest groups, an effective partnership can be created.

We have learnt that strong partnerships are crucial, and would normally include:

- The County Council;
- The police;
- Trading Standards;
- Retailer Members of RASG;
- Children and Young People's Services;
- Local health and youth working groups;
- Safer Community teams;
- Drug & Alcohol Action Team;
- Local schools;
- Independent retailers and shops.

### **Setting up a new CAP Scheme**

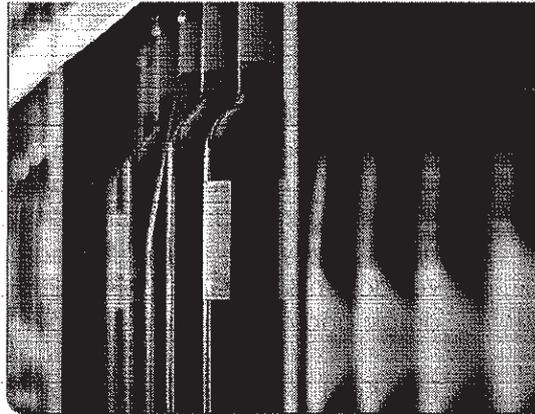
Experience has shown that good preparation, a full understanding of the issues and the selection of committed partners are key to providing the right foundation for a successful scheme.

Implementation of the proven CAP management structure is crucial.



## Where to next?

There are many steps involved in setting up a successful CAP. RASG has produced a comprehensive guide, including draft plans, documentation and artwork, which can be used and adapted by local authorities as required. RASG staff are available to help in all aspects of the design and launch of the scheme.



If you would like to discuss CAP further or find out how it could help in your local area, please contact the RASG Community Alcohol Partnership Officer, Philip Loring, based at the Wine & Spirit Trade Association: [philip@wsta.co.uk](mailto:philip@wsta.co.uk) or go to [www.communityalcoholpartnerships.co.uk](http://www.communityalcoholpartnerships.co.uk)

## Retail of Alcohol Standards Group: list of members



Aldi UK	Musgrave
ASDA	Retail Partners
Association of Convenience Stores	Nisa-Today's
Bargain Booze	One Stop Stores
Booker Premier	Sainsburys
British Retail Consortium	Snax 24
The Co-Operative	SPAR
Lidl UK	Tesco
Marks and Spencer	Total
Mills Group	Waitrose
WM Morrisons	

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International Wine & Spirit Centre 39-45 Bermondsey Street LONDON SE1 3XF

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**From:** Matthew Hughes [mailto:MatthewHughes@BargainBooze.co.uk]

**Sent:** 23 December 2010 14:55

**To:** O'Donnell, Margaret

**Subject:** RL/MOD - Consultation - Minimum Price for Alcohol

Dear Margaret

We are in receipt of your letter dated 10.12.10 inviting us to respond to Wirral Council's current consideration of the proposal to introduce a minimum price on alcohol.

Such a policy is fundamentally anti-competitive and would doubtless fall foul of the Competition Act and of European law, even if the Home Secretary were to 'sign off' on the introduction of a by-law, which – if I may - seems unlikely given that central Government has already ruled out 'minimum pricing' as a national strategy.

Irrespective of its legality (or otherwise), 'minimum pricing' as a strategy would not actually have the desired effect – on the contrary, there would be a number of unintended consequences such as the penalisation of legitimate consumers that do not have a problem relationship with alcohol, 'cross border' booze-cruises and damage to legitimate businesses in the local area.

We would all like to see an end to the sort of scenes that blight some of our town and city centres at the weekend when people have had too much to drink. It is appealing to imagine that there might be an easy answer to the problem.

The supporters of minimum unit pricing suggest that a price hike for alcohol would provide a solution by forcing people to drink less. It's a simple theory until you really think about the implications and the reality of problem drinking.

The truth is that most people in the UK have a perfectly normal relationship with alcohol. Most of us enjoy a drink with friends at the weekend or a glass of wine at home with our evening meal. Far from harming anyone it is a simple pleasure for you, your family and friends.

A minimum unit price of 50p would put the price of drinks up across the board.

Everybody pays more regardless of whether or not they have a problem with alcohol.

Many of us would say it simply isn't fair for the majority to face the same hit as the minority which has the problem. It's worse in fact. Self-evidently those on low and fixed incomes, such as pensioners and single parent families, would be hardest hit.

For those with less money to spend, forcing up the price of a bottle of wine from say £3.99 to £5 may mean the difference between being able to enjoy a bottle of wine at the weekend or not, particularly when household budgets are already stretched and fuel bills are rising.

But would that price rise persuade problem drinkers to change their behaviour?

Most of us would say no and indeed the overwhelming evidence supports that view.

Major international studies show that while people who drink excessively may switch to different drinks if the price of a particular product goes up they are least likely to cut back if prices go up generally. It's what you'd expect – heavy drinkers aren't likely to be deterred by a price hike because they are more determined to carry on drinking the amount they do.

The fact is that there is no evidence to suggest that minimum unit pricing of alcohol would stop problem drinkers drinking because it has never been tried anywhere in the world.

Addressing the price of alcohol is not of itself going to tackle problem drinking. The solution must be education and tougher enforcement of the raft of laws we have to tackle alcohol misuse and anti-social behaviour arising from it.

Putting the price up in Merseyside won't work. In particular it will be completely ineffective if you can get in your car and drive to Cheshire where prices are cheaper. And what about the internet? A local price rise wouldn't stop someone from buying their drink online. It seems more like a recipe for damaging local businesses than for curing problem alcohol consumption.

Our industry – producers and the major retailers of alcohol in the UK – support plans to ban the sale of alcohol below cost. Duty and VAT are consumer taxes and should rightly be paid by them. There are, however, a number of small businesses in the Wirral area that even now are selling alcohol below the sum of Duty and VAT.

The likelihood is that some of these businesses are utilising 'duty fraud' stock (i.e. – products on which the alcohol tax has not been paid) in order to maintain a competitive edge in the market.

We would urge Wirral Council to focus its efforts on working with HMRC to deal with those businesses in the Wirral area which may be funding their trading through criminal activity (duty fraud). This would be a far more effective strategy than attempting to implement 'minimum pricing' which is not only anti-competitive, but also likely to be ineffective in tackling the issue of drinkers that have a problem relationship with alcohol.

Via the WSTA (Wines and Spirits Trade Association) Bargain Booze is working with central Government to find a solution to the issue of problem drinkers and to agree a set of practical steps for ensuring consumers have the right information about the drinks they choose to buy and the risks if they drink too much.

Education is part of the answer and so too is enforcement. Merseyside has a good track record in this area.

Finally, you might be surprised to know that while reported alcohol-related hospital admissions continue to increase the Government's own figures show that alcohol consumption in the UK has been falling for the last few years. In fact overall consumption is down 12% since 2004.

The problem is not all of us who like a drink. It's a minority of people who continue to drink to excess, inflicting harm on themselves and others. We need policies that tackle this minority, not a blanket policy like minimum unit pricing which punishes all consumers, particularly the poor, while doing nothing to dissuade problem drinkers.

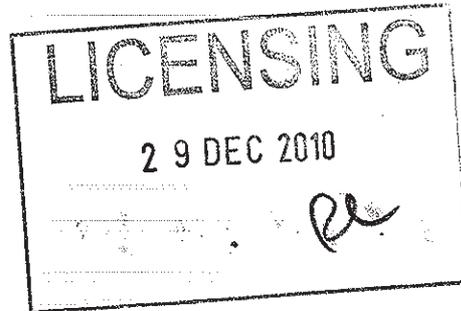
Yours sincerely

**Matthew Hughes**  
**Joint Managing Director**  
**Bargain Booze Ltd.**

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This email is from Bargain Booze Ltd  
Registered Office: Unit 1 Weston Road, Crewe, Cheshire. CW1 6BP  
Registered in England: No. 1801597 VAT Reg. GB 7287601 15

Department of Law, HR and Asset Management  
 Margaret O'Donnell  
 Town Hall  
 Brighton Street  
 Wallasey  
 Wirral  
 Merseyside  
 CH44 8ED



23.12.10

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**BARGAIN BOOZE**

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**thoroughgoods**

**thoroughgoods** Select Convenience

**BARGAIN BOOZE**

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The likelihood is that some of these businesses are utilising 'duty fraud' stock (i.e. – products on which the alcohol tax has not been paid) in order to maintain a competitive edge in the market.

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Via the WSTA (Wines and Spirits Trade Association) Bargain Booze is working with central Government to find a solution to the issue of problem drinkers and to agree a set of practical steps for ensuring consumers have the right information about the drinks they choose to buy and the risks if they drink too much.

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Finally, you might be surprised to know that while reported alcohol-related hospital admissions continue to increase the Government's own figures show that alcohol consumption in the UK has been falling for the last few years. In

fact overall consumption is down 12% since 2004.

The problem is not all of us who like a drink. It's a minority of people who continue to drink to excess, inflicting harm on themselves and others. We need policies that tackle this minority, not a blanket policy like minimum unit pricing which punishes all consumers, particularly the poor, while doing nothing to dissuade problem drinkers.

Yours sincerely



**Matthew Hughes**  
**Joint Managing Director**  
**Bargain Booze Ltd.**

---

**From:** Deborah Jones [mailto:Deborah.Jones@cwp.nhs.uk]  
**Sent:** 19 January 2011 11:44  
**To:** Licensing  
**Subject:**

Dear Margaret

I am responding to the consultation – Minimum price for alcohol, by implementing a minimum pricing of 50p per unit of alcohol. As a professional working with people who are alcohol dependent, I am concerned as to the wider impact such a strategy will have on this group of the community. Based upon the price per unit would mean such individuals would have to fine £30-£45 daily, to support the alcohol dependency.

The impact on the community could be significant also: The impact upon current health provision would result in this population having more acute hospital admissions due to possible imposed withdrawals due to being unable to meet their daily alcohol cost, dietary deficiency issues would arise as priority would be given to their alcohol as fear of withdrawal would be a worry, economically they may not be able to meet their needs for daily living rent, food, heating, council tax etc due to having to divert funds to meet their dependency needs and finally there is the potential cost to the criminal justice system as people attempt to prevent withdrawal and unable to find the means to fund their dependency other than through criminal activity. So the binge drinkers who this is aimed at will have some impact, but the biggest and most potential harm will be to those who are dependent drinkers.

Kind Regards

Deborah Jones

## MINIMUM PRICING OF ALCOHOL

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This response is submitted on behalf of the Trading Standards Service of Wirral Council to a consultation concerning a proposal to implement a minimum price per unit of alcohol to reduce the negative impact excessive alcohol consumption has on individuals, communities and public services.

1.2 Wirral Council's Trading Standards service has statutory responsibility to enforce a wide range of legislation placing requiring retailers of goods to comply with legal provisions concerning the advertising, description, pricing and quality of goods. Failure to comply with those provisions is a criminal offence and can lead to prosecution.

1.3 This response is based on practical and legal experience gained in investigating and prosecuting criminal provisions designed to control the price and/or sale of specific products.

### 2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made in the body of the response;

2.1 Any bye law introduced requiring minimum pricing of alcohol should be clear, unambiguous and clearly understood, enforceable and able to withstand legal challenge. (Part 3)

2.2 Any bye law introduced requiring minimum pricing of alcohol should provide sufficient powers to those charged with enforcing its provisions to gather sufficient admissible evidence to prove the commission of the offence. (Part 3)

2.3 Legal advice should be sought as the impact European law may have on the implementation of the bye law. (Part 4)

2.4 A joint fighting fund should be set up to enable legal challenges to be rebutted and to prevent a single local authority having to bear cost of lengthy and protracted legal proceedings. (Part 5)

2.5 A communications strategy, based on evidence of the health impact, should be prepared to rebut criticism of the introduction of a minimum price for alcohol, stressing the long term health benefits of such a policy. (Part 6)

### **3.0 STRUCTURE OF THE LOCAL BYE LAW**

3.1 Trading Standards experience, influenced and guided by case law relating to the sale or supply of goods, reinforces the need to ensure that any legal provision designed to control the supply of goods is;

(a) Drafted in such a way that it is clear and unambiguous and be clearly understood, enforceable and able to withstand legal challenge.

(b) Provides sufficient powers to those charged with enforcing the provisions to gather admissible evidence to prove the commission of the offence

3.2 In relation to (a) above there is a wealth of precedent in consumer law cases concerning which person or legal entity is legally responsible for sale of goods and the means by which the goods are provided i.e. are the goods sold or supplied goods offered for sale or supply?

3.3 There are clear legal distinctions between each phrase and care should be taken to ensure that the correct term is used. It is essential any bye law should be clear as to who is responsible for ensuring that goods are priced in accordance with the minimum pricing policy and whether or not the goods are offered for sale or supply.

3.4 The cases briefly mentioned below indicate the need to ensure that any controls are correctly drafted. It is not intended as guidance as to how the

control should be drafted, as specialist legal advice would be needed, but merely as an indication of the need to ensure that the correct legal terminology concerning how the alcohol is supplied and who is responsible for its sale or supply.

3.5 A shopkeeper displayed in his shop window a knife with a price ticket behind it. He was charged with **offering for sale** a flick knife, contrary to s. 1 (1) of the Restriction of Offensive Weapons Act 1959.

3.6 Held: the shopkeeper was not guilty of the offense with which he was charged because the displaying of the knife in the shop window was merely an invitation to treat and the shopkeeper had not thereby offered the knife for sale, within the meaning of s. 1 (1) of the Act of 1959. **Fisher v Bell [1961] 1 QB 394**

3.7 The defendants, Boots Cash Chemists, operated a self-serve pharmacy where customers selected the articles from the shelf and then proceeded to the cashier to pay for them. Among the articles for sale were pharmaceutical products which, according to the Pharmacy and Poisons Act, were required to be **sold** only under the supervision or, or authorization by, a pharmacist. On April 13, 1951, two customers purchased a pharmaceutical product governed by the Act.

3.8 Held; A display of items in a store is an invitation to treat, that is, a non-binding invitation to receive offers. The presentation of the item by the customer to the cashier constitutes an offer to purchase the item. The contract is completed with the cashier's acceptance of the customer's offer. Therefore, the sales in question were completed under the pharmacist's supervision and, as such, were legal sales under the Act. **Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain v Boots Cash Chemists Ltd [1953] 1 QB 401, Court of Appeal**

3.9 Whether a **sale** of alcoholic beverages for the purposes of section 14 of the Food Safety Act 1990 can be made only by the licensee authorised under the Licensing Act 1964, or whether it can also be made by the owner of

the alcoholic beverages, where such a person also owns the premises from which they are sold and employs the licensee?

3.10 Held; In my judgment the words of section 14 of the Food Safety Act 1990 should be given their ordinary meaning and should not be restricted as Mr Wise contends and as the District Judge accepted, simply because the food in question is an alcoholic drink. Apart from the clarity of the statutory wording it seems to me that a powerful reason for arriving at that conclusion is that section 14 applies to all foods, and it is obviously desirable for the achievement of the legislative purpose that it should be possible to hold to account the owner of the goods prior to the sale. **Nottingham City Council v. Wolverhampton & Dudley Breweries Ltd. [2004] 1 QB 1274.**

3.11 The defendant, a store manager, was charged with giving 'in the course of a business of his' a price indication by means of a notice which was misleading, contrary to section 20(1) of the Consumer Protection Act 1987 Act. The justices decided that the defendant was acting 'in the course of a business of his'

3.12 Held; However a study of the legislation had led to the conclusion that the words 'in the course of any business of his' must mean any business of which the defendant was either the owner or in which he had a controlling interest. Therefore for the purposes of section 20(2) (a) of the Act an employed branch manager who failed to comply with a price indication so that it was misleading did not do so 'in the course of any business of his'. **Regina - v- Warwickshire County Council, ex parte Johnson [1993] WLR 1 HL; [1991] UKHL 11; [1993] AC 583; [1993] All ER 299**

3.13 The above examples, generated by the enforcement of a variety of statutory provisions, give an indication of the legal arguments which can ensue from a relatively simple transaction and reinforce the need to ensure that the bye law is carefully drafted.

#### **4.0 EUROPEAN LAW CONSIDERATIONS**

4.1 Whilst a minimum price for alcohol may have support from the medical profession there may not be similar enthusiasm for a minimum price within the alcohol industry. Consideration needs to be given to ensuring that any local bye laws do not contravene either competition law in relation to fixing prices or European law, concerning the free movement of goods.

4.2 From a Trading Standards enforcement perspective there is recent experience of how European law can impact on domestic legislation intended to control the supply of goods.

4.3 The Video Recordings Act 1984 was intended to prevent the supply of "video nasties" by implementing a classification system overseen by the British Board of Film Classification and an enforcement regime, regulated by local authorities. In order to comply with EU requirements the UK should have notified the Commission of the classification and labelling requirements of the Act under article 12(1) of Technical Standards and Regulations Directive 1983/189 (now replaced by Directive 98/34). This did not happen.

4.4 This omission did not come to light until 2009 during the Department of Culture, Media and Sport Digital Britain project. The correct submission was then made to the EU and the legislation was reviewed leading to the implementation of the Video Recordings Act 2010. However during the period between the defect being noticed and the implementation of the 2010 Act local authorities were unable to prosecute, cases were withdrawn and appeals against previous convictions lodged.

4.5 Legal advice should be sought as to the impact EU law may have on the implementation of a minimum price for alcohol.

## **5.0 LEGAL CHALLENGES BY THE DRINKS INDUSTRY**

5.1 As stated at there may be a medical consensus that a minimum price for alcohol may reduce harm but the alcohol industry may not share that view.

Trading Standards have experience of enforcing section 7(1) of the Children and Young Persons Act intended to prevent the sale of tobacco to a person under 18. There are very strong health reasons to prohibit the sale of tobacco to children.

5.2 There is strong evidence that one source of supply of cigarettes to young people is from unsupervised, or loosely supervised, cigarette machines. The Department of Health have acted upon this evidence and, through sections 22 and 23 of the Health Act 2009 made the Protection from Tobacco (Sales from Vending Machines) Regulations 2010, whose effect is to ban, from 1st October 2011 the sale of tobacco from automatic vending machines.

5.3 Enforcement of the Act and the proposal to implement the regulations to ban the sale of cigarettes from automatic machines has led to considerable and, no doubt, expensive litigation.

5.4 In the case of **London Borough of Merton v Sinclair Collis Ltd [2010] EWHC 3089 (Admin)** the local authority prosecuted Sinclair Collis (the owners of the vending machine) and appealed to the High Court against a judgement by the District Judge that section 7(1) of the Children and Young Persons Act did not apply to a purchase from a vending machine. The appeal was allowed and the case remitted back to the Magistrates Court for rehearing.

5.5 In the case of **Sinclair Collis Ltd [2010] EWHC 3112 Admin and the Secretary of State for Health** (with the members of the national association of cigarette machine operators as an interested party) Sinclair Collis Ltd sought judicial review of the Secretary of state's intention to implement the Protection from Tobacco (Sales from Vending Machines Regulations) 2010. In a carefully argued judgement the Court considered the rationale behind the regulations (the protection of the nation's health) and the proportionality of the regulations.

5.6 In this instance the Court dismissed the claims against the Secretary of State. The judgement may be useful when considering the aim behind the reason to introduce a bye law and the proportionality of such a bye law.

