

WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCRUTINY PROGRAMME BOARD - 14th JANUARY 2010

REPORT OF THE ALCOHOL SCRUTINY PANEL MEMBERS

ALCOHOL SCRUTINY REVIEW - PROGRESS REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an update on progress for the Alcohol Scrutiny Review.

1. Background

- 1.1 At the meeting of the Scrutiny Programme Board, held on 14th September 2009, members agreed to undertake an in-depth scrutiny review regarding progress towards implementation of the Alcohol Strategy in Wirral. The Board members agreed that volunteers should be sought from among scrutiny members to form a Panel. It was agreed that the review should be managed by the Scrutiny Programme Board due to the cross-cutting nature of the topic and the impact on a number of areas such as health, young people, anti-social behaviour and community safety, road safety, trading standards and licensing.
- 1.2 Subsequently, the following members volunteered to be members of the Panel:
- Councillor Dave Mitchell (Chair)
 - Councillor Sue Taylor
 - Councillor Chris Meaden
 - Councillor Ann Bridson

2. Scope of the Review

- 2.1 The Panel members met on 6th November 2009 to discuss the scope of the review. Due to the enormous breadth of the topic, it was agreed to focus on specific areas, concentrating particularly on those issues which are within the direct responsibility of the Council. The panel members are proposing that, due to the high profile and significance of excessive drinking among young people, the central focus of the review should be the "access to alcohol by young people in Wirral".
- 2.2 The draft Scope Document, agreed by the Panel members, is attached as Appendix 1 to this report. Committee members are requested to consider this draft document for approval.

- 2.3 The Panel is recommending that this scrutiny review focuses on the following issues:
- What is the impact of alcohol on young people in Wirral?
 - What is the impact of young people drinking alcohol having on other residents of Wirral?
 - What is already being done to enable young people to make good choices regarding alcohol?
 - What are the key issues relating to access and availability: Where? Price? Promotions?
 - What restrictions of access to alcohol exist at present?
 - What additional restrictions of access are available and which have been successfully used elsewhere?
 - Can Council policies be sensibly amended relating to the access and availability of alcohol, particularly with respect to young people?

3. Evidence Gathering and the Report

- 3.1 An initial presentation for panel members, held on 16th December, was delivered by relevant officers with a variety of expertise, including Wirral NHS, Drug and Alcohol Team (DAAT), Children and Young People, Licensing and Trading Standards.
- 3.2 The Panel members propose to use a number of methods to gather evidence:
- Meetings with key officers / organisations
 - Meetings with relevant groups from the third sector
 - Obtaining the views of young people
 - Assessing the impact on the wider community
- 3.3 Further written evidence will be gathered from recent Committee reports, relevant Government reports and strategies as well as from other Councils.
- 3.4 It is planned that the final report for the Alcohol Scrutiny Review will be completed before the end of the current municipal year.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the Committee approve the Scope for the Alcohol Scrutiny Review, as detailed in Appendix 1.
- (2) That the Panel members be confirmed as Councillors Ann Bridson, Chris Meaden, Dave Mitchell and Sue Taylor.

Report of the Alcohol Scrutiny Panel Members:

Cllr Ann Bridson

Cllr Chris Meaden

Cllr Dave Mitchell (Chair)

Cllr Sue Taylor

(15/12/09)

Appendix 1: Scope Document for the Alcohol Scrutiny Review

Date: 14th December 2009

Review Title: Access to Alcohol by Young People in Wirral

Scrutiny Panel Chair: Cllr Dave Mitchell	Contact details: 0151 327 2095
Scrutiny Officer: Alan Veitch	Contact details: 0151 691 8564
Departmental Link Officer: Sue Drew	Contact details: 0151 651 3914
Panel members: Cllr Ann Bridson Cllr Chris Meaden Cllr Dave Mitchell Cllr Sue Taylor	Contact details: 0151 201 7310 mobile: 07759 587597 0151 645 1729 0151 327 2095 07736 927201
Other Key Officer contacts:	
1. Which of our strategic corporate objectives does this topic address? 1.1 To create a clean, pleasant, safe and sustainable environment, in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- To reduce alcohol related crime- To reduce levels of anti-social behaviour 1.2 To Improve Health and Well-being for all, ensuring people who require support are full participants in mainstream society, in particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- To encourage healthy lifestyles and participation in fulfilling activities- To narrow the mortality gap on Wirral- To tackle all forms of alcohol and drug induced harm	

2. What are the main issues?

- 2.1 What is the impact of alcohol on young people in Wirral?
- 2.2 What is the impact of young people drinking alcohol having on other residents of Wirral?
- 2.2 What is already being done to enable young people to make good choices regarding alcohol?
- 2.3 What are the key issues relating to access and availability: Where? Price? Promotions?
- 2.4 What restrictions of access to alcohol exist at present?
- 2.5 What additional restrictions of access are available and which have been successfully used elsewhere?
- 2.6 Can Council policies be sensibly amended relating to the access and availability of alcohol, particularly with respect to young people?

3. The Committee's overall aim/objective in doing this work is:

- 3.1 To understand the impact of alcohol on young people and other residents in Wirral.
- 3.2 To gauge the ease with which young people are able to access alcohol.
- 3.2 To consider the support available to young people enabling them to make positive decisions regarding alcohol.

4. The possible outputs/outcomes are:

- 4.1 To