5.7 Additionally these two cases may give an indication of the perfectly legitimate lengths to which businesses will go when threatened by restrictions on their ability to trade. Litigation of this type is costly and it may be worthwhile for all those local authorities and agencies supporting the implementation of the bye law to consider setting up a fighting fund to resist any subsequent legal challenge. This will prevent one local authority having to pay substantial legal costs, if the bye law is taken to judicial review or if any subsequent legal action taken is challenged in the High Court.

## **6.0 ADVERSE PUBLICITY**

6.1 Whilst some will see this proposal as a laudable public health measure sections of the press will see it as another nanny state measure infringing the rights of the responsible individual to use the free market to source their purchases at the lowest price possible. Cogent arguments need to be ready to rebut these views.

## **7.0 THE SALE OF ILLICIT ALCOHOL**

7.1 Successive Governments have used taxation levied upon tobacco products to increase the price making the product less attractive to smokers and increasing the likelihood that they will give up smoking and improve their health. This has had a beneficial health affect for those smokers who, deterred by the higher price, gave up smoking but it has also lead to an increase in the supply of illicit tobacco products (counterfeit, illegally imported or non duty paid) to those determined to pay as little as possible for their cigarettes or hand rolling tobacco. Trading Standards experience is that illicit tobacco is sold, literally, under the counter to those seeking this type of product.

7.2 This experience is being replicated in the less reputable end of the alcohol business with officers seizing counterfeit or non duty paid spirits, again hidden from plain view.

7.3 It is almost a mathematical certainty that this end of the alcohol supply chain will apparently comply with any minimum price conditions for their legitimate product but will be able to supply cheap non minimum price compliant product to those in the know - probably to those whose health needs a higher level of protection.

7.4 This craftiness reinforces the need to ensure that any minimum price control regime is effective and capable of effective enforcement and that officers have sufficient powers to effectively tackle those transgressing the requirements.



**Dr S A Kidd**  
**B Sc (Hons) MB, Ch B, DCH**

**Mill Lane Surgery**  
**Victoria Central Health Centre**  
**Mill Lane**  
**Wallasey**  
**CH44 5UF**

**Tel: 0151 630 4747**  
**Fax: 0151 639 7395**

23 December 2010

SK/JOB  
Your Ref: RL/MOD

**Margaret O'Donnell**  
**Licensing Manager**  
**Department of Law, HR**  
**and Asset Management**  
**Town Hall**  
**Brighton Street**  
**Wallasey**  
**CH44 8ED**

Dear Ms O'Donnell

Many thanks for your letter enquiring about my views on a minimum price for alcohol. As a GP I would say it is important to consider measures that would have an impact on reducing excess alcohol consumption in my patients, and I do think that having a minimum price per unit would help in that role.

Yours sincerely

**Dr S A Kidd**

---

**From:** Lewin Denise (WIRRAL PCT) [mailto:denise.lewin@nhs.net]  
**Sent:** 20 December 2010 09:55  
**To:** Licensing  
**Subject:** minimum price for alcohol

To whom it may concern

No i do not agree with a minimum price for alcohol. Why should we all be punished for the irresponsible actions of a few. i enjoy a few glasses of wine at the weekend which is a treat for me. Why should I be charged more?? Surely the logical thing to do would be to higher the legal age for drinking to 21. To stop 24 hour opening of pubs and clubs and to go back to the old hours. To stop the purchasing of alcohol in supermarkets and shops etc after closing hours. Come on government start showing a bit of sense for a change.

Denise Lewin

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*

This message may contain confidential information. If you are not the intended recipient please inform the sender that you have received the message in error before deleting it.

Please do not disclose, copy or distribute information in this e-mail or take any action in reliance on its contents: to do so is strictly prohibited and may be unlawful.

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For more information and to find out how you can switch, visit [www.connectingforhealth.nhs.uk/nhsmail](http://www.connectingforhealth.nhs.uk/nhsmail)

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*

Rec'd 10/12  
(R)

## Minimum pricing of alcohol

Wirral Council and its partners – including public health agencies – are looking at ways to reduce the negative impacts of excess alcohol consumption on individuals, local communities and public services.

One option being considered is to introduce a minimum price for alcohol. The Council is asking local people, businesses, partner organisations and community & voluntary groups, what they think about a proposal to introduce a minimum price.

Any comments received will be reported to the Council's Licensing, Health & Safety and General Purposes Committee. The Committee will then consider whether or not to recommend to the Council's Cabinet that they should support the campaign for a minimum price per unit of alcohol.

Further information is available on the Council website at [www.wirral.gov.uk/alcoholpricing](http://www.wirral.gov.uk/alcoholpricing)  
Your comments are important to us and are much appreciated.

This survey will close on 18th February 2011.

Printed copies of this survey should be returned before this date to:  
Head of Regulation  
Wirral Council  
North Annexe  
Town Hall  
Wallasey, CH44 8ED

If you would like us to report back directly to you please provide your contact details below so we can get back in touch.

### 1. Contact details:

Name:

E-mail address:

### 2. If you don't have an e-mail address please provide your postal address:

Address 1:

Address 2:

Town:

Postcode:

### 3. Email updates

Please tick here if you would like to receive e-mail updates on Council services. Wirral Council will not disclose your information to any unauthorised third party. To unsubscribe please email [unsubscribe@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:unsubscribe@wirral.gov.uk)

## Minimum pricing of alcohol

### 4. Which of Wirral's neighbourhoods do you live in?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Bebington or Clatterbridge                | <input type="radio"/> Liscard or Seacombe                         |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> Bidston, St James or Claughton | <input type="radio"/> New Brighton or Wallasey                    |
| <input type="radio"/> Birkenhead, Tranmere or Rock Ferry        | <input type="radio"/> Prenton or Oxton                            |
| <input type="radio"/> Bromborough or Eastham                    | <input type="radio"/> Woodchurch, Greasby, Frankby, Irby or Upton |
| <input type="radio"/> Heswall, Pensby or Thingwall              | <input type="radio"/> I am visiting Wirral                        |
| <input type="radio"/> Hoylake, Meols, West Kirby or Thurstaston | <input type="radio"/> I work in Wirral but don't live here        |
| <input type="radio"/> Leasowe, Moreton or Saughall Massie       |   |
| <input type="radio"/> Other (please specify)                    |   |

### 5. What is your relationship to Wirral Council?

(Tick all that apply)

- Resident
- Member of staff
- Licensed premises
- Off-license premises
- Partner agency/organisation
- Voluntary/community organisation
- Other (please state)

Bebington Councillor

### 6. If you are answering on behalf of a business or organisation please tell us its name

## Minimum pricing of alcohol

**7. To what extent do you agree with the following statement?**

**A minimum unit price should be introduced for alcohol sold in licensed premises in Merseyside and Halton.**

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- No strong opinion
- Disagree
- Disagree strongly

**8. To what extent do you agree with the following statement?**

**A minimum unit price should be introduced for alcohol sold in off license premises in Merseyside and Halton.**

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- No strong opinion
- Disagree
- Disagree strongly

**9. What do you think are the main issues arising from alcohol in your neighbourhood? (tick all that apply)**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No issues          | <input type="checkbox"/> Violence          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anti-social behaviour         | <input type="checkbox"/> Noise disturbance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Young people drinking outside | <input type="checkbox"/> Criminal damage   |

Other (please specify)

## Minimum pricing of alcohol

10. If you support minimum alcohol pricing how do you think it will benefit your community?

11. If you are opposed to minimum pricing, what alternatives would you like to see to tackle alcohol-related problems?

More police patrols who take firm action against those who become violent and anti-social due to over indulgence in drink, Pub landlords must also play their part in helping to stop drunkenness.

12. Do you have any other comments you would like to add?

Why should the vast majority of us have to pay pay more for our occasional tittle for something that I consider is already expensive. I find that I am already paying more for my odd bottle of scotch and my week-end bottle of wine is more expensive. To make the policy work alcohol would have to be very highly priced and would further penalise most of us.

The following questions help to ensure that we have gathered the views from as broad a range of people within Wirral as possible. All the information you give will be kept completely confidential.

## Minimum pricing of alcohol

### 13. Are you?

- Male  
 Female

### 14. What was your age on your last birthday?

- Under 16  
 16-24  
 25-44  
 45-64  
 65+  
 Prefer not to say

### 15. Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?

- Yes  
 No  
 Prefer not to say

### 16. Please tell us to which of the following ethnic groups you belong:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> White English                        | <input type="radio"/> Asian or Asian British (Bangladeshi)            |
| <input type="radio"/> White Other British                             | <input type="radio"/> Asian or Asian British (Chinese)                |
| <input type="radio"/> White Irish                                     | <input type="radio"/> Any other Asian background (please state below) |
| <input type="radio"/> Any other White background (please state below) | <input type="radio"/> Black or Black British (Caribbean)              |
| <input type="radio"/> Mixed White & Black Caribbean                   | <input type="radio"/> Black or Black British (African)                |
| <input type="radio"/> Mixed White & Black African                     | <input type="radio"/> Any other Black background (please state below) |
| <input type="radio"/> Mixed White & Asian                             | <input type="radio"/> Arab  |
| <input type="radio"/> Any other Mixed background (please state below) | <input type="radio"/> Gypsy/Romany/Irish Traveller                    |
| <input type="radio"/> Asian or Asian British (Indian)                 | <input type="radio"/> Any other Ethnic Group (please state below)     |
| <input type="radio"/> Asian or Asian British (Pakistani)              | <input type="radio"/> Prefer not to say                               |

Other (please specify)

**Leyland, Richard K.**

---

**From:** Anne O'Marah [anneomarah@wirralark.org.uk]  
**Sent:** 04 October 2010 08:50  
**To:** Leyland, Richard K.  
**Subject:** Alcohol minimum pricing

Hi Richard,

My name is Anne O'Marah and I am CEO at Wirral Churches' Ark Project in Birkenhead

I was given your e-mail in a letter from Beverley McAteer.

One of the biggest issues we face with our clients in the hostel in particular is heavy drinking. We take people directly from the streets and more often than not they are street drinkers.

The sheer volume of alcohol they can purchase for relatively little money is a huge issue to us. The very cheap cider and sherry is so awful the only people who drink it are the street drinkers...they must be their target market.

An increase in price would, we believe, at least go some way to addressing the problem.

Please contact me if I can be of any assistance.

My direct dial number is 0151 650 6858

Anne O'Marah

**Leyland, Richard K.**

---

**From:** O'Donnell, Margaret  
**Sent:** 27 September 2010 15:21  
**To:** Leyland, Richard K.  
**Subject:** FW:

Richard

Please include email below with responses to consultation on minimum pricing.

Thank you

**Margaret O'Donnell**  
**Licensing Manager**

Wirral Council

0151 691 8606

email: [margaretodonnell@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:margaretodonnell@wirral.gov.uk)

Fax: 0151 691 8215

Visit our website: [www.wirral.gov.uk](http://www.wirral.gov.uk)

Please save paper and print out only what is necessary

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**From:** Ann Conroy [mailto:[annconroy@live.com](mailto:annconroy@live.com)]

**Sent:** 27 September 2010 15:19

**To:** O'Donnell, Margaret

**Subject:**

Dear Margaret,

I'm emailing you after our conversation on the phone this morning about alcohol prices.

My opinion, as I said, is that an increase in the price of alcohol will do absolutely nothing to solve the problems of those who tend to drink excessively; on the contrary, such an increase will simply exacerbate the problems that such people, and their families, already suffer. The desperate need to drink felt by the drinking alcoholic will not be affected by price!

The open meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous in the Wirral are as follows:

Last Tuesday of month: YMCA, Whetstone Lane, Birkenhead, 7.30.

Last Wednesday of month: Arrowe Park Hospital, Eye Dept., Clinic A, 7.30.

This Thursday (30th) only: St. Peter's Church Hall, St. Peter's Road, Rock Ferry, 7.30.

2nd Sunday of month: St. John Ambulance Hall, New Chester Road, Bromborough, 7.30.

3rd Wednesday of month: Trinity Methodist Church Hall, Whitby Road, Ellesmere Port, 7.30.

You're likely to find attendance at one of these meetings both interesting and informative.

Sincerely,  
Ann Conroy.

**Leyland, Richard K.**

---

**From:** Williams, Chris D.  
**Sent:** 23 September 2010 09:43  
**To:** Leyland, Richard K.  
**Subject:** FW: Minimum Booze

Regards

**Chris Williams**  
**Licensing Assistant**  
Wirral Council  
0151 691 8019  
email: [chriswilliams@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:chriswilliams@wirral.gov.uk)  
fax: 0151 691 8215  
Visit our website: [www.wirral.gov.uk](http://www.wirral.gov.uk)

Please save paper and print only what is necessary

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**From:** Castleton Marilyn (WESTERN CHESHIRE PCT) [<mailto:mcastleton@nhs.net>]  
**Sent:** 23 September 2010 09:18  
**To:** Licensing  
**Subject:** Minimum Booze

Dear Mr Green

Licensing, Health and Safety

I am in favour of a minimum price of 50p per unit for alcohol and am very surprised when I see Tesco's and the Ravenscroft pub in Heswall promoting cheap drinking, which is extremely irresponsible of them. Heavy drinking is the most serious problem the North West of England faces and costs the NHS vast sums.

Could you ban the tasteless advertising scrawlings on the windows and outside pubs which I am sure put people off going into the pubs (myself included) in any case.

Thank you for all your hard work in making the Wirral a place to be proud of.

Kind Regards

**Marilyn Castleton**

Clinic Clerical Officer  
NHS Western Cheshire  
Author of The Elvis and Marilyn Story  
and Committee Member WSCA  
Neston Clinic  
Mellock Lane  
Little Neston  
Neston CH66 3NZ  
Cheshire, T: 0151 336 2189  
F: 0151 353 1873  
[mcastleton@nhs.net](mailto:mcastleton@nhs.net)

**Leyland, Richard K.**

---

**From:** Calvert, Margaret on behalf of Licensing  
**Sent:** 20 September 2010 11:10  
**To:** Leyland, Richard K.; O'Donnell, Margaret  
**Subject:** FW: minimum pricing for alcohol

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**From:** peter burdett-smith [mailto:peterburdettsmith@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** 19 September 2010 15:41  
**To:** Licensing  
**Subject:** minimum pricing for alcohol

Dear Sir

I am writing to support a minimum price per unit of alcohol. As a consultant in the Emergency department at the Royal Liverpool university hospital I see the results of alcohol abuse every day. 40% of admissions to hospital are as a direct result of alcohol abuse, whether acute, leading to falls and fights, acute intoxication and even death from alcohol poisoning, or chronic leading to ascites, cirrhosis, pancreatitis and liver cancers. Unfortunately, Liverpool and Birkenhead are among the worst areas in the country in this regard. We expect large numbers of attendances to the Emergency department next week as a result of students drinking to excess during freshers week. Apart from the personal cost to individuals and their families, the cost to the economy in terms of working days lost and health care is enormous. We have seen the positive effects on health from the reduction in cigarette smoking. Alcohol abuse is the single most common, easily addressed health issue in society that could make a big difference to all concerned, both sufferers and those who have to care for them. I understand that Liverpool council are considering similar measures and it is obviously important that if a minimum price is adopted, that it is the same on both sides of the Mersey.

yours sincerely

Peter Burdett-Smith  
Consultant emergency physician  
Divisional medical director (medicine)

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**Leyland, Richard K.**

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**From:** Calvert, Margaret on behalf of Licensing  
**Sent:** 16 September 2010 08:56  
**To:** Leyland, Richard K.  
**Subject:** FW: Concern over alcohol

-----Original Message-----

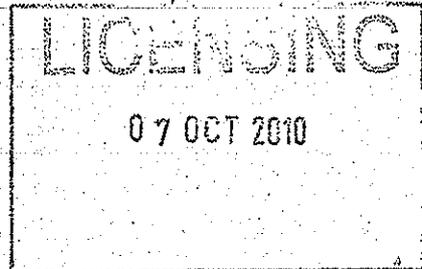
**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 16 September 2010 08:25  
**To:** Licensing  
**Subject:** Concern over alcohol

I fully appreciate all that was said in the report in this week's news about the problems of alcohol. I think the cost implication is only a part of the problem. If the price is raised I think hardened drinkers will still try and find the money. Those drinkers who are also parents will end up spending less on more important things like looking after their kids. I think as well we need to look at the access to alcohol and the number of licenses given out to shops and supermarkets. Then there is the important issue of education. People should be more aware of the problems at an early age and the matter should be treated more seriously at every consultation with doctors and hospitals. It is most important that a drink problem is identified as early as possible. A lot of problem drinking is found amongst the least well off, especially families who are on benefits. In a lot of cases this is where the family suffers. You can't look after your family properly if you spend all your dole money on alcohol.

[REDACTED]

Sent from my Nokia Phone

To:  
Licensing Committee,  
Town Hall,  
Brighton Street,  
Wallasey,  
CH44 8ED



Dear Councillors,

**Minimum Price for Alcohol**

We are pleased that you have decided to consult your constituents on this issue.  
We raised the matter at a well-attended Church Meeting held on Monday Sept.27<sup>th</sup>.  
A resolution was passed unanimously asking me to write to you to confirm our view that  
a minimum price for alcohol such as is proposed should be laid down and enforced.

Yours sincerely,

A redacted signature area consisting of two thick, horizontal black bars. The top bar is shorter and wider, while the bottom bar is longer and narrower, extending further to the right.

[REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 19 January 2011 10:57

**To:** Beresford, Robert W.

**Subject:** Minimum pricing of alcohol consultation

Dear Mr. Beresford,

I write regarding the current consultation on the minimum pricing of alcohol.

I have been studying for an MSc in Environmental Health and I am currently completing a student placement within the Environmental Health department here at Wirral.

As part of my MSc I completed a dissertation, which was entitled '*Binge Drinking: The social implications and potential solutions*'. As you are aware, alcohol misuse is a very difficult issue to tackle, however I came to the conclusion that a minimum price per unit of alcohol is one of the most effective ways of reducing the public health impact of alcohol across society.

Regarding this, I do not feel that the Government's current pricing proposals go far enough. I agree with many other researchers (and the charity Alcohol Concern) that the minimum price would be better set at at least 50p/unit.

If you would like to see a copy of my dissertation I would be happy to forward one to you.

Regards,  
[REDACTED]

LICENSING  
16 DEC 2010

Form completed

12.12.10

**Minimum pricing of alcohol**

Wirral Council and its partners - including public health agencies - are looking at ways to reduce the negative impacts of excess alcohol consumption on individuals, local communities and public services.

One option being considered is to introduce a minimum price for alcohol. The Council is asking local people, businesses, partner organisations and community & voluntary groups, what they think about a proposal to introduce a minimum price.

Any comments received will be reported to the Council's Licensing, Health & Safety and General Purposes Committee. The Committee will then consider whether or not to recommend to the Council's Cabinet that they should support the campaign for a minimum price per unit of alcohol.

Further information is available on the Council website at [www.wirral.gov.uk/alcoholpricing](http://www.wirral.gov.uk/alcoholpricing)  
Your comments are important to us and are much appreciated.

This survey will close on 18th February 2011.

Printed copies of this survey should be returned before this date to:  
Head of Regulation  
Wirral Council  
North Annexe  
Town Hall  
Wallasey, CH44 8ED

If you would like us to report back directly to you please provide your contact details below so we can get back in touch.

**1. Contact details:**

Name: [REDACTED]  
E-mail address: [REDACTED]

**2. If you don't have an e-mail address please provide your postal address:**

Address 1: [REDACTED]  
Address 2: [REDACTED]  
Town: BROMBOROUGH  
Postcode: [REDACTED]

**3. Email updates**

Please tick here if you would like to receive e-mail updates on Council services. Wirral Council will not disclose your information to any unauthorised third party. To unsubscribe please email [unsubscribe@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:unsubscribe@wirral.gov.uk)

## Minimum pricing of alcohol

### 4. Which of Wirral's neighbourhoods do you live in?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Bebington or Clatterbridge                | <input type="radio"/> Liscard or Seacombe                         |
| <input type="radio"/> Bidston, St James or Claughton            | <input type="radio"/> New Brighton or Wallasey                    |
| <input type="radio"/> Birkenhead, Tranmere or Rock Ferry        | <input type="radio"/> Prenton or Oxton                            |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> Bromborough or Eastham         | <input type="radio"/> Woodchurch, Greasby, Frankby, Irby or Upton |
| <input type="radio"/> Heswall, Pensby or Thingwall              | <input type="radio"/> I am visiting Wirral                        |
| <input type="radio"/> Hoylake, Meols, West Kirby or Thurstaston | <input type="radio"/> I work in Wirral but don't live here        |
| <input type="radio"/> Leasowe, Moreton or Saughall Massie       |   |
| <input type="radio"/> Other (please specify)                    |   |

### 5. What is your relationship to Wirral Council?

(Tick all that apply)

- Resident
- Member of staff
- Licensed premises
- Off-license premises
- Partner agency/organisation
- Voluntary/community organisation
- Other (please state)

### 6. If you are answering on behalf of a business or organisation please tell us its name

## Minimum pricing of alcohol

7. To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

A minimum unit price should be introduced for alcohol sold in licensed premises in Merseyside and Halton.

- Agree strongly  
 Agree  
 No strong opinion  
 Disagree  
 Disagree strongly

8. To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

A minimum unit price should be introduced for alcohol sold in off license premises in Merseyside and Halton.

- Agree strongly  
 Agree  
 No strong opinion  
 Disagree  
 Disagree strongly

9. What do you think are the main issues arising from alcohol in your neighbourhood? (tick all that apply)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No issues                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Violence                     |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anti-social behaviour         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Noise disturbance |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Young people drinking outside | <input type="checkbox"/> Criminal damage              |

Other (please specify)

## Minimum pricing of alcohol

10. If you support minimum alcohol pricing how do you think it will benefit your community?

It is difficult to assess the impact; one hopes that it would make people think more carefully about the amount consumed. Moderate drinking, in a responsible way, is an individual choice, but mass marketing and peer pressure (at all ages) have a strong influence. It is disappointing to see shops to place large displays of alcohol in prominent positions.

11. If you are opposed to minimum pricing, what alternatives would you like to see to tackle alcohol-related problems?

[Empty response box for question 11]

12. Do you have any other comments you would like to add?

cont. from 10, above.

It would be helpful if all drink of an alcoholic kind were to be behind a counter, and not in a help-yourself position.

It would not be beneficial to the local community to have a minimum alcohol price to discourage (if possible) the irresponsible drinking not only by young people (even very young, i.e. adults), but also by older people. Much drinking can take place in people's homes and can affect their health adversely.

The Government's proposal, (awaited) to limit premises' opening hours may be helpful, but a minimum price needs to be applied, too. People's health may be improved and young people less likely to overindulge, unhealthily.

hope

The following questions help to ensure that we have gathered the views from as broad a range of people within Wirral as possible. All the information you give will be kept completely confidential.

**Minimum pricing of alcohol**

**13. Are you?**

- Male
- Female

**14. What was your age on your last birthday?**

- Under 16
- 16-24
- 25-44
- 45-64
- 65+
- Prefer not to say

**15. Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?**

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

**16. Please tell us to which of the following ethnic groups you belong:**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> White English                        | <input type="radio"/> Asian or Asian British (Bangladeshi)            |
| <input type="radio"/> White Other British                             | <input type="radio"/> Asian or Asian British (Chinese)                |
| <input type="radio"/> White Irish                                     | <input type="radio"/> Any other Asian background (please state below) |
| <input type="radio"/> Any other White background (please state below) | <input type="radio"/> Black or Black British (Caribbean)              |
| <input type="radio"/> Mixed White & Black Caribbean                   | <input type="radio"/> Black or Black British (African)                |
| <input type="radio"/> Mixed White & Black African                     | <input type="radio"/> Any other Black background (please state below) |
| <input type="radio"/> Mixed White & Asian                             | <input type="radio"/> Arab  |
| <input type="radio"/> Any other Mixed background (please state below) | <input type="radio"/> Gypsy/Romany/Irish Traveller                    |
| <input type="radio"/> Asian or Asian British (Indian)                 | <input type="radio"/> Any other Ethnic Group (please state below)     |
| <input type="radio"/> Asian or Asian British (Pakistani)              | <input type="radio"/> Prefer not to say                               |

Other (please specify)

**Leyland, Richard K.**

---

**From:** Williams, Chris D.  
**Sent:** 27 September 2010 09:59  
**To:** Leyland, Richard K.  
**Subject:** FW: Minimum price for alcohol

Regards

**Chris Williams**  
**Licensing Assistant**  
Wirral Council  
0151 691 8019  
email: [chriswilliams@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:chriswilliams@wirral.gov.uk)  
fax: 0151 691 8215  
Visit our website: [www.wirral.gov.uk](http://www.wirral.gov.uk)

Please save paper and print only what is necessary

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 25 September 2010 12:06  
**To:** Licensing  
**Subject:** Minimum price for alcohol

I support a minimum price per unit of alcohol = [REDACTED] CH44 [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Heswall  
WIRRAL  
[REDACTED]

LICENSING  
27 SEP 2010  
RL

Tel: [REDACTED]

22 September 2010

Dear "Licensing" etc etc Committee

I have seen the article in the "Wirral News" of 15 September regarding the proposal to introduce a minimum price per unit of alcohol. Councillors have asked for opinions from the public, so here is my opinion.

The idea of a minimum price per unit is typical of the directions that "authority" takes when confronted with a minority problem- i.e. it knee-jerks itself into the simplest possible answer, ignoring the problem of improving the behaviour of the offending minority and steam-rolling over the rights of the sensible majority. So, what would be the result of introducing this proposal? More crime by elements of the minority, and very little, if any, reduction in the consumption of alcohol by the remainder, who will find the extra money somehow. Will their families actually have to foot the extra bill for booze, regardless of the damage to the family?

At the "sensible drinker" end of the scale, resentment at being taxed yet again by a council desperate to grab new revenues- and who is going to vote for councillors who bring such a measure into local law? (Assuming it is legal to introduce it anyway?) There are more sensible drinkers than irresponsible ones.

If councillors want something more to do they should get strong with Iceland and get our money back, rather than taking courses of least bother regarding alcohol.

Yours despairingly

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Licensing etc  
Wirral Borough Council  
Town Hall  
Brighton Street  
Wallasey  
WIRRAL  
CH44 8ED

**Leyland, Richard K.**

---

**From:** Williams, Chris D.  
**Sent:** 21 September 2010 11:37  
**To:** Leyland, Richard K.  
**Subject:** FW: Minimum Alcohol Price

Regards

**Chris Williams**  
**Licensing Assistant**  
Wirral Council  
0151 691 8019  
email: [chriswilliams@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:chriswilliams@wirral.gov.uk)  
fax: 0151 691 8215  
Visit our website: [www.wirral.gov.uk](http://www.wirral.gov.uk)

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---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 21 September 2010 10:24  
**To:** Licensing  
**Subject:** Minimum Alcohol Price

*I fully support the imposition of a minimum price for alcohol. As a non-alcohol drinker myself, I regard its consumption as completely unnecessary. A minimum price may not only reduce its consumption by under-age drinkers, it may also help control anti-social behaviour and protect the loss of trade in public houses.*

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

LICENSING  
20 SEP 2010  
[Signature]

Thingwall  
CA 61 [REDACTED]

16-9-10

Licensing Committee  
Wirral Council.

You are apparently seeking views on plans to introduce a minimum price of 50p. per unit of alcohol.

My view is that it is totally unfair to the vast majority of people who, like myself, are responsible drinkers.

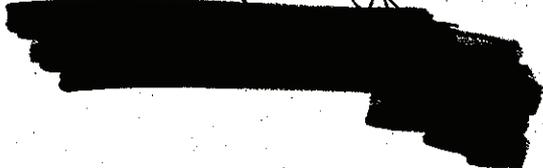
I am a 66 year old pensioner and I enjoy a few drinks each week. Why should I be penalised by having to pay more, which I can't afford, because of "problem drinkers"?

Cllr Sue Taylor says "We're not trying to penalise the average man in the street", but that is obviously exactly what this does do.

It is the job of the police to stop drunkenness in the streets and anti-social behaviour, and they should be doing it more effectively.

As for deaths in Winal from alcohol abuse, it is ridiculous to think that alcoholism can be cured or prevented by raising the price. The same applies to raising the price of cigarettes, which research has always shown does not stop people smoking.

You are seeking to penalise me, and the vast majority of the public, when you should be finding better ways to deal with the irresponsible minority who cause all the problems.

Yours faithfully,  


**Leyland, Richard K.**

---

**From:** Calvert, Margaret on behalf of Licensing  
**Sent:** 20 September 2010 17:49  
**To:** Leyland, Richard K.; O'Donnell, Margaret  
**Subject:** FW: Minimum price on alcohol

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 20 September 2010 17:18  
**To:** Licensing  
**Subject:** Minimum price on alcohol

Dear sir

Having seen the article in this week's Wirral News, I am writing with my view on the matter.

I am very much against imposing a minimum price per unit of 50p or more. I am a responsible adult who likes a few drinks at the weekend.

Why should I be penalised for parents who cannot control their children's drinking? I haven't had a pay rise in nearly 3 years and, indeed, had to take a pay cut and work a shorter week because my employer was in difficulties, and it is likely this will happen again. Having a drink at the weekend is one of few pleasures I have, and if this is imposed it will cost us more money than we have. We are already worse off than we were. I would ask you not to do this, but to let the majority of people who are like myself and enjoy a few drinks without harming anyone else do so and not be out of pocket to pay for the other idiots.

The price of alcohol will be going up soon anyway with the VAT hike, and a recent national survey on the bbc website stated that the amount of alcohol consumed in 2009 was actually decreasing, and was the

lowest since 1948. This saw a decrease of some 13% and was now below the EU average.

The better solution would be to fine the parents of the teenagers who cause the anti social troubles, hitting them in the pocket would soon focus their minds on what their children are up to at night.

You could also look at increasing the policing of off licenses to stop the irresponsible ones from selling drinks to the under aged.

As to the older idiots who cause trouble at weekends and the like, fueled by drink, putting the price up is not going to deter these louts anyway.

A far better solution would be to focus your efforts on educating the younger generation on alcohol and drug awareness perhaps by introducing classes in school as part of the

curriculum.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Merseyside CH61 [REDACTED]

**Leyland, Richard K.**

---

**From:** Calvert, Margaret on behalf of Licensing  
**Sent:** 20 September 2010 17:10  
**To:** Leyland, Richard K.; O'Donnell, Margaret  
**Subject:** FW: minimum price for alcohol

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 20 September 2010 16:06  
**To:** Licensing  
**Subject:** minimum price for alcohol

Dear Councillor Davies,

I feel very strongly that there should be an increase in the minimum price per unit of alcohol. Whenever regional or national statistics are published concerning alcohol related injuries/diseases, Wirral compares really badly to other parts of the country. Extending licensing hours has not had the desired effect on the drinking culture that was hoped for. The policing that is required in our town centres every Friday and Saturday night is a waste of resources, not to mention the similar cost to the NHS in staffing A and E departments, where the majority of outpatients on these evenings have alcohol related injuries/illness. The argument against raising prices is that it penalises the sensible drinker. That may be so but we cannot any longer ignore the danger to young people's health and it is important to send out the right message. It would be good to see Wirral taking a lead on this as Manchester are proposing to do.

Yours,  
[REDACTED]

PS. This email is specifically for you and I do not wish it to be passed over to the Wirral News who are proposing a vote on the topic. Thankyou.

**Leyland, Richard K.**

---

**From:** Williams, Chris D.  
**Sent:** 17 September 2010 15:18  
**To:** Leyland, Richard K.  
**Subject:** FW: Drinks Increase

Regards

**Chris Williams**  
**Licensing Assistant**  
Wirral Council  
0151 691 8019  
email: [chriswilliams@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:chriswilliams@wirral.gov.uk)  
fax: 0151 691 8215  
Visit our website: [www.wirral.gov.uk](http://www.wirral.gov.uk)

Please save paper and print only what is necessary

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 17 September 2010 12:35  
**To:** Licensing  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Drinks Increase

Dear Editor

Any introduction of increase in tax on alcohol is not going to reduce the number of alcoholics, the only people who will be affected are the occasional drinker, and this action is to punish the majority because of the minority.

As I can see the only people who will benefit from the proposed increases are the Stores and Shops, who are I believe are leading the way for increases, their action is one motivated by profits and nothing else.

The other people affected by any increase will be the families and possibly member of the public.

People with alcohol abuse problems are not going to stop drinking or reduce their drinking they are going to find the funds to pay for the drink, this they will do in several ways, if they are married with children they will take the money from the family budget leaving less money for food and clothing for the children, if that is not available they will resort to breaking the law to get the funds.

The worsted action that will happen is drinking unsuitable drinks, this will lead to more Alcoholics being admitted to Hospital for longer stays or could lead to an increase in Deaths from drinking dangerous liquids, to replace Alcohol.

Increase have been introduced on many occasions and all that as happened is the problem gets worse, so the proposal will not make a bit of difference, but could make things a lot worse.

Maybe a different approach to the problem is what is needed and not the same old methods of out price them.

Yours Sincerely  
[REDACTED]

**Leyland, Richard K.**

---

**From:** Calvert, Margaret on behalf of Licensing  
**Sent:** 20 September 2010 11:11  
**To:** Leyland, Richard K.; O'Donnell, Margaret  
**Subject:** FW: Minimum price for alcoholic drinks

-----Original Message-----

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 18 September 2010 16:30  
**To:** Licensing  
**Subject:** Minimum price for alcoholic drinks

My opinion is that the current price of alcohol in supermarkets can be too low and we need a minimum price as the social cost of over consumption of alcohol is excessive. I have no suggestion as to what this should be other than that it should be high enough to deter without imposing a burden on social drinkers.

[REDACTED]

Leyland, Richard K.

---

From: Calvert, Margaret on behalf of Licensing  
Sent: 20 September 2010 11:10  
To: Leyland, Richard K.; O'Donnell, Margaret  
Subject: FW: Minimum price

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: 19 September 2010 11:46  
To: Licensing  
Subject: Minimum price

Hi,  
I have just read the article in the wirral news - I think its a good idea! Especially if it keeps our pubs thriving. But some consideration should be given to the growth in 'home brewing' because of the price rise.. I have seen it in places like sweden, finland and norway and some of this stuff is dangerous! I have never seen people so destroyed in 1 evening than I have in these countries.  
Who knows if that could become an issue here, but its worth thinking about.  
Regards

[REDACTED]  
Sent from my BlackBerry® wireless device

**Leyland, Richard K.**

---

**From:** Williams, Chris D.  
**Sent:** 17 September 2010 10:04  
**To:** Leyland, Richard K.  
**Subject:** FW: Minimum price for alcohol

Regards

Chris Williams  
Licensing Assistant  
Wirral Council  
0151 691 8019  
email: chriswilliams@wirral.gov.uk  
fax: 0151 691 8215  
Visit our website: www.wirral.gov.uk

Please save paper and print only what is necessary -----Original Message-----

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 17 September 2010 09:11  
**To:** Licensing  
**Subject:** Minimum price for alcohol

I have seen that you are seeking views on the minimum price for alcohol. I have followed this subject closely in the press/radio broadcasts in the last couple of years and do not agree with a minimum pricing policy. This is not out of vested interest - I don't consume much alcohol, and I could afford the increase in price (and I am not in the industry). I accept that there is an alcohol problem in society and a large part of that problem that touches on ordinary people's lives is younger people drinking too much. I believe that the control procedures that we already have (of a much more severe nature than has been applied before) be properly applied and worked at for this group of people. I think that a much, much greater effort of targeting drunken troublemakers and some clubs/pubs, and using the law and sentencing to its limit will have great effect. It has not been used anywhere near to its full effect. (you only have to hear the news this week, that out of all of the burglars sentenced, not a single one served a maximum sentence).

**Leyland, Richard K.**

---

**From:** Williams, Chris D.  
**Sent:** 17 September 2010 10:04  
**To:** Leyland, Richard K.  
**Subject:** FW: MINIMUM PRICE FOR ALCOHOL

Regards

**Chris Williams**  
**Licensing Assistant**  
Wirral Council  
0151 691 8019  
email: [chriswilliams@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:chriswilliams@wirral.gov.uk)  
fax: 0151 691 8215  
Visit our website: [www.wirral.gov.uk](http://www.wirral.gov.uk)

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 16 September 2010 19:05  
**To:** Licensing  
**Subject:** MINIMUM PRICE FOR ALCOHOL

I wish to express my complete disagreement with the proposed minimum fixed price per unit of alcohol. I firmly believe that such a move would have negligible effect on this regions problems, it is more a cultural issue that requires education and a stop to glamorous advertising, these measures would have a significant impact. I speak from experience having suffered with my Fathers chronic alcoholism.

[REDACTED]

**Leyland, Richard K.**

---

**From:** Williams, Chris D.  
**Sent:** 17 September 2010 10:04  
**To:** Leyland, Richard K.  
**Subject:** FW: Thoughts on minimum pricing

Regards

**Chris Williams**  
**Licensing Assistant**  
Wirral Council  
0151 691 8019  
email: [chriswilliams@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:chriswilliams@wirral.gov.uk)  
fax: 0151 691 8215  
Visit our website: [www.wirral.gov.uk](http://www.wirral.gov.uk)

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---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 17 September 2010 01:38  
**To:** Licensing  
**Subject:** Thoughts on minimum pricing

I have quite strong reservations regarding the proposals to apply a minimum price to alcoholic drinks. Firstly, the statistics used within the recent news article are somewhat misleading. It is claimed that in 2007, 141 deaths were attributable to alcohol in Wirral. It then goes on to state that an estimated 39 of these could have been prevented by a minimum price. How exactly was this estimated? Was a psychic consulted to find out from the deceased if they would still be drinking had there not been a 3 for 2 offer at the local off license?

Alcoholism is an addiction as any other and a minimum price, no matter how high, will not prevent an addict from finding their next fix. If anything, it will only encourage more illegal activities to maintain the supply whether that be from black market trading or increased crime to fund the addiction.

[REDACTED]

**Leyland, Richard K.**

---

**From:** Williams, Chris D.  
**Sent:** 17 September 2010 10:04  
**To:** Leyland, Richard K.  
**Subject:** FW: minimum, booze price

Regards

**Chris Williams**  
**Licensing Assistant**  
Wirral Council  
0151 691 8019  
email: [chriswilliams@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:chriswilliams@wirral.gov.uk)  
fax: 0151 691 8215  
Visit our website: [www.wirral.gov.uk](http://www.wirral.gov.uk)

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 16 September 2010 18:41  
**To:** Licensing  
**Subject:** minimum, booze price

I most definately disagree with this recommedation. My husband and I are old age pensioners and both worked all our lives and paid our taxes. We are now living on a very small pension and would feel that once again we are being victimised. We have few pleasures we can afford and object to others taking our small choices away from us.

**Leyland, Richard K.**

---

**From:** Calvert, Margaret on behalf of Licensing  
**Sent:** 16 September 2010 17:32  
**To:** O'Donnell, Margaret; Leyland, Richard K.  
**Subject:** FW: minimum alcohol price

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 16 September 2010 17:01  
**To:** Licensing  
**Subject:** minimum alcohol price

Councilor Davies, why should the majority suffer for the minority, i am dumfounded that nobody has hit on the "cure all" answer which works well in America and Australia which is you have to be 21 and LOOK IT to drink alcohol. If you are under 21 there you are arrested if you have drunk anything. I am definitely NOT in favor of a minimum price but would support a minimum AGE.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Oxton  
Birkenhead  
Wirral  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Leyland, Richard K.**

---

**From:** Calvert, Margaret on behalf of Licensing  
**Sent:** 16 September 2010 15:52  
**To:** O'Donnell, Margaret; Leyland, Richard K.  
**Subject:** FW: Minimum price for alcohol

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 16 September 2010 15:28  
**To:** Licensing  
**Subject:** Minimum price for alcohol

Dear sir / madam,

I would very much object to the proposal to introduce a minimum price for alcohol. One effect this would have would be to encourage people who could not afford the extra cost to commit robbery in order to pay for their drinking.

Cllr Sue Taylor says, "We're not trying to penalise the average man in the street who likes a pint or a glass of wine." Unfortunately this is exactly what will happen.

A much fairer and more effective way of stopping underage drinking would be to strongly enforce the existing laws and to come down hard on retailers who supply them.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

**Leyland, Richard K.**

---

**From:** Calvert, Margaret on behalf of Licensing  
**Sent:** 16 September 2010 15:28  
**To:** O'Donnell, Margaret; Leyland, Richard K.  
**Subject:** FW: views

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 16 September 2010 15:18  
**To:** Licensing  
**Subject:** views

i do not think a minimum of 50p per unit of alcohol stop underage drinkers it will only penalise moderate drinkers there must be other ways to penalise them  
[REDACTED] by email

**Leyland, Richard K.**

---

**From:** Calvert, Margaret on behalf of Licensing  
**Sent:** 16 September 2010 14:00  
**To:** Leyland, Richard K.; O'Donnell, Margaret  
**Subject:** FW: View on minimum pricing for alcohol

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 16 September 2010 13:13  
**To:** Licensing  
**Subject:** View on minimum pricing for alcohol

Dear Sirs,

The article in Wirral News about proposals to set minimum prices for alcohol invited views. I provide my view below:

I support this concept very strongly. It is clear to me that the problems of both antisocial behaviour and health dangers arising from excessive consumption of alcohol have reached epidemic proportions. I believe that it is essential that measures are taken to arrest the trend. I am aware that opposition to the proposal arise around the issue of the impact on affordability to those members of our community who do not contribute to the antisocial problem, and I will admit to having a little sympathy with these folk. However, I would counter this with the following points:

- We need to weigh the issues and ask what is the greater problem, and I would say that nobody is truly going to come to harm as a result of abstinence or reduction in their levels of consumption of alcohol, whereas the harm being caused by alcohol abuse is a massive burden in many ways, both to the safety and harmony of our communities and to the health of the population as a whole.
- Even for these people, the health risks arising from excessive consumption are still considerable, and no amount of good intent on their part, other than moderation, will reduce these risks. The minimum price will, if anything, tend to encourage such moderation.
- Anybody keeping to the health guidelines for sensible use of alcohol will not incur heavy expenditure if the suggested level for the minimum price of 50p per alcohol unit is implemented.

I would add, though, that I don't think that minimum price is the only issue. I believe that local laws restricting the location in which alcohol can be consumed need to be both increased and more rigorously enforced. I also think that the type of drink is of particular importance when it comes to alcohol abuse by young folk. I believe that all of those drinks that go out of their way to be "pseudo-soft drinks" (the so called alcho-pops and similar, which includes certain types of Cider) should be either banned, or at least heavily controlled. I think it is appalling that drinks that are so obviously targeted on being easier to drink for those who are not used to alcohol, and am astonished that legislation has not prevented this trend many years ago. I understand that this may not be a matter for local licensing, but you will hopefully have a mechanism for passing these views through to central government or other avenues that may ultimately lead to action.

Finally, I feel that, as with so many things, action needs to be accompanied by education. I am aware that a great deal already takes place in the way of conveying sensible drinking approaches, but, learning from the previous lessons of action against smoking, there needs to be a concerted publicity campaign targeted at making excessive drinking appear unattractive – "uncool" if you like. If a similar stigma against excessive drinking could be developed over time, without creeping into being sanctimonious – focusing on, for instance, the unpleasant smell of stale alcohol, and of people's breath after heavy drinking, the difficulty in understanding slurred speech, the vomiting, etc., it would add to the effectiveness of the other measures. This approach worked very well with smoking, though it took many years.

I hope the above has been helpful for you.

Yours Faithfully

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] West Kirby, CH48 [REDACTED]

**Leyland, Richard K.**

---

**From:** Calvert, Margaret on behalf of Licensing  
**Sent:** 16 September 2010 13:04  
**To:** O'Donnell, Margaret; Leyland, Richard K.  
**Subject:** FW: Minimum price on alcohol

-----Original Message-----

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 16 September 2010 12:32  
**To:** Licensing  
**Subject:** Minimum price on alcohol

Having seen the article in this week's Wirral News, I am writing with my view on the matter.

I am very much against imposing a minimum price per unit of 50p or more. I am a responsible adult who likes a few drinks at the weekend. Why should I be penalised for parents who cannot control their children's drinking? I had an accident and injured my shoulder last year and was unable to work for 10 months, I have since returned to work part time with a cut in pay. My husband hasn't had a pay rise in nearly 3 years and, indeed, had to take a pay cut and work a shorter week because his employer was in difficulties, and it is likely this will happen again. Having a drink at the weekend is one of few pleasures we have, and if this is imposed it will cost us more money than we have. We are already worse off than we were. I would ask you not to do this, but to let the majority of people who are like myself and enjoy a few drinks without harming anyone else do so and not be out of pocket to pay for the other idiots.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Heswall  
Wirral  
Merseyside [REDACTED]

**Leyland, Richard K.**

---

**From:** Calvert, Margaret on behalf of Licensing  
**Sent:** 16 September 2010 08:56  
**To:** Leyland, Richard K.  
**Subject:** FW: Booze Price!!!

-----Original Message-----

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 15 September 2010 21:19  
**To:** Licensing  
**Subject:** Booze Price!!!

I am writing in response to the article in Wirral News 15/09/10 in regards to views on minimum alcohol prices.

Even though it seems a good idea, no matter how much the price is increased youths always seem to get the money to buy alcohol, and no matter what adults are the same, by implying this increase will not deter anyone with an alcohol problem it will just drive them towards getting the money elsewhere to support their problem!!! The problem lies with local shops who do not I.D youths or wait until the shop is empty to sell them alcohol and cigarettes!!! If traders where more responsible then a major part of this problem would be solved without the larger majority of responsible drinkers having to pay for others problems and mistakes!!!!

[REDACTED] Oxton, Wirral  
Sent from my BlackBerry smartphone from Virgin Media

**Leyland, Richard K.**

---

**From:** Calvert, Margaret on behalf of Licensing  
**Sent:** 16 September 2010 08:56  
**To:** Leyland, Richard K.  
**Subject:** FW: minimum booze price

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 15 September 2010 20:07  
**To:** Licensing  
**Subject:** minimum booze price

I strongly object to being penalised on pricing due to a minority of people who binge drink. Let us be fair if this policy was introduced most people would buy their alcohol outside the brough and therefore the retailers would be penalised through no fault of their own. It would be better to restrict the pubs that cause the problem and if drinkers have to be taken to A & E why not charge them for treatment after all it is self inflicted.

[REDACTED]

**Leyland, Richard K.**

---

**From:** Calvert, Margaret on behalf of Licensing  
**Sent:** 16 September 2010 08:56  
**To:** Leyland, Richard K.  
**Subject:** FW: Re Licensing

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 15 September 2010 20:10  
**To:** Licensing  
**Subject:** Re Licensing

Your recommendations for minimum prices for alcohol in theory seem sound, as most of the encouragement for excess drinking comes from the cheaply available booze from supermarkets, this in turn also puts pressure on Public House trade and often results in closures and loss of jobs.

However I do not believe you have the legal authority to enforce this minimum price and unless you have then it merely becomes an agreed practise with the supermarkets, not enforcable in law??

[REDACTED]

**Leyland, Richard K.**

---

**From:** Calvert, Margaret on behalf of Licensing  
**Sent:** 16 September 2010 08:55  
**To:** Leyland, Richard K.  
**Subject:** FW: minimum price

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 15 September 2010 16:44  
**To:** Licensing  
**Subject:** minimum price

Please please, rethink this issue

More creative solutions are required rather than an easy option of blanket increase in per unit cost of alcohol.

The more likely object of the proposed increase is a saving to the overburdened National health service, A reduction in the requirement to have police on the streets to target antisocial/young drinkers, admittedly these are bona fide issues, that need financial solutions, but please don't patronise the public at large by dressing this "initiative" up as some kind of Health and welfare "we are only thinking of you" obligation.

- **This increase will be seen by thousands as a stealth tax that is mandated on all, by the back door, under the guise of the health and welfare of the general public.**

This is Nanny state at its very worst, next will be a minimum weight for a burger, on the pretence of fat content (also a major killer and cost to the national health service). Or how about a minimum size of cereal bowl to keep the amount of sugar per portion down (another killer and significant cost to the national health service). Could you imagine, telling McDonalds to increase their burger prices, or Kellogg's to increase their per portion prices, I do not think so

- **Tell the public how the extra revenue would be used (there is no comment on this in the article in the Wirral News) and if every penny of an increase in per unit cost went to health care or more police on the beat, maybe just maybe it could be acceptable/justified (but I sincerely doubt that that would be the case) Over the whole country there would be millions in extra revenue as every single person (drinker) will suffer the unit cost increase to pay for the minority indiscretions of people, who are making conscious decisions to buy alcohol. If they happen to be underage, that is already illegal and a matter of enforcement.**

An analogy :- The facts and figures about "drug" abuse are also relevant and cannot be ignored, In as much that, changing the classification of a drug or how expensive a given drug is, just moves the "user" on to next substance, which in many cases increases the burden on Welfare services

- **I am disappointed with the Wirral News article also, that to pick out speculative figures such 39 cases in the quoted research could have been saved in Wirral by an increase of the price per unit to 50p, this can in no way be substantiated and would be more of a presumption or to put it another way psychologically "a means to justify the ends" scare tactic, based solely around an extrapolation of an already subjective total!**

Regards

[REDACTED]  
Bromborough  
Wirral

[REDACTED] (this is a private e-mail address, [REDACTED] The author of this e-mail is in no way affiliated to [REDACTED]

**Leyland, Richard K.**

---

**From:** Calvert, Margaret on behalf of Licensing  
**Sent:** 16 September 2010 08:56  
**To:** Leyland, Richard K.  
**Subject:** FW: Minimum price of alcohol

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 15 September 2010 22:06  
**To:** Licensing  
**Subject:** Minimum price of alcohol

to whom it may concern

I write this as a low paid worker who enjoys a few drinks at the weekend, why should the sensible drinkers be punished, i dont smoke, dont do drugs. Its bad enough that the price of petrol goes up as an when the government needs a few extra pounds, but the price of gas, electric, water, council tax and the weekly shop have all increased, i dont know how much Cllr Bill Davies earns but i bet he doesn't have to worry about the everyday costs. Its not right that the average man in the street then bears the brunt everytime the bureaucrats in local government come up with a new idea. If it wasn't for Asda and Tesco most working class people probably couldn't afford the luxury of a bottle of wine or a couple of cans at the end of the working week.

[Redacted]  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted] Wallasey  
Merseyside CH45 [Redacted]  
Tel: [Redacted]  
e-mail: [Redacted]

10.09.10  
Councillor Sue Taylor  
Chairman Licensing Committee  
Town Hall  
Wallasey CH45 8ED

Dear Sue Taylor,

Re: "Bargain Booze"

As a non-drinker myself I do not know whether or not raising the price of alcohol would make a difference to the amount of alcohol bought and consumed. However, I feel strongly that "Happy Hours" should be banned and that Bargain Booze shops, which are an eyesore anyway, should change their name and not be allowed to display their bargains on the pavement. As it is Bargain Booze shops are a direct invitation to buy alcohol.

I hope my comments will be taken into account at the meeting of the Licensing, Health and Safety Committee on 13 September.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted Signature]

**Leyland, Richard K.**

---

**From:** Calvert, Margaret on behalf of Licensing  
**Sent:** 03 September 2010 13:23  
**To:** O'Donnell, Margaret; Leyland, Richard K.  
**Subject:** FW: Comment on 50 per unit.

---

**From:** Jennifer [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 03 September 2010 12:44  
**To:** Licensing  
**Subject:** Comment on 50 per unit.

Dear Sir,

It would be wonderful if charging 50p per unit would work but as someone said on TV the other day when she drank she would have paid anything for her alcohol. Upping the price isn't going to help but it would be better if the supermarket stopped selling under cost.

So no I don't think charging a minimum of 50p a unit very helpful. It would get some people out of the pubs. Probably the ones that cannot afford much but find the odd drink out of the home and a bit of company a nice change from four walls in an empty home.

What needs to be sorted out is the way and where alcohol is bought and drank. Cut down the hours of public houses and stop shops selling it all hours (especially supermarkets). Also make drinking outside pubs (except in designated areas) illegal and fine the public houses that allow it.

Yours faithfully

[REDACTED]

**Leyland, Richard K.**

---

**From:** Calvert, Margaret on behalf of Licensing  
**Sent:** 03 September 2010 08:09  
**To:** O'Donnell, Margaret; Leyland, Richard K.  
**Subject:** FW: Minimum pricing of alcohol

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 02 September 2010 17:02  
**To:** Licensing  
**Subject:** Minimum pricing of alcohol

Dear Sir/Madam

I recently read an article in the Wirral Globe about the Council asking the views of local people and Community Groups about setting a minimum price for a unit of alcohol. I would like to say what a fantastic idea this would be.

[http://www.wirralglobe.co.uk/news/8367722.Council\\_needs\\_your\\_support\\_for\\_introduction\\_of\\_minimum\\_price](http://www.wirralglobe.co.uk/news/8367722.Council_needs_your_support_for_introduction_of_minimum_price)

I live in a deprived area of Wallasey (Egremont) where myself and a few of the neighbours run a very small Community group to try and improve the area that we live in. Over the last 3-5 years or so we have witnessed a real increase in the level of alcohol abuse and the antisocial behaviour that goes with this. The area around Rice Lane/Charlotte Road/Lea Road/Trafalgar Road has become blighted by problems brought on by people abusing alcohol. We see people walking up and down the local streets drinking cans of beer at 9-30am and have a life of misery during the summer months when we can not leave our windows open during the night because we know that we will be woken up several times in the night to the noise of people shouting screaming, breaking windows, smashing down doors and half killing each other in their drunken rages.

If setting a minimum price per unit of alcohol were to implemented in our area it would make a massive difference to the quality of life of the people who live here, instead of being woken up every night we might just get woken up on Saturdays only!... A vast improvement on the trouble we get now.

[REDACTED]

**Leyland, Richard K.**

---

**From:** Calvert, Margaret on behalf of Licensing  
**Sent:** 03 September 2010 08:08  
**To:** O'Donnell, Margaret; Leyland, Richard K.  
**Subject:** FW: Price of Alcohol

-----Original Message-----

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 02 September 2010 17:59  
**To:** Licensing  
**Subject:** Price of Alcohol

[REDACTED]  
New Brighton  
Wallasey  
Ch [REDACTED]  
Tel: [REDACTED]  
Mobile [REDACTED]

Thursday, 02 September 2010

I [REDACTED] of [REDACTED] CH45 [REDACTED]  
I support a rise in the minimum price of Alcohol.  
I have recently been admitted to hospital on a number of occasions and seen for myself the pressure put on medical services by over indulgence to say nothing of the lives being destroyed. I consider our politicians too corrupt to deal with this national tragedy. How much is the trade giving to political parties?

**Leyland, Richard K.**

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**From:** Calvert, Margaret on behalf of Licensing  
**Sent:** 03 September 2010 08:08  
**To:** O'Donnell, Margaret; Leyland, Richard K.  
**Subject:** FW: Unit pricing

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 02 September 2010 18:12  
**To:** Licensing  
**Subject:** Unit pricing

Hello,

Take the bold step of thinking for yourselves once in a while. No need to follow other Councils! The average drinker behaves sensibly. The bad people are mainly the younger one's and believe me they don't care what price they pay. As stated by so many before, you are just going to punish those of us who do drink sensibly and may I add usually at home which does not cause any trouble to the community.

Those who are the main culprits when it comes to alcohol will in all probability look for a cheaper and not necessarily legal alternative. This could lead to a massive drain on the health service and we all know that suffers enough from alcohol induced problems without adding blindness and poisoning to it.

One does not have to be Einstein to tell that no matter what is done in the way of overpricing, there are still those who will get drunk and abuse it. Just walk around the towns in the Borough and see the lowest of the low drinking very expensive strong lagers. Not cheap stuff but very expensive extra strong stuff.

Thank you

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Wallasey  
[REDACTED]

**Leyland, Richard K.**

**From:** Calvert, Margaret on behalf of Licensing  
**Sent:** 02 September 2010 14:22  
**To:** O'Donnell, Margaret; Leyland, Richard K.  
**Subject:** FW: Miniumum pricing opinion

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 02 September 2010 13:16  
**To:** Licensing  
**Subject:** Miniumum pricing opinion

Re Your article in the Wirral Globe.

My opinion on minimum pricing is that It makes no difference what price it is, alcoholics will drink no matter what it costs, kids will still drink in the park and alcohol fuelled crime pales into insignificance compared to drug fuelled crime.

All minimum pricing does is hit the poorest in the pocket, makes responsible drinkers pay more and increases the already inflated profit margin of the supermarket.

Regards

[REDACTED]

**Tel:** [REDACTED]  
**Fax:** [REDACTED]

\*\*\*\*\*

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# Wirral Globe

## Council needs your support for introduction of minimum price of alcohol (From Wirral Globe)



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### **Council needs your support for introduction of minimum price of alcohol**

9:52am Thursday 2nd September 2010

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WOULD you support the introduction of a minimum price for alcohol?

That's what Wirral Council is asking residents to consider.

It follows plans by the 10 authorities in Greater Manchester to apply for a bye law which would allow them to address public disorder and health issues caused by binge-drinking, including a law that each unit of alcohol must cost at least 50p.

The leaders of Merseyside's local councils have now agreed that each council will consult whether there is public support for a similar proposal across Merseyside.

The Chairman of Wirral's Licensing Committee, Cllr. Sue Taylor, said: "There are huge issues in Wirral with alcohol - either through addiction, under-age sales or alcohol-fuelled crime and disorder.

"We need to look at ways to tackle these issues and I'm really keen that we look at all options, without punishing the moderate drinker who has a quiet pint on their way home from work.

"The new Government has recognised that the previous push towards 24 hour drinking has, if anything, made some of these problems worse.

"I am keen that we overhaul the licensing system to tackle some of the alcohol-related issues we are seeing in all parts of the Borough, but I also want to know if residents would support us going down the Manchester route of charging, for example, £6 for a six pack of lager or £5.50 for a two litre bottle of cider."

"We will be contacting retailers, community groups, the police and those agencies that deal with the consequences of alcohol abuse for their views.

"Anyone who wishes to make their views known to the Licensing Committee can send us their views via [licensing@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@wirral.gov.uk) or by writing to the Town Hall, Brighton Street, Wallasey CH44 8ED."

The issue will be discussed at the next meeting of the Council's Licensing, Health & Safety and General Purposes Committee on September 13.

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### Your Say *Your Globe*

piggymalone, wirral says...  
10:59am Thu 2 Sep 10

Who will profit from the hiked up prices? How about donating them to charity or am I being naive?

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King Tut, Wirral says...  
1:09pm Thu 2 Sep 10

It makes no difference what price it is, alcoholics will drink no matter what it costs, kids will still drink in the park and alcohol fuelled crime pales into insignificance compared to drug fuelled crime.

All minimum pricing does is hit the poorest in the pocket and makes responsible drinkers pay more.

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Peppar John, West Kirby says...  
1:20pm Thu 2 Sep 10

What am I doing wrong? Where do these people drink for under 50p a unit?  
The last round I bought consisted of a pint bottle of Magner's / Bulmers cider £3-50 a small galss of Pinot Grigio costs £3-50 , a Large one £4-50 a bottle £14-90.  
A house spirit £ 3.00 a special / premium spiritit £4-50 (plus the mixers).

I remember during Italia 90 Threshers did a special cheap larger which was so cheap it tasted awfull - so bad that grown men had to have a dash of Roses Lime cordial with it to make it taste half decent.

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royalhussar, PETERBOROUGH says...  
2:28pm Thu 2 Sep 10

I HAVE NEVER HEARD OF A PERSON BEING VIOLENT AFTER HAVING A CIGARETTE  
BUT ALCHOHOL..NOW THAT IS A DIFFERENT MATTER!!

BRING THE PRICE OF A PINT OF BEER UP TO THE SAME PRICE AS 20 CIGARETTES  
(£5.00)

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hugo2008, Wirral says...  
3:06pm Thu 2 Sep 10

Better still, make fags a fiver each and beer only sold with a meal, the pubs could do with the extra cash, the government needs the extra duty.  
Pubs would need to employ more staff, cooking, waiting, cleaning, etc  
The government could ring fence the extra duty for health care and Hospitals.  
We all benefit right across the board, economics made easy.

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Peppar John, West Kirby says...  
5:31pm Thu 2 Sep 10

Again where am I going wrong... 20 fags for £5.00? The last packets of B&H in Morrison's was £6.45 for 20, and in the bar £7.00 for 16 Marlboro Gold.  
I suspect the consequence of these bans and purges will have to prohibit sale of alcohol and tobacco products to those that cannot pay the premium prices.  
In effect it will be a tax on the poor who already pay a larger % of their income on low cost options.  
Guess what ... the quality of the ready to cook meals bought in the local corner shop is probably not as good for in relation to Fat and Salt content as say that bought from M&S or from the Tesco premium range! What you going to do? Impose minimum prices on these products too?  
Let us just face it. There are some things legally available to individuals that if abused will cause harm and death to the individuals concerned and the general public at large.  
Restricting the sale and consumption in one's own home of legal products is a draconian measure that artificially impacts on lower income individuals.  
The rigorous Policing of current legislation is required to prevent violent disorder in public. Stop the individuals ( I wont say kids coz I have seen women of 50 staggering the streets after meeting up at someone's house and being on the wine / Vodka before they come out to the bars!) turning up at pubs and clubs drunk. It is illegal to serve an intoxicated customer so enforce it. It is illegal to be drunk in a public place so enforce it. It is illegal to urinate in public so enforce it.... It is illegal to sell alcohol to under 18s or to someone over the age of 18 whom you have reasonable cause to believe will supply the alcohol to the under 18s...  
Just enforce the current legislation! Withdraw the Liquor License of establishments breaking the law, whether it be a major supermarket, a corner shop or a nightclub!  
As we are ending the summer silly season for journalism I really did not suspect to see the other story doing the round about the RSPCA calling for the government to bring back the Dog License! I have an alternative! Bring back the Dog license and anybody that has tattoos should be arrested if found in possession of a Bull terrier, Rottweiler, Doberman, Alsatian, Akita etc....  
Also no Car or Motorbike should be sold in the UK that can be drive in excess of 70 mph... if you want to go fast on a private race track that is fine! Take it there on a trailer not on the public roads!  
No Televisions should be sold without showing a valid TV License to the till operator and followed up by a home visit from BBC Licensing...  
OK I am sure I have forgotten something's... but no doubt the reactionary masses will bring those into the debate.

Music!

That was it..

Ban all loud music and stop pubs / clubs playing it! It must be playing devil tricks with the minds of the kids and causing them harm not like what happened with me ... I remember when I was a lad they were proper musicians and the songs had a tune and words you could understand and sing along to as you drove home drunk from the pub after drinking 8 pints of Mild ... now that was proper beer - no one used to get hurt with that... apart from the wife and kids taking a beating on a Friday night... but then we did not talk about that sort of thing then if it was not in public!

So that is it then! Problem solved!

Ban Larger and play Billy Furry and Lonnie Donegan records!

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Jayo, Wallasey says...

8:46pm Thu 2 Sep 10

Alcohol fueled violence is most likely no worse than it has ever been. As Peppar John rightly points out in his amusing post a bottle of "voddy" has already been sunk before they get to the pub. The real problem is when the vodka is mixed with the cocaine and that's when people really get hurt. Cocaine is the real problem but nobody seems to want to target that. I wonder why ?

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Toryman, Lower Heswall says...

10:33pm Thu 2 Sep 10

As a shareholder in many companies, I fully support a minimum price in the sale of alcohol: I come to this judgement because of a number of factors: any one who has a need for alcohol will find the money to get it regardless of their income and hence the price/dividends that I will receive for my investment in those companies will increase. Secondly, it removes the need for me to invest further in those companies, just to increase my own return, because it has already been done for me; thus my returns increase without any investment from me.

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slumdogg, Wallasey says...

3:41am Fri 3 Sep 10

Peppar John, good stuff!!

Is that right Toryman? Well, I invented alcohol and I get 0.01p for every unit sold globally. I think the price should be as high as possible.

This is actually a stupid Tory idea. It just means that the poorer you are, the more you pay, proportionally, for a drink.

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The only concern I have about minimum pricing is that people who cannot necessarily afford to continue their drinking habits will still continue to drink the same amounts - this dose raise questions around whether child poverty in such families will increase.
I find it utterly ridiculous that this is even being debated - yet again the law abiding majority are expected to subsidise those that break the law! Punish those that are at fault, don't price me out of my rare pleasure of an occasional bottle of vino!
Retired people on modest/low incomes would be harmed by a blanket minimum price system. It's not the bitter/stout drinks that are causing the problems it is lagers, ciders, 'shots' and other drinks with high alcohol content.
Yet again this council jumps on the band wagon and "tries to do good" with out thinking of the people they are ment to represent. People on the wirral as a hole do not have the spare money to pay over inflated prices at the best of times never mind with what the country is going through.
Will not solve the problem. Heavy drinkers will just find the money from other parts of their lifestyles which may impact additionally on them or close members of the family i.e. food, living costs, heating, leisure etc. Meanwhile the rest of us will pay an additional tax. – pointless
There may be some merit in minimum pricing but it has to be nationwide. What's to stop anyone going to Ellesmere Port or Neston to buy alcohol if it's much cheaper there?
Lots of people buy alcohol in bulk in supermarkets, often when the stores are having cheap promotions - the fact that a small minority of people abuse alcohol should not mean that everyone has to pay more in the hope that a minimum price will deter the idiots - has anyone considered the possibility that a minimum unit price won't deter them? What then? keep on increasing the minimum price until it has some effect?
Why is being disabled a relevant question in this survey?!?!?
I am opposed to minimum pricing as I don't see why I should be penalised due to the drinking habits and behaviours of others. I think there are a lot of people out there who need to take responsibility for themselves and raising the cost of drinking by the estimated £15 a month is not going to deter these people from going out, drinking too much and ultimately causing problems for other people. etter education in schools and colleges which shows the harsh reality of alcohol and it's effects would, in the long term, have more effect.
Please do not penalise the well behaved majority in an attempt to control the disruptive minority (who will manage to obtain drink or drugs by other methods anyway!)
in addition, the use of community wardens, local beat police officers would be of more use during the evenings and night-time patrolling the streets, than they currently are during the day. i still do not understand the role the wardens do in rock ferry for example, i have only ever seen them patrolling during the day time, which is not a lot of use. better use of this resorce, and expense, if they worked during evening hours when a presence on the streets would be of some value.
That I am strongly against a percentage rise on the price of all alcohol, but I do support a minimum price.
Minimum pricing will be seen as an unpopular stealth tax. It will be increasingly resented as the minimum price (once set) rises year-on-year. It will not affect binge drinking - the Sheffield study cannot predict an accurate model for this. It will increase smuggling and the availability of dangerous black market liquor which will be accessible to minors. It will increase travelling to buy in bulk at cheaper prices thus defeating the object of the exercise i.e. to discourage the purchase of large volumes of affordable alcohol. It unfairly punishes responsible drinkers - more so the poorest in society for example pensioners.
Minimum pricing is just another tax that benefit nobody. All licenced premises will all have reduced sales for alcohol with potential for going out of business. Unscrupulous shop keepers with a reduction in sales will be even more tempted to break the law and sell alcohol to children. Trading Standards tend not to work weekends and evenings and this makes them less effective. It may be worth considering employing Trading Standards Officers who only work evenings and weekends.
This proposal is just a smokescreen that will satisfy the Mother Grundies but will do little to resolve the actual problems.
Please do something about the problem instead of talk and no action- for many years now.
I cannot see why lawful, responsible individuals should be charged more for anything simply because a minority of irresponsible people cause a nuisance. Once again it is the majority who are punished for the actions of the minority
How about spending money on worthwhile projects instead of issue like this? There are many worthy causes that will suffer cuts due to 'Government cut backs' - put the cash into these instead of a negative useless issue.
We encourage youths not to congregate in groups of more than 3 or we move them on, we want them off the streets, not seen and not heard, why, what exactly do we want them to do
One of the most common points of opposition to a minimum price is that it is unfair to penalise the majority, who cause no problem through their alcohol consumption. It is the most important point, too; it is not the job of councils, police or anyone else to suggest that decent, tax-paying, law-abiding people should be treated the same as violent antisocial yobs. The most sensible policy is to deal with the yobs and leave everyone else alone.
We are grooming future alcoholics, all paid for with state benefits, plus all the related NHS problems, there are more important issues to spend our taxes on, Have you ever been to the local casualty department on a Friday and Saturday night! worth a visit I can tell you!

<p>The return of boot leg beer and trips to calais will start again if this silly policy is introduced.  Not to mention, going to other boroughs to buy alcohol. i work in st helens, and i will buy my wine beer etc from there if wirral introduces this policy. and im sure i wont be the only one.  This will in turn, effect small business's all across the region, as well as the pubs which are all ready empty.  Birkenhead is a ghost town on a saturday night already, and this will only make it worse.  Stop penalising hard working people and do something useful for a change.  EG fit the Brown,Green, and Grey Bin wagons with snow ploughs, which can clear the roads as the do there rounds.</p>
<p>Pricing per unit only benefits businesses since they reap additional profits not the tax people.</p>
<p>As a pensioner on a fixed income. I enjoy with my wife, going to our local pubs for a sociable drink to meet friends.  Being on a fixed income, with the cost of food, utilities, clothing, council tax etc. all rising, why should it cost the majority of law abiding citizens more money just because of the behaviour as a percentage of the population of a few louts.</p>
<p>Why even consider punishing the majority of law abiding citizens for the sake of minority who will continue whatever the price of alcohol</p>
<p>Since a lot of areas are considering this it would be by far the best option if all areas did this at the same time(I believe there are some thoughts about a national scheme).Isolated areas having or not having minimum pricing would create problems-people going to certain areas to access cheap alcohol etc.</p>
<p>The problem appears to be a British one. Communities in Europe drink alcohol without the same outcomes. This suggests there is a need to re-educate rather than take on the lead that Greater Manchester is doing.  People should have the right to deal with their bodies asa they feel fit. That said, they should also be prepared to pay a premium for treatment where over indulgence is a regular feature.</p>
<p>i drink sensibly in the comfort of my own home.i occasionally visit licensed premises in liscard.i strongly oppose been taxed for other peoples problems.should you implament such a policy,then on principle i will go else were no matter how much it cost me in petrol.i will even buy off the black market if i am forced to because of the unfair tax adding to the cost.i have worked all my life i am not some lay about who likes his ale and gets drunk.i am 60 years old.the poeple who you are targeting will go strait to the black market leaving decent honest working poeple to pick up the bill,for dearer alchol.you will more than likely turn the youngsters to drugs because it will end up a cheaper option.this is not the road to go down.you can ignore this email,but rember what i have said 10 years down the line if this policy is implemented.totally out of touch with reality.</p>
<p>I think it is unfair to place minimum pricing on alcohol sales as this would affect responsible drinkers and they would not then be able to benefit from offers in supermarkets that are on currently such as 3 for 3 etc. Why punish responsible drinkers!!!</p>
<p>In my opinion it is about time this drink issue was attended to, People who are addicted to drink cost the welfare state a great deal of money and thier families a great deal of pain.  Drinkers DO need help, and putting up the cost is the first step, I only hope that the monies raised will go to employing staff to support those with an addiction.</p>
<p>no tolerance by the police regarding drink fuelled offences. Should it be proved that there insufficient policethen call the army in to assist . the army would be better employed in this capacity than in he killing fields of afghanistan. ask the parents or wives of the deceased.</p>
<p>I think it is unfair to penalise hard working people especially in times of austerity by increasing alcohol prices with no clear evidence that this would tackle anti-social behaviour. Anti-social behaviour is as likely to occur either due to a) Demand for alcohol will still exist and the price elasticity of it is such that I don't believe increasing prices will significantly decrease demand, b) Drug use is still an issue.</p>
<p>The vast majority of drinkers are sensible and do not cause any problems to others. It smacks of the worst of the 'Nanny state' to treat all drinkers as incapable of making informed choices and dictating how we should live our lives. Applying an artificial tax levy is unfair and would not carry the support of the majority of adults. The solution lies in dealing with the problem drinkers, not in inflicting financial pain on all !</p>
<p>Landlords and publicans should use powers they already have and refuse to serve people who have had to much to drink are drunk or causing trouble. Minimum pricing punishes everyone, target the ones who cause the problems through the courts and close these premises down.</p>
<p>i think this idear has not been thought out properly. You are hitting the working class and people who cause no problems in life to anybody else,i personaly enjoy a drink after weeks hard work just like many others. i would not be able to afford to drink at them prices and would look else were for cheaper booze ie beer run so would many other people inc the people causing the problems.i also would like to say alot of people like to have a beer as away of out let of stress after weeks hard work or every days challengers,if alcohol is taken away or put at to higher price people would look for alternatives ie drugs.the local pub would not benefit as all the alcohol problems round here and around the country are youths who are unable to go to public house.IT IS TOTALY WRONG TO CHARGE THE PEOPLE OF MERSEYSIDE,WIRRAL WHO CAUSE NO PROBLEMS TO OTHERS MORE TAX OR PRICE FOR THERE ONLY LITTLE BIT OF PLEASURE THEY MIGHT HAVE AFTER WEEKS HARD WORK FOR THE MESS OF THE FEW WHO WILL JUST LOOK FOR SOMETHINK ELSE TO TAKE AND LEAVE US WITH NOTHINK.you only have to look at the state of the local pubs to see how the cost of alcohol has destroyed them.</p>
<p>Minimum prices will adversely affect poorer people. Everyone will drink just as much but will be worse off</p>
<p>Who pockets the increased cost of the rise ? Supermarkets no doubt.</p>
<p>We live in a supposed free market society where jobs and prices are justified by supply and demand. Why interfere with the price of alcohol whilst doing nothing about the price of gas, electricity, water, insurance, booking fees for</p>

<p>concert tickets. Why arent the council doing something about the policy of music and sporting venues stopping people bringing in their own food and drink whilst at the same time selling food and drink at vastly inflated prices inside the venue (eg £3-60 a pint of weak lager inside the Liverpool Echo arena, £3-50 for bottle of 330ml bottle of Fosters, £5-00 for a pastie\pie, £8 for fish and chips at Aintree races)</p> <p>The councils should be looking at existing licensing legislation to stop venues ripping off paying customers by having a captured market at such venues instead of interfering in a free market.</p>
<p>A minimum price for alcohol is using a sledgehammer to crack a nut. I enjoy a glass of wine at approx. £3.50 for a 750ml bottle - to increase that to 450ml for a 12% wine is ridiculous.</p> <p>You are proposing to penalise the majority for the irresponsible actions of the minority.</p>
<p>The public should not have to pay the price for under age drinkers who can't behave &amp; are being sold alcohol by irresponsible shop keepers, the Council &amp; Police should be more pro-active in stopping them drinking themselves stupid, i.e. increase fines/penalties/awareness &amp; visit these outlets to issue warnings ( Greece issue 3 yellow cards &amp; then shut them for a month ) and if necessary take away their licence.</p> <p>Also as the Brewery, Government &amp; outlet supplier already decide on the amount a drink should cost should the Council really need to become involved &amp; have they not already got enough to do given the state of many areas throughout Wirral.</p>
<p>With a financially better of younger generation an increase in cost will have little or no effect.</p> <p>Whats an extra few pounds on a night out if you are spending 10's or even 100's.</p> <p>The only ones effected are those on a tight budget (ie pensioners , low paid etc).</p> <p>Look at the problem and not for excuses.</p>
<p>If this proposed idea was to go ahead it would hit harsh on the poor in this community who already find it hard to make ends meet with the cost of living raising whilst wages and work are on the decline. Focus more on those who DO abuse drink rather than target everyone</p>
<p>Minimum alcohol pricing is a good idea, if only to bring in more tax. It won't cut drinking levels, people will just take the hit and spend more. But if it helps pay for their hospital treatment later in life, hey, why the hell not?</p>
<p>These policies may revive the pub trade and create jobs and less frenzied drinking.</p>
<p>It is not the amount of people drinking; it is the amount that a minority drink to such a degree that it causes problems.</p> <p>Introducing a minimum unit price would be punishing the responsible drinker &amp; is not the answer to the problem of binge drinking.</p> <p>Part of the problem is about how alcohol is consumed &amp; often these problem drinkers indulge in other illegal substances at the same time.</p> <p>Too many shops are being issued licences to sell alcohol &amp; often it is the licensees that are irresponsible.</p> <p>According to the ONS, the more wealthy or Middle class tend to drink more expensive premium branded alcohol that is already above the proposed min 50p per unit price.</p> <p>Also according to the ONS Alcohol consumption in 2009 was down 13% on 2004 &amp; distributed across a larger population.</p> <p>So the implementation of min price per unit would hit the responsible poorer of us.</p> <p>Those who are determined to drink irrelevant of price will find a way of getting the money to support their habit possibly leading to an increase in crime.</p>
<p><b>STOP GOING FOR THE EASY OPPTIONS, THERE ARE MORE AND CHEAPER DRUGS AVAILABLE THAN THE COST OF ALCOHOL THESE DAYS.WHY NOT FOCUS YOUR RESOURCES WHERE THE REAL DAMAGE TO OUR SOCIETY IS BEING CAUSED</b></p>
<p>Yes. I am fed up with being penalised for the actions of the minority. I would also like to say that I think it is about time that the authorities started to support the licenced trade instead of continuously hammering another nail in the coffin.</p>
<p>People seem to go out in this country to get wasted seems to be younger generation Who dont think they can have a good time unless they are very drunk</p>
<p>I do not see why the minority must spoil it for the vast majority of sensible drinkers.</p>
<p>Why should those of us who are sensible with our drinking be penalised by the minority. If you i will spend less, but i just make the effort and brew my own! 70's here we come again</p> <p>Many public houses are already struggling and this will lead to there closure as more and more people stop frequenting them, as they become more expensive.</p> <p>Those that do cause trouble by there drinking, will only look for differnt ways of getting there thrills.</p> <p>Will it lead to an increase in drug use, to get the high?</p>
<p>I think children in school, and at home should be taught about the responsibility of drinking alcohol, and how to behave.</p>
<p>People who drink responsibly should not have to pay for those who don't. Other EU countries have no problems whatsoever like the UK and that's because they are brought up with drink and they respect their parents and people in authority unlike the idiots who live in this country. I do think that alcopops/strong beer/cider/shots should be made more expensive but not normal beer/cider/spirits/wine which responsible people drink.</p>
<p>Isnt the 50p minimum per unit just penalising the supermarkets and small shops. There is alot of so called anti social behaviour in towns and cities up and down the country where people have paid alot more per unit in pubs and clubs - how is the 50p minimum going to stop this</p>

<p>I object to the nanny state approach to the way alcohol is enjoyed, and also that this will hit the poorest, most vulnerable residents in a time of double dip recession</p>
<p>To put on a local Tax would force the pulic to go to areas where there is no tax,it would still no stop the excessive drinking thus no benefit .          Maybe a standing charge could be made for the cost of the services needed to deal with the problem ie cost of Police , Medical Services. If a person is invoved in a Car accident a charge is made why not in these cases.</p>
<p>Unfair to charge everyone for the small minority of abusers.</p>
<p>I doubt that a minimum price per unit of alcohol is lawful either under European law or UK competition law. To introduce it via local byelaws is crazy - it will just create a patchwork quilt, postcode lottery of different regulations depending on where you live.          The legal consequences of breaking competition law will be visited on the retailers you impose this byelaw on. Hence I believe you will very quickly see this challenged in the courts - probably by a large supermarket chain. Incidentally, the Sheffield study DOES NOT provide evidence of the impact that a minimum price has on alcohol-related hospital admissions. The Sheffield study is a mathematical model that works out what the reductions would be on the basis of a number of unproven assumptions about the relationship between alcohol and price. It is a mathematical model - not a piece of research - there is no research anywhere in the world that can demonstrate the direct relationship between price, consumption and harms posited in the Sheffield report.          I strongly recommend that before you waste community charge payers money with this nonsense that you seek advice from senior counsel about the legality of what you propose - this issue goes way above the pay grade of the Borough Solicitor. A QC's advice on this would probably cost about £3,000 - a lot less than it wil cost you if you are sued by a supermarket for loss of business, or for damages arising out of the fact that you have acted ultra vires in imposing a byelaw that may cause a major retailer to be prosecuted for a breach of competition law or European law in this regard.          Before Wirral Council jumps on this silly bandwagon, consult a lawyer or count the cost.          Paul Chase</p>
<p>Increasing the price of alcohol would only increase the profits to either the outlets or suppliers to them. the people involved would just pay the extra and carry on. Extra pay would be demanded.          Ordinary respectable people would be penalised.          Pensioners would suffer.</p>
<p>To put alcohol, price wise, out of reach of many people is a recipe for disaster.          The average person (Of a legal age to drink) is being brought down to the lowest common denominator of society, and they know it.          The smoking ban has decimated the leisure industry and the proposed price hike of alcohol will finish it off.          At a time when the country needs tax revenues for the likes of the two foreign wars we are engaged in, now is not the time to reduce this sort of tax income.          If the proposal is passed the likes of myself will have to pay the shortfall in revenue when the effects on the treasury coffers are felt. I don't want to bear this burden of extra personal tax.          Anyone who has truly thought about this proposal, without prejudice, must accept that drinking, illegally or otherwise will continue, and some people will abuse it. Surly it is better they do it with a controlled substance than buying from an illegal source or homemade still.          A further problem to add to the misery of the exchequer will be the perfectly legal "booze cruise" which will flourish yet again, and we as a nation will lose revenues way beyond expectation. That does not include the people that sell the liquor illegally.          The worst scenario I see, as do many other people I have talked to, is the resultant use of marijuana. Kids will replace one drug for another resulting in more crime, more health problems and obviously more loss of tax revenues.          In conclusion          Don't penalize the hard working, overtaxed citizen of this country, who enjoys a drink when he/she arrives home from work, or a night out with friends, or the poorer of our society who will be excluded from the pleasure an occasional drink can bring.          Alcohol should not be the preserve of the rich alone, as so many other things have become in recent years.          I do not expect my opinion to have much sway on the final outcome and decision you will make as I, along with many others actually believe this to be another money making exercise which will backfire, and the powers that be will, yet again, return to the general public with hikes in council tax etc. to fund the shortfalls this short-sighted idea will bring about.          Birkenhead shopping centre is already dying as a result of car parking fee greed and if the Wirral alone brings in the proposed local beer tax people will travel outside the area and fill up their cars with supplies and, as mentioned earlier, if this plan goes national people will travel abroad.          Children, teenagers and adults all need hope. Education, real discipline in schools and employment would stop most of our societies drink problems. This is what you need to focus on. A little carrot can work wonders where the stick will always, eventually, fail.          RB.</p>
<p>Wirral Council is opposed to "common sense" so I will not be surprised to see minimum pricing brought in!</p>
<p>This is a Central Government/Health issue. Yes, there are problems with excess drinking which need to be addressed. There are enough taxes already and <b>Page 138</b> <del>Dis NOT the</del> place for local authorities to effectively raise prices for</p>

the vast majority of the population.
If alcohol is made more expensive in pubs then it will merely encourage more people to buy cheap alcohol in supermarkets and off licences. This will be counter productive.
I think the price of soft drinks and non-alcoholic drinks in pubs and bars should be significantly lower than alcoholic drinks. The price of a glass of lemonade/coke is £2-2.50. The price of half a beer is £1.20, what would you rather buy?
Do not want to see alcohol retailers make more profit
I support a minimum price for Alcohol but consider that the main problems apply to super strength ciders and similar rather than standard beers etc. Feel all this might do is line the pockets of supermarkets etc
Most people who drink alcohol do so within sensible measures. This is yet another propopsal where the sensible majority is being penalised for the actions of a minority. The last government let the cat out of the bag by believing the UK could have a cafe culture.
Stick to what the council is supposed to do. There is far too much interference in peoples lives from meddling, small minded interfering do-gooders
People will just buy the cheapest alcohol they can afford if they want to get drunk. It seems unfair to penalise those who drink responsibly by increasing their household bills, especially as the price of everything else is going ogg.
Please look at the long term problem rather than a quick win.
In addition to minimum pricing, I would like to see further work preventing under age young people from being able to purchase alcohol. I would also like to see further health awareness campaigns with children which enable them to understand the dangers of drinking so that they don't start in the first place.
Penalising the majority will not help the minority. Education may help. A completely diferent angle is needed - give the kids an alternative - coffee bars aimed at youngsters maybe or milk shake bars with internet access....I dont know!
The majority of drinkers are adult & responsible about their drinking. As with any group, it is a minority that cause a problem. More ban's could be handed out to people who cause trouble when drunk. In the Northeast they have a very strong policy on dealing with troublemakers. A ban from one pub constitutes a ban from all those in the area. The bar owners/managers have to co-ordinate this, passing around lists of those they've had to deal with, etc, but I believe that it has been successful in reducing the problems caused by the few.
I am often asked for 40p off beggars in the street and couldn't understand why (never 30p or 50p). I asked a few friends and they told me it was the cheapest alcoholic drink you could buy at an off-licence. So the issue of begging should also be addressed, I'll happily buy a sandwich for someone who is hungry but will not give to beggars.
Minimum pricing is just one intervention that you should take. We also need a campaign to encourage local shopkeepers not to use alcohol as a loss leader. It is very sad to see that the most prominent sales areas in my local Co-op are given over to the active promotion of low price alcohol deals. We also need more support for alternatives for young people in the area. Instead of the Council squandering many £millions over the last three years in Tranmere to knock down perfectly serviceable houses in the disastrous HMRI initiative, the money should have gone on youth services and increasing local police presence. We also need the Church Road CCTV unit re-established before summer. It makes a significant contribution to reducing local antio-social activity.
I think I have made myself clear, though perhaps unpopular!
You need to rally the supermarkets with their lost leader cheap alcohol offers. Also, drinks in pubs are now the only alternative is for people to drink at home/in the street where there is little/no boundaries and incidences of home violence are more likely. An example of this is at the weekend I was charged £3.50 for a pint of pear cider, in the supermarket I can buy 4 for £4.00 (£1 each). When money is short people are not going to pay this. Incentives for pub landlords (ie. lower business rates) should be made and efforts to get breweries to reduce their prices to an affordable (but not irresponsible) level to encourage people to drink less in their own home and go out where it is more easily controlled/monitored.
I think that the pricing structure should NOT encourage people to drink at home rather than in pubs and clubs, so possibly it may be better if alcohol in pubs and clubs is not greatly more expensive than in off licences
Alcohol should not be solely for the rich, the working classes should not be viewed as intemperate and immoral. Our members of parliament who pass the laws have shown that they are not above breaking the law if they can benefit themselves, they can not take the high-ground morally when most of them were found to be fiddling their expenses. And it has not taken long for them to find the trough again.
As with all things it is education about what the damage alcohol does to the body that will change peoples mind about whether it is acceptable to drink to excess. it has taken along time to change peoples attitude to smoking so it will be with alcohol,putting up the price will not work wonders as it didnt with cigarettes. it takes education .
I think a national minimum alcohol price might be a good idea but can't see a local one working if it is set too high. Would this include alcohol sold in supermarkets?
how will it be policed and to what cost to the council. vulnerable people who self medicate with alcohol will be put more at risk so what stratergies will be put in place to support them.
If the price of alcohol is raised, young people especialy will rely more heavily on other drugs. E.g. I am told that

<p>you can buy a line of coke for 50p</p> <p>Controlling people's behaviour by cost only results in one law for the rich and another for the poor. If the primary target group for such legislation is young adults, it must be remembered that they are also the group with the greatest disposable income. It could therefore have an adverse effect resulting in late night town centres becoming even more exclusively the domain of the young drinker.</p>
<p>There is a law on the statute books which states that, "...it is illegal to sell alcohol to a person under the influence." I would like to see licence holders have their licences suspended/revoked for flouting this law - be it a landlord or a shopkeeper. Currently we have no real deterrent to stop these drunken idiots repeatedly blighting people's lives, but if they lost their local hostelry/drinks outlet because the police and licensing authorities actually used the letter of the law to its fullest, then maybe they might think a little more about the inconvenience THEY would be put to, in having to go further afield to get a drink. And, more's the point, the licensee/shop owner who persistently aggravates the situation by looking more to their profit in selling alcohol to those already under the influence of alcohol, instead of saying 'no', should be very aware that their loss of livelihood is a very good possibility. The police, too, would have to spend far less time dealing with drunks and be able to turn their attention to more serious matters.</p> <p>To those in a position to make the difference I say, "Where's your balls?" You've lost the art of being tough on a situation, isn't it about time you changed that? The law abiding citizens of this Borough are behind any council member who is prepared to stand up and be counted.</p>
<p>if you increase alcohol prices people may turn to cheap drugs!</p>
<p>A minimum price per unit will only serve to penalise those who drink responsibly in the first place. Most people who currently cause problems to society through alcohol use will find other ways to fund it purchase. Therefore, I can see other areas of crime, e.g. theft, burglary and muggings going up in order that the cost of alcohol can be funded.</p>
<p>Yes please:</p> <p>I feel strongly that the only way to reduce NHS and Policing expenses and therefore higher taxes for non-drinkers and drinkers alike, would be for the forms used by the Police and hospitals to include a box to be checked - "Are you certain that this injury/incident was caused as a result of alcohol?"</p> <p>Whenever that box is checked the bill should be costed and the invoice sent to the Alcohol industry.</p> <p>There could also be a space to mention any outlet which is considered to be at fault.</p> <p>Then the drinks industry would have to put prices up to pay the bill and would also be more likely to ensure that the abuse is more closely regulated.</p> <p>The industry could pass on the invoice, or a proportion of it, to any outlet which is found to be at fault.</p>
<p>I would like to see stricter control of the sale of alcohol at off-licenses and a united approach of Liverpool and Wirral together to combat drunkenness especially in the young</p>
<p>One again strategy is being reduced to the lowest common denominator. Increasing prices to deter the irresponsible drinkers automatically penalises those in society who take a responsible approach to alcohol consumption.</p>
<p>Another ill thought out Tory policy, then again they are the patrons of the wealthy and privileged in society who won't be affected by the VAT increase and cuts to benefits.</p>
<p>The minimum pricing should be targeted at off licence sales and public houses with a bad behaviour record.</p>
<p>People must make their own choices. Stop 'nannying' people.</p>
<p>If alcohol prices go up, how many local pubs and restaurants will go out of business. Although the prices will go up in the supermarket, they will generally always be cheaper than the pub. Therefore more people will drink at home, drinking more and more frequently. Drinking in pubs is a social activity, and most people will have a couple of drinks and walk/get a taxi home. Less people going to the pub = more drinking at home = less socialising = more depression within the community.</p> <p>Also, spending money in pubs etc will help the recovery from the recession. Hitting people again will make people spend less.</p> <p>At the end of the day, if people with alcohol related problems want a drink, they will get one regardless of the price. They will beg, borrow or steal to get the money for it. Better education of alcohol related issues will be a bigger help than putting prices up.</p>
<p>Quiet alcoholism is a hidden problem, people who do not get roaring drunk or go out causing trouble but who cannot function without alcohol.</p>
<p>The minimum pricing of alcohol will not be a benefit many of the residents, the majority of the people of the Wirral are very sensible and can manage their consumption.</p> <p>The people who do drink to excess will carry out drinking no matter what the cost of the units so in reality you are punishing the majority while it will not matter to the minority.</p> <p>If you increase the price of alcohol, you may find that there could be less food and clothing available to a household on minimum wage or income support due to the extra money spent by the household on alcohol.</p> <p>I believe that an increase in pricing will not effect the consumption level you don't care how much you pay when you go out for a drink.</p>
<p>Please... Wirral Borough Council. Keep out of our lives.</p>
<p>minimum pricing takes the responsibility from the individual for their drinking and penalises sensible drinkers.</p>
<p>It's a ridiculous solution to the problem since those dependent on alcohol will find the money to pay for it whatever it costs.</p>

I am certain that if teenagers had somewhere to go to meet up and involve themselves in activities, that they would not be hanging around street corners drinking and getting involved in criminal activities - they just want something to occupy and interest them and for people to be interested in them and their future.
Land lords encouraging young people to drink too much with special offers eg happy hour and making mixed alcohol cheeky vintage readily available .
It is very hard to think of ways to reduce alcohol abuse, without it having an effect on sensible to moderate use of alcohol.
As I said above, people will drink whatever it costs. I'm sure the problematic drinkers don't just go for the cheaper stuff, they go for anything they can get their hands on. I do not see why people like myself and friends, family etc who are hard working, sensible people who like to have a drink should be punished because of some idiots. You are punishing the wrong people. If you ban things like the offers they have in supermarkets, Joe public loses out....plus that will make a black market.
As usual the questions on sex, race etc do not provide information on whether a representative sample of people have given their input. The sample is self selecting and biased towards those who receive the e-mail and especially biased against those in full time employment and those with families to support who lack the time to input into these so called consultations
It would look better on questionnaires if the questions were posed in a grammatical manner, without finishing sentences with a preposition, eg. question should be "In which area do you live", not "What area do you live in!"
It would help if all young people understood what 'a unit' of alcohol is. I find that lots think a half pint glass of Vodka is a unit. PHSE in schools should not work on the assumption that all youngsters are going to consume alcohol. At the moment it seems to be saying 'it's OK to drink as long as you don't get drunk'. We should be telling them the worst horror stories we can find and frightening them off until they are 18!! Further, there is no need for parents to leave the house when teenagers have parties! Send out the message that responsible parents stay in and keep an eye on what's going on, even if they hole up in the kitchen. Adults need to set a good example. Drinking to excess in front of children, even if it's only once or twice a year, is a bad example. But we need to change our whole language. Why do we assume that one celebrates birthdays, Christmas, retirements, and any good news by consuming alcohol? (have you tried to buy an 18th birthday card which doesn't have a reference to alcohol?) and not just good news - Bad news too: 'have a drink you'll feel better'; drown your sorrows.... It isn't good enough for adults in responsible positions to say, 'Well I got drunk when I was a teenager' and assume it's a rite of passage. One drunken night can, and often does, leave teenagers with emotional baggage and mental or physical scars for life. No-one should take this lightly.
Having devised and rolled out the largest survey of young people across the Region in relation to their drinking and smoking habits 2005, 2007 and 2009, and worked with Liverpool John Moores Public Health on a number of research documents, I can state that the empirical evidence from that research highlights that as Trading Standards have been more and more proactive at testing off licence premises to establish if they sell to underage children, the more that underage children have stated they obtain their alcohol from their parents or from over 18's purchasing it for them. The price increase is unlikely to alter parents giving their children alcohol if they already do. Many parents give their children an unfathomable rate of pocket money, again this is unlikely to reduce significantly, so IF underage children have the cash currently to purchase alcohol via over 18's then they will just spend a higher proportion of their pocket money so they can continue to do so. Once this habit forming alcohol behaviour has begun, it will continue through their 20's etc. Speak to your Council Trading Standards Staff for a copy of the Regional Young Peoples Survey on Alcohol and Cigarettes and the specific one for Wirral and the rest of the Merseyside and Halton Authorities.
I should like to see a sophisticated system, that increases the cost of units of alcohol, as well as all alcoholic drinks - to inhibit the sales of super-strength lagers and ciders, whose main function is to deliver an alcohol based kick, rather than an appreciation of the taste of a drink.
There are millions of pensioners and other citizens who take advantage of cheap alcohol and do not cause any problems for society. Why should they be penalised because of a minority of selfish, thoughtless morons. If we had a group of morons driving at high speed down our high street would you suggest fining all motorists? I would hope not.
We do not want any more licensed premises in Hoylake nor late licences after midnight, as the Residents deserve the peaceful enjoyment of their property as stated in Wirral UDP. We also would like to see greater enforcement and checks being made to ensure Bars and Licensed Premises Food Retailers[ ie Pizza Shops] operate to their Licences and are fined when they operate illegally.
charging sensible drinkers for the abuse of the minority would not be right.
Something is wrong when it is cheaper to buy high strength cider than bottled water. Need to do something to curb supermarkets and shops selling it in cheaply as loss leaders.
I think that that minimum pricing is bound to affect adversely people who currently are social drinkers and cause no problems. However, I think that there will be an overall benefit.
It is not the amount of people drinking; it is the amount that a minority drink to such a degree that it causes problems.

<p>Introducing a minimum unit price would be punishing the responsible drinker &amp; is not the answer to the problem of binge drinking.</p> <p>Part of the problem is about how alcohol is consumed &amp; often these problem drinkers indulge in other illegal substances at the same time.</p> <p>Too many shops are being issued licences to sell alcohol &amp; often it is the licensees that are irresponsible.</p> <p>According to the ONS, the more wealthy or Middle class tend to drink more expensive premium branded alcohol that is already above the proposed min 50p per unit price.</p> <p>So the implementation of min price per unit would hit the responsible poorer of us.</p> <p>Those who are determined to drink irrelevant of price will find a way of getting the money to support their habit possibly leading to an increase in crime.</p>
<p>why should i have to pay extra for adrink at the end of a hard working day-i am not the problem,the problem stems from your reluctance to apply existing laws.</p>
<p>Minimum pricing is urgently required. Alcohol abuse is a serious problem on the Wirral, and not with just teenagers. The Council should take note of the very positive effect, which the ban on smoking in public buildings has had. A similar scheme is needed for the control of alcohol. I speak as an abuser of alcohol for 6 years, between 1999-2005.</p>
<p>The increase in price up to a minimum price should generate income to establish worthwhile charities who help and support eg. young people, alcoholics or provide safe transport. Street Pastors work in cities setting up help centres for clubbers. The revenue should not go into bottomless Government or retailers' coffers.</p>
<p>WHY SHOULD THE ORDINARY DRINKER BE PENALISED FOR THE FOLLY OF THE YOUTH.</p>
<p>I think that putting a minimum price on alcohol is hitting those of us who drink responsibly.</p> <p>Underage drinking is not a new thing all teenagers go through that period in their life and whatever the price if they want to drink they will always be able to obtain it.</p>
<p>I consider myself among the vast majority of people who use alchol without destroying the neighbourhood &amp; welcome the cheaper prices. In the past it was far cheaper to buy drinks on the continent so people brought back as much as they could after a holiday, so depriving the British economy of the profits. Now with cheaper prices here there is little need to go abroad to buy alcohol, so we put our money into our home economy.</p> <p>As usual the first option seems to be penalise everyone just to control a small minority.</p>
<p>Minimum prices should only be introduced on those drinks most closely associated with alcohol-related problems, e.g. lager. Other drinks, such as real ale, should not be targetted, as these are almost solely enjoyed by responsible drinkers.</p>
<p>Return to shorter licened hours i.e. close clubs and pubs earlier</p> <p>Encourage licenced premises to support responsible drinking - control cheap drinks promotions etc</p>
<p>minimum alcohol pricing should be applied to all retail outlets and should be set at a price somewhat higher than the cost of the drinks to the retailer.</p>
<p>I oppose the minimum pricing as I don't go out to socialise any more as it costs too much. I prefare to dink at home at the weekend therefore I buy my alcohol when I do my weekly shopping as this is the only way I can afford to have a drink. As I don't smoke this is the only pleasure I have.</p>
<p>Yes, Firstly, We are supposed to be living in a free market rather economy rather than a planned economy. You are a Council and not democratically voted into power to manipulate the prices of products available in an open market.</p> <p>If youths are causing criminal offences due to alcohol consumption then the Police should arrest them! If they are not causing criminal offences then leave them be to enjoy their legal right to consume alcohol.</p> <p>A minimum price will not deter youths from buying it. If you think it will then you are completely barking mad and obviously not living in the real world.</p> <p>Lastly, I voted in the Council elections wrongly thinking that I was voting for intelligent Councillors to implement their policies in the best interests of the public. I didnt realise that you haven't got any and need to ask the public for theirs!</p> <p>I look forward to your next request for advice.</p>
<p>I am strongly against minimum pricing as I believe that if someone is determined to drink no matter what the age or price they will do so.</p>
<p>Strong enforcement such as they have in europe.</p> <p>Zero tolerance on drink driving such as they adopt in Norway.</p> <p>Heavier penalties for drink-related offences.</p> <p>Limit the use of advertising alcohol products and glamourising drinking.</p> <p>Have more national advertising coverage showing the disadvantages of heavy drinking.</p> <p>I have always been a great believer in the carrot-and-stick method. Enforcement is very necessary.</p> <p>But I feel that people who don't drink should be rewarded somehow, perhaps lower insurance premiums, or something along those lines, and just maybe.....it might make a difference?</p>
<p>I do not think price would make much difference to older drinkers.</p>
<p>An introduction of a minimum amount per unit would only penalise those who drink sensibly. Those who abuse alcohol should be the ones that are targeted more specifically and dealt with more robustly rather than draconian legislation that punishes everyone regardless being introduced.</p>
<p>Minimum pricing punishes everybody not just the irresponsible drinkers - especially in a recession when there is less spare money around for leisure activities.</p>
<p>Better policing (by police or community support) of pubs and of licenses, and heavy fines imposed on any adult</p>

<p>buying alcohol for a minor, and, perhaps parents. Vigilance by staff in pubs, and refusal to serve anyone who, in their opinion , has had enough. Support from managers in this would not come amiss, but I don't know how you achieve this.</p>
<p>Don't make things worse than they have been made already.</p>
<p>Instigate the policy of prosecuting outlets that sell to underage drinkers. Apply the law and drumb them out of business.</p>
<p>I only buy cheap beer when its on offer in the supermarkets. normal prices have increased double in the last couple of years from around £10 a box up to close to £20 for larger.</p>
<p>This is a brilliant way to make decisions. It really suits me to respond to online questionnaires, but please also try and include people who do not have access to the internet at home. Thank you very much.</p>
<p>The idea that making drink more expensive will solve the alcohol abuse problem is short sighted. Have we learned nothing from the regular price increases in tobacco? Every time cigarettes and tobacco have gone up in price the old "I'm going to cut down or give up altogether" comments come out - I've yet to see any of those people do either, they just find the extra money to carry on! Rather than introduce a minimum price which will effectively put the extra money in the profits of the retailers for no return to the general public, we should impose a local alcohol tax which can see the money used to finance youth or alcohol rehabilitation schemes.</p>
<p>Most people drink responsibly . It is patronising to inflict minimum pricing on those who don't - they'll still buy it regardless of the price -and it is a not so subtle way of getting more money out of the majority of people who are already being subjected to stealth taxes</p>
<p>In the current climate I feel that there are other priorities that the council should be addressing. If the enforcement of licencing laws cannot be successfully achieved how do they propose to enforce these laws? Why take on new responsibilities whilst cutting the workforce by 25%?</p>
<p>The problem is that you can buy alcohol in too many outlets this, should be restricted so it can be better policed/monitored.</p>
<p>I would like to know if the the drop in centres located in Birkenhead actually work, I see many of them and as a tax payer would like reassurance that such centres are beneficial and not just a waste of us hard working tax payers money?</p>
<p>not enough done to highlight the distruction alcohol does</p>
<p>It is not fair to penalise everyone just because of under age / younger people drinking, why not charge them if they have to be took to hospital due to drinking too much so that only people who abuse alcohol have to pay for it.</p>
<p>why do the vast majority of law abiding people who drink sensibly have to suffer being priced out of their enjoyment of a social drink by the actions of mostly young people who will find the price for their alcohol no matter how high that price is, but can that be said of the worker on low income or the millions of pensioners who enjoy their drink in moderation? I think not.</p>
<p>I don't see why people who behave responsibly should have to pay more.</p>
<p>Placing a minimum price per unit on alcohol would only punish people who currently consume alcohol responsibly and give the regular alcohol related offenders a reason to find an alternative method to feed their irresponsible habits.</p>
<p>The majority of adults use alcohol in a safe way that doesn't impede on their family, community, job or health. Overpricing alcohol will encourage people to make their own "moonshine" where the strength of the alcohol would more often be stronger in alcohol volume than what is on sale already which would have a knock on effect to alcohol related illnesses.</p>
<p>As above. As with people who allow their dogs to mess on the beach, the council wanted to ban all dogs thus punishing responsible dog owners(although I know this did not come to fruition), this is just the same,punish those who work hard and have a drink responsibly because of those who have nothing better to do than cause trouble and drink.</p>
<p>Each year we hear more and more that alcohol-related anti-social behaviour and crime is on the rise. Each year the tax on alcohol rises. There is a clear correlation here - when people can't afford to drink small amounts of alcohol frequently they instead drink lots of alcohol infrequently, which is a greater risk to their health. By introducing a minimum price on alcohol you will kill people, not help them.</p>
<p>I wish some elected members of council and the government would stand up and be counted, not hide behind policies most of them would honestly reject if they were victims instead of hiding away in self created ivory towers, away from street level. Remember, you all have to come back down to earth eventually, whatever you do, just hope its not too late and you become a victim of the guy next door like we have to.</p>
<p>I dont think price will make a difference to peoples drinking. People will still go out and get drunk it just might take them longer to save up for the drinks.</p>
<p>The problem seems to be mainly off-licences in residential areas. Many proprietors cynically disregard the laws on age - teenagers have easy access to alcohol at low prices. Some supermarkets are also at fault</p>
<p>i am opposed to minimum pricing,because its not fair on people like myself who work hard all week.And enjoy a drink at the weekend.why should people who drink responsibly have to suffer price rises.</p>
<p>Ido not drink but feel it is wrong to penalise the many for the wrong doing of the few.</p>

I am assuming this minimum price will apply to all major supermarkets as this is not their main business and not just to pubs off licences etc. If a minimum price is introduced it may give local pubs a fighting chance for survival
Have you thought that as there is a significant proportion of the population without internet access and that it is self selective this can never be a representative survey?
I'm not particularly for or against minimum alcohol pricing - it would not directly affect me as I barely drink. However, I don't feel that minimum pricing will necessarily solve the issues relating to alcohol. More awareness of the risks of alcohol, better education in school, better parenting (knowing where your child is and what they are doing!), Police being given the right tools and resources to be able to break up crowds of young people hanging about, Police actually responding to calls from residents to deal with unruly kids, stricter sales policies (i.e. over 25) and they must show ID. People will always be able to get hold of cheap alcohol, so a minimum unit price will only be so effective, plus by introducing it you actually punish those who use alcohol responsibly.
I think putting prices up is completely the wrong way to look at things. It is not going to stop the problem, if anything it will make matters worse as people struggle to pay the alcohol which they will still want despite the higher price. Drinking is a culture in Britain and raising prices is not going to change this. The mindset of people instead needs to be tackled, I think it is quite scary that you obviously do not realise this!!!
We should be penalising offenders instead of everyone now having to pay more to make up for the reckless behaviour of certain individuals. I agree on a higher price for the cheaper strong ciders as these appear to be bought by alcoholics and people who want to get stupidly drunk. I don't agree on higher prices in pubs as these are high enough anyway and will put many more pubs out of business.
Go back to restricted opening times. Off Licenses in Sweden are only open for short periods during the day and you can only buy drink in designated shops and it is expensive. It works.
More vigorous procedures for extending venues licensing hours need to be introduced and the criteria / justifications for requests to extend a venues existing hours should be made more onerous. For example - Why do 18th birthday parties in venues need to make an application to extend their hours beyond midnight. Not all the attendees will be 18 - how will they deal with this aspect . Christening parties - why do they need to be given an extension? and so forth
Yes, I no longer go to pubs for a drink and much prefer to have an enjoyable drink at home in the evening. I will hopefully be able to continue to do so without my pension being further eroded.
It needs to be implemented as soon as possible.
I think this is an over reaction due to the few who abuse alcohol pricing. As always its the majority who are made to suffer. Higher prices will not deter the purchase of alcohol. Get into schools to encourage youngsters not to drink. Fine parents of kids caught drinking. Leave the pricing to market conditions and leave us with freedom of choice.
I would like to register my protest prior to Wirral Council making a decision to impose a minimum price on the retail sale of alcohol. To do so would infringe the human rights of an individual to purchase alcohol at a price set by retailers, in so much that low paid and responsible persons would be targeted and become victimised by such a decision. People on low incomes have every right to enjoy a relaxing and affordable drink at home especially so in these austere times! Why should this simple pleasure be taken away from them whilst more affluent members of our society would still be able to enjoy this simple pleasure! I fully agree that rowdy and drunken behaviour needs to be controlled, but I believe that this needs to be done by rigorous challenging of under age persons attempting to purchase alcohol and by stopping these low priced offers in clubs. Please think very carefully before imposing such a draconian by-law on law abiding and responsible members of the public.
Stop looking for knee-jerk blanket bans and "easy" answers which punish the majority of well mannered and well behaved people and focus on dealing with problem makers. Many people drive too fast also, should we increase the cost of petrol as well!? It is an idea which lacks foresight and hasn't been thought through.
Don't think that putting up the price will deter people from drinking.
I am supportive of increasing the price of alcohol but unless you increase it very substantially you won't prevent binge drinking.
I believe that minimum pricing per unit should be targeted rather than applied across the board. For instance if it is applied to such products as sherry or similar being traditionally an older persons drink -this is likely to penalise this category of person who likes the occasional drink but is very unlikely to abuse the pricing system. The main problem areas I believe are in the boxes of drinks sold as loss leaders by the supermarkets and the alchopop type drinks - you need only stand by any supermarket checkout to see who is buying these items in huge quantities to see where the problem areas lie - very few pensioners gather in intimidating groups or create disturbances in public through alcohol abuse!
Why should I as a sensible and mature drinker have to pay more for my wine because others can't keep an eye on their offspring? If youngsters are on the streets getting drunk then there is a problem within the family which should be addressed, it's not just about alcohol. Its about parenting, self respect, responsible behaviour.
The issue of enforcement should be looked at. From my experience adults who buy the alcohol for underaged should be punished severely. Imagine the publicity it would cause if some where prosecuted and named!
Fewer licensed premises (off-licences)
As addiction to alcohol is responsible for growing rates of various illnesses, let alone family breakdown and road

<p>traffic accidents, any action that would help to reduce addiction can only be of benefit to the community.</p>
<p>No mention as to who will benefit from any price increase ... when prices go up who will receive the additional money? The manufacturer (for what?); the Government (why?); the seller (why?); the Council (why?). Basically it is "cash cow" for someone with both the Government and the Council having to then account for the additional "income" by way of setting up another expensive QUANGO for £1m to show how they distributed the £1/2M income.</p>
<p>Any form of minimum pricing would penalise the vast majority of the law-abiding population. I believe that it would be very wrong to punish the respectable majority for the bad behaviour of the appalling minority. Deal with the idiots, not ordinary folk.</p>
<p>SILLY IDEA.</p>
<p>Introducing a minimum price for alcohol, would be unfair to the majority of residents such as myself, who respect others and do not drink excessively. Myself and my wife are pensioners who like a drink at home, having a minimum pricing policy would just increase the price of alcohol, and presumably the profits of supermarkets and off licences. We have enough on our plate with rising prices of fuel and petrol.</p>
<p>Those who drinks with due care should not be punished by price rises, especially in this economic climate.</p>
<p>Takeaway food shops should have to clean up the mess made by their customers who purchase meals on their way home and then throw them on the pavements</p>
<p>This needs to be combined with more invetmenet in enforcement against off licenses who serve young people buying alcohol</p>
<p>I feel that there should be a complete ban on drink driving, no safe limit as everyone is affected differently there should be a straight rule - no drink driving.</p>
<p>Get the Police to back off from their strutting around when stopping people. Their attitude gives an impression of them only wanting to get tickets issued to earn "Brownie Points" to justify their existance. They need not only with drink related, but also Motorists, not appear that they are only interested in getting money from us for petty mindedness and get back to the way the British Police operated prior to the last abomination of a government we had who were only interested in brow beating. I hereby declare that I have never been stopped due to being drunk, agressive or violent in my life. I also state that I have been stopped and booked when in my car and the attitude was to just get a ticket out and money in the system. My "Offence" was to not have mty headlights on on a main road fully lit and it being a 40 mph area. Booked simply to get money. Pettymindedness.</p>
<p>Fortunately both of my children who are now grown up realise there are lots of other pursuits that bring real fun and contentment that is lasting and worthwhile</p>
<p>Reduction in retail outfits which have licences, should cease sales in supermarkets and only allow off licence sales from related public house premises.</p>
<p>Margate and West Yorkshire LAs have imposed a requirement through conditions in the Licensing Act 2003 that requires off licences to indelibly mark the containers that alcohol is sold in, so the police can identify the premises and take appropriate action against the licensed premises and the licence holder. I think this is something that Wirral should consider.</p>
<p>If a minimum price for alcohol is introduced in Merseyside unfortunatley, unless some agreement is made with major retailers, off sales in Cheshire, Lancashire and North Wales will increase to compensate. If minimum pricing is introduced it will potentially increase profits for the major alcohol retailers even if total volumes of sales are reduced. There should be some process whereby retailers are encouraged(obliged??) to invest back into the local community.</p>
<p>I think this is an excellent initiative</p>
<p>If you put a minimum price on alcohol, it will not stop people from buying, it may cause a lot of issues ie shoplifting etc to find the money to buy what they need.</p>
<p>The governments policy of allowing drinking establishments to make their own hours has clearly increased alcohol related problems and is a failure that has had a marked effect upon all communities. The law ought to be reversed.</p>
<p>Raising the price will just infuriate people at a time where prices of everything else are rising, it will not curb alcohol problems, more people will take alcohol out with them or drink at home before they go out which will impact on businesses. Need education / advertising campaign to impact on the effects of alcohol abuse.</p>
<p>The idea of a minimum pricing policy is fundamentally anti-competitive and would doubtless fall foul of the Competition Act and of European law, even if the Home Secretary were to 'sign off' on the introduction of a by-law, which – if I may - seems unlikely given that central Government has already ruled out 'minimum pricing' as a national strategy. Irrespective of its legality (or otherwise), 'minimum pricing' as a strategy would not actually have the desired effect – on the contrary, there would be a number of unintended consequences such as the penalisation of legitimate consumers that do not have a problem relationship with alcohol, 'cross border' booze-cruises and damage to legitimate businesses in the local area. We would all like to see an end to the sort of scenes that blight some of our town and city centres at the weekend when people have had too much to drink. It is appealing to imagine that there might be an easy answer to the problem. The supporters of minimum unit pricing suggest that a price hike for alcohol would provide a solution by forcing people to drink less. It's a simple theory until you really think about the implications and the reality of problem drinking.</p>

The truth is that most people in the UK have a perfectly normal relationship with alcohol. Most of us enjoy a drink with friends at the weekend or a glass of wine at home with our evening meal. Far from harming anyone it is a simple pleasure for you, your family and friends.

A minimum unit price of 50p would put the price of drinks up across the board. Everybody pays more regardless of whether or not they have a problem with alcohol.

Many of us would say it simply isn't fair for the majority to face the same hit as the minority which has the problem. It's worse in fact. Self-evidently those on low and fixed incomes, such as pensioners and single parent families, would be hardest hit.

For those with less money to spend, forcing up the price of a bottle of wine from say £3.99 to £5 may mean the difference between being able to enjoy a bottle of wine at the weekend or not, particularly when household budgets are already stretched and fuel bills are rising.

But would that price rise persuade problem drinkers to change their behaviour?

Most of us would say no and indeed the overwhelming evidence supports that view.

Major international studies show that while people who drink excessively may switch to different drinks if the price of a particular product goes up they are least likely to cut back if prices go up generally. It's what you'd expect – heavy drinkers aren't likely to be deterred by a price hike because they are more determined to carry on drinking the amount they do.

The fact is that there is no evidence to suggest that minimum unit pricing of alcohol would stop problem drinkers drinking because it has never been tried anywhere in the world.

Addressing the price of alcohol is not of itself going to tackle problem drinking. The solution must be education and tougher enforcement of the raft of laws we have to tackle alcohol misuse and anti-social behaviour arising from it.

Putting the price up in Merseyside won't work. In particular it will be completely ineffective if you can get in your car and drive to Cheshire where prices are cheaper. And what about the internet? A local price rise wouldn't stop someone from buying their drink online. It seems more like a recipe for damaging local businesses than for curing problem alcohol consumption.

Our industry – producers and the major retailers of alcohol in the UK – support plans to ban the sale of alcohol below cost. Duty and VAT are consumer taxes and should rightly be paid by them. There are, however, a number of small businesses in the Wirral area that even now are selling alcohol below the sum of Duty and VAT.

The likelihood is that some of these businesses are utilising 'duty fraud' stock (i.e. – products on which the alcohol tax has not been paid) in order to maintain a competitive edge in the market

We would urge Wirral Council to focus its efforts on working with HMRC to deal with those businesses in the Wirral area which may be funding their trading through criminal activity (duty fraud). This would be a far more effective strategy than attempting to implement 'minimum pricing' which is not only anti-competitive, but also likely to be ineffective in tackling the issue of drinkers that have a problem relationship with alcohol.

Via the WSTA (Wines and Spirits Trade Association) Bargain Booze is working with central Government to find a solution to the issue of problem drinkers and to agree a set of practical steps for ensuring consumers have the right information about the drinks they choose to buy and the risks if they drink too much.

Education is part of the answer and so too is enforcement. Merseyside has a good track record in this area.

Finally, you might be surprised to know that while reported alcohol-related hospital admissions continue to increase the Government's own figures show that alcohol consumption in the UK has been falling for the last few years. In fact overall consumption is down 12% since 2004.

The problem is not all of us who like a drink. It's a minority of people who continue to drink to excess, inflicting harm on themselves and others. We need policies that tackle this minority, not a blanket policy like minimum unit pricing which punishes all consumers, particularly the poor, while doing nothing to dissuade problem drinkers.

Responsible drinkers should not be targeted when it is not them who are at fault, so why should they be hit financially

Wirral Borough Council needs to focus on other areas to restore community pride, Dog Fouling, litter on the streets, ensuring refuse collection and not using weather as an excuse.

Only I was informed by the police about my daughter and the problem was dealt with by a good chat between myself ,my daughter and a police constable in my home.

higher prices may have a negative effect on peopel and they might get involved in crime to get the money

Please stop referring to us as merseyside.

It seems that the people who drink responisble once again would be paying a higher price for the actions of others which seems so unfair.

I like to go out have a drink with friends etc but I don't cause fights, damage other peoples property etc.

Why aren't shops more accountable when sold selling alchol to underaged children?

Why done more publicans say no to the person they can see have over indulged and getting stropopy already?

Surely to have a license to sell alchol you have to accept responisbility for your customers well being in some way, and not just keep selling drink to someone who is cleary the worst for wear.

I haven't got all the answers, and I have had my car damaged on numerous occasions due to passing people that are drunk. I have incurred the cost of this damage, so why should I now have my odd night out made more expensive again due to the lack of control in others?

Maybe a night in the cells isn't enough, maybe a heavy fine and community service would make these people think twice.

The imposition of a minimum price/unit will not have a direct effect on drinking unless the price is raised to the level

were the responsible drinker was denied his/her right to enjoy a glass or two. High prices for cigarettes has created it's own problems of criminality.
Need to look at dependent marginal groups bigger packages of care - including support More supported accomodation / access to accomodation once detoxification is complete to reduce the opportunities to remainin g alcohol free Swifter access to services
I guess that pricing will only go so far in reducing drinking problems. I wonder that boredom may be a big problem for youth. They need something to do. A safe environment and wholesome activities might allow them to be with their peers and make better use of their time
Pricing should be split across alcohol categories ie Beer, wines, Spirits etc, there should also be a VAT differential between on trade and off trade premises.
I think that, as a society, we tolerate too much excess - we eat too much and we drink too much and we tolerate too much in the name of 'individual freedom'. While I would defend anyone's right to 'be themselves' that shouldn't be at the expense of others' right to the same freedoms. Big business can afford to cut the unit price of alcohol because of the volumes sold and because of additional purchases - they're supplying (and creating) our demand. The short term losers are usually small businesses but I think we're all the long term losers and we need to reverse the trend.
No matter what the price people would still buy it!
We are far too tolerant of drunken underage drinkers behaving in a menacing and abusive manner
Look at the likes of France and Sweden etc who dont have teenage alcohol problems to see what they do differently. England is far too tollerant with social issues.
No
I do not believe that introducing minumum pricing will reolve alcohol related problems
Feel that if people drink they will still find ways to get the money for alcohol which will possibly create more problems.
Pubs and clubs only to sell alcohol
THE GOVERNMENT NEEDS TO INVEST MORE MONEY IN EDUCATION AND PREVENTION. EDUCATE FROM A YOUNG AGE.
Should put the drinking age up to 25. You'll see a huge drop in anti-social behaviour and teen pregnancy.
If we had more policing of known problem areas this would reduce anti social behaviour
Its another stealth tax
Alcohol should be sold at prices decided on by retailers, but should only be sold through designated alcohol outlets, that do not sell anything else. This would prohibit supermarkets and corner shops selling it.
I think people who are found by the police to be drunk and incapable should be fined: this would mainly affect young people.
Pictures on billboards showing effect of alcohol
I had a friend killed y a drunk driver. I have also been attacked in the street by a drunk. Some people can be very abusive and intimidating when drunk.
They should police underage sales and youths hanging around drinking. It would be an idea to have more things for youths to do ie, youth clubs. Moreton used to have sports cages that were used alot by youths but they built a medical centre on them!! Now we have 'base jumpers'.
Still think would get their drinks anyway.
The problem of alcohol stems from all generations who think it is a good idea to go out and get drunk. The problem is not with the young generation, but with everyone from all ages who themselves drink too much and say we having a good time. A great example for the young we set.
Proportionately it affects the working class adversely.
Drinking is a personal choice and its up to the individual what/how much they choose to drink. Drink is a major health/social problem, however, oftenthere are other issues that make people drink. These should be addressed first.
More intervention from early age.
Intervention at a young age, maybe from school.
To prevent at early age
I believe that those people who abuse alcohol and as a consequence engage in anti-social behaviour, criminal damage and violence etc. believe that a) They are unlikely to be caught as there are no Police about these days, b) The Police can't be bothered finding out who engages in the behaviour, c) The Courts do nothing to them if they do endup in Court.
I think alot of alcohol related problems result from people mixing drinks mainly after the introduction of 'trendy' shots and alcopops. I consider most young people and adults con loose control of the number of drinks they consume. Possibly a ban on these drinks or higher prices may help as sensible drinkers will be penalised if all drink prices were increased.
My job involves seeing people who have alcohol issues. I have seen their distress, realsie how often thay use hospital and GP Services. There needs to be some compulsory point ot which a person deemed to be an alcoholic / boarder line has to attend rehabilitation. More of this needs to be available for young people - they should also be compulsorily referred for rehabilitation if Police action s warranted from their behaviour.

I feel it may not affect that attitudes and lifestyles of the people of Wirral. People will still be influenced by issues such as social pressure. It may be viable to look at tackling these types of issues.
too many people in hospital with alcohol related illness
Minimum price policies penalise those who drink responsibly, and will deter those who do not.
I think if you put prices up in supermarkets and off licenses it could lead to more crime. If a person has an addiction and needs alcohol they will commit crime to get hold of it.
Who will get the increased money?? and who benefits??
Alcohol needs to be stopped or needs to be a stop on how much you can buy in one night and weekend
We had to sell our home of 20 years because of anti-social behaviour drinking on the streets, fighting, verbal abuse to me and my family, threatening behaviour, vandalism to my car and house, verbal abuse and this happened everyday till we had to move and could not fight on as everywhere we turned for help wanted 12 months of evidence.
More media coverage re: abuse of alcohol
As a mother of 2 young children, I'm more aware of dog fouling in the area, it's a very big problem at the minute and needs addressing.
Whatever the price of alcohol it will always be bought and the same things will happen same as now.
I don't think setting a price for alcohol is fair to people on low incomes who enjoy drinking in a responsible way. I understand young people can get it cheap and some can cause trouble but they would still find a way of getting alcohol no matter what price it is. I just think again people who enjoy a drink responsibly should not have to pay higher prices for it just because the Council think it would stop anti-social behaviour and crime with young people because it won't!
Why do all corner shops have to sell alcohol, if they didn't this would help in the demise of A.S.B
I do not think it will make any difference to the community whether alcohol increases or not.
If prices go up, more trips will be made abroad to bring in cheap beer
The minimum pricing policy penalises everyone not just the binge drinkers that the government are trying to target. It penalises people who just want a bottle of wine to enjoy with a meal. People who drink to get drunk will still buy alcohol and the underlying problems are not being addressed.
Even if minimum price is introduced, people are still going to obtain alcohol in as many ways they can
I feel that I would be being penalised. I work full time.
Minimum pricing will not work because people will find the extra money to pay for it. Educate parents. Lead by example.
We need to be looking at: 1) education - linked to alcohol consumption 2) parenting skills 3) Good role models for children (less coverage of so called celebrities behaving badly.) 4) more respect for authority - meaning the person not just the uniform.
Drunken people should not be permitted to travel on public transport
The problem is children outside shops asking people to buy alcohol for them and people acting irresponsibly by doing that.
Problems are with youngsters outside shops asking people to go in and buy alcohol for them.
too widely available
Don't think people should be criticised for buying alcohol for wanting a drink
Putting a minimum price on alcohol would see pubs, off licences, and many small businesses closing, resulting in more and more job losses in Merseyside. Alcohol is a massive sales target to all people, and if minimum price of alcohol was put into place, people would stop buying it, therefore, businesses would close. People in the north west, working in licensed premises, simply cannot afford to lose their jobs, because of a pointless increase, which will simply lead to people going to other countries to import alcohol.
As a sensible drinker, minimum pricing will put the price up and line the pockets of the supermarkets. Drinkers / Alcoholics will drink, no matter what price (the same as drug addicts).
Raising the price will not solve or alleviate the problem.
I do agree to supporting minimum alcohol pricing however I do feel that certain people who depend on alcohol consumption will find a way regardless. (i.e stealing, or purchasing from an off licence that sells individual bottles/cans)
I have concerns that minimum pricing may increase incidences of theft/burglary. I live in an area where there is a concentration of people who are largely dependant on alcohol-if prices are increased, are these people going to take measures to ensure that they can still buy what they need? The area I live in is already well known for anti-social behaviour/ crime, so we could do without an increase.
Putting a minimum price on off licensed premises would promote higher prices in pubs, who would then profiteer, as has happened with recent VAT increases, which in turn would mean even higher off license sales as moderate drinkers choose a lower cost alternative. Higher prices is a short term 'easy' option that will mean long term hardship to the pub trade as business dies off.
This country's population has a love/hate relationship with alcohol, largely due to society turning a blind eye to

unacceptable behaviour. Education via all forms of media is required to bring about a change in our perception of what is and isn't acceptable - and this has to be enforced rigorously until people's sense of responsibility is changed for the better.
Why should the everyone be "punished" because of the anti-social behaviour of a minority group of the population. I am not convinced that there is a correlation between price and anti-social behaviour and suspect that there is a general decline in respect for society. If an individual seeks to get drunk and cause trouble he will, irrespective of the cost.
I HAVE NURSED PEOPLE WITH ALCOHOL PROBLEMS.I ALSO HAVE EXPERIENCE OF WHAT ALCOHOL DOES TO MY OWN FAMILY AND FRIENDS.SUPERMARKETS ARE THE WORST OFFENDERS FOR ENCOURAGING CHEAP DRINK AND AVAILABILITY. THE HIGHER THE PRICE THE BETTER AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED.
As well as minimum pricing I think the licencing hours should be reviewed. Pubs and clubs should have shorter opening hours. Britain does not have a 'cafe society' lets not pretend we do.
I think the legal age of drinking should be raised to 25 and pubs should ask everyone for ID
I think ts already expensive and this is just another excuse for the government to get more out of us.
If the young kids had somewhere to go on a Friday and Saturday night which didn't cost a bomb you would get alot less trouble.
More help and money should be made available to treat and educate dependent drinkers.
stop supermarkets sell cheap alcohol so public house's can make a improvement
staff guarding victoria park in to cut weeds + bush around trees + by fencing by children play area were they flat bottles
I am unaware of anybody who has quit smoking simply because the price of cigarettes have increased. People with alcohol dependency will just drink less but drink stronger alcohol. I am against blanket controls imposed by the state or local councils becuae of the activities of a minority. The excessive consumption of alcohol and abuse of drugs is often related to complex social issues. If people want help, there is help available. Young people, many of whom have more disposal income than ever before, will always find ways of affording alcohol if they wish to consume it.
putting price restrictions on alcohol penalises people who drink moderately
Although i support minimum pricing i don't mean that it should be priced out of reach as this will only increase crime to pay for it. It is ridiculous though that alcohol is more expensive than soft drinks. I think there should be and end to incentives to bulk buy.
I feel by putting up the price of alcohol for everyone is penalising the people who do drink responsibly, as ever the minority spoil it for everyone. Increasing the price is not a deterrent to buy it, as its at the top of the shopping list before food. As they still want to drink it will just cost them more and increase profits for retailers.
i cannot comment on the above has i have had no problems with any one drinking alcohol in my area.
i don't think reducing alcohol prices or putting them up as people will get it away shops that sell it need to stop at an earlier time
This will encourage more drinking at home with alcohol provided from 'out of town' sources. This will make the 'negative' issues even more difficult to measure and monitor. Why should sensible, less well off, drinkers be penalised by raising the minimum price? Is it only poorer people who drink to excess? Don't some people feel 'positive' for having the occasional drink?
low/reasonably priced alcohol is a great relaxer for many pensioners & lower paid
every weekend there is trouble in my street as we live close to birkenhead town centre
I don't think minimum pricing would have any affect at all where there is a will there is a way people who want to buy alcohol will they will pay whatever if they really want it
i think paying more for alcohol will stop the young buying it on a regular basis
I would feel penalised for others drinking in excess. Licensed premises have a duty to ensure behaviour and should stop serving once a person is believed to have had enough.
any problem that may exist regarding alcohol-related crime/anti-social behaviour or under-age drinking should be tackled through education
All you hear these days is "cuts in this.../cuts in that".. etc. No money is spent in providing things for communities these days due to bankers/tories needing their new porches etc. If you spend nothing on the population , expect them to abuse themselves in other ways. This is a problem caused due to inaction & budget cuts.
By putting up the price of alcohol it will not deter people from drinking, if people want tp drink they will. It is not fair to make hard working people pay more for alcohol when they don't abuse it and use it in social situations for relaxing
minimum age to buy alcohol should be increased to 21
alcohol 18 to easy to get
Everybody has less money to spend We are taxed more and mor

Putting the price up will not deter youngsters from drinking in fact it might increase crime i.e burglaries
Yes - off licence is spelt thus not with an "s".
A drinker will always find money for alcohol. The ordinary person who enjoys a sip of sherry or wine should have to pay more for social manipulation
The alcohol pathway at the local hospital does not work, far too often alcohol related patients are discharged home before anyone even considers a referral to the alcohol nurse, this is not helpful. Also it would be good if we could advertise the difficulties we face supporting alcohol mis users, too often people think the authority can assert services on drinkers, this is legally impossible, but society then blames LA for not responding, yet we are often powerless to respond.
I think this is a Government con to get more money.
Can't understand how alcohol is legal as this is also a destructive drug
Would like to see alcohol banned. Sister died of alcohol related illness. Brother murdered as result of alcohol.
Raise age limit to 21 years. Cancel 24 hour licences.
Unemployment between 16-24 Year olds is now 1 in 5 The number of children who are entering social care is increasing Police numbers are reducing Funding to those who work with addiction and alcohol problems is reducing Schools dumb down and spit out thousands of children who have been through an exam factory but have no concept of thinking for themselves, taking responsibility for their actions and respecting anything The battle between community solidarity and celebrating diversity which is one of the greatest challenges facing progressive liberalism is not currently being addressed by anyone. Address the above issues and you will find alcohol issues will reduce. The problem will never be completely eradicated as will always be addicts/ people who abuse any privilege, however paying lip service to the issue by raising alcohol prices will not help solve any issues. While the above issues are long term solutions and the problem is current, simply punishing those responsible of crimes will work as part of a short term solution to a long term plan as will advising and educating people on their responsibilities
Local Parks should be closed , gates locked at 8pm in winter months and 9pm in the summer that way there is no underage drinking , or tramps using the parks as a pub. Also fines if found with alcohol after a certain hour
Parks need to be patrolled by people with powers of arrest.
Stop allowing liquor licences to local shops Make access to alcohol less easily available Give it the same priority as smoking and other drugs
I think it will take a while to see any improvements, but while the supermarkets offer such cheap prices, they seem to go do instead of increasing
don't think anything will change with drinking, they will drink whatever
alcohol abuse is rife in this area late night shop are the biggest provider of alcohol to under age drinkers
Do not think price increase will deter people
Why should it affect people who drink sensibly.
Why people who drink sensibly should be penalised.
More money to be spent on A & E, education and Police.
Education is a main route to educating and empowering individuals to have insight and understanding on the affects of over drinking can affect on the human being. Physical, psychological and social impact it takes on peoples lives. From junior school upwards - education / re: alcohol awareness should be put forward.
People who drink responsibly shouldn't be affected by the behaviour of others.
More Policing
To be aware of the dangers of alcohol
Should be a 25+ age policy, if they look under 25 ID required.
If people want to drink it is up to them they should have been brought up in a way where they know how to behave responsibly. Pricing will not change anything. If its too expensive they will steal to get money for it.
Responsible drinkers should not be penalised for the actions of irresponsible.
This action will not solve any of the problems caused by alcohol but if more action is taken it may be the the first step in tackling behaviours related to alcohol, such as raising the age of drinking, changing pub hours, more policing and government intervention.
I do not think it is fair to impose minimum pricing across the board when it would mostly affect those who drink sensibly and responsibly. A separate initiative needs to be introduced such as tackling under age sales to alleviate this issue.
It is an individuals choice to drink and minimum pricing not likely to have a major impact reducing alcohol related illness. It may reduce under age drinking.
We need more youth clubs for older kids

Publicise alcohol addiction more in campaigns like we see for smoking.
Publicise the health effects from drinking too much alcohol.
Some corner shops serve under age kids.
There will be more penalized by putting prices up.
I do not think it is right to penalise those who drink responsibly by introducing minimum alcohol pricing.
I do not think everybody should be punished if they drink responsibly.
There might be more robberies
Not to punish responsible drinkers.
I do not think increaing prices of alcohol will make any difference
It would be better to address the situating regarding selling alcohol to under aged people.
There should be more regulations within within shop. Stop drinks promotions etc
All roads to be alcohol free areas

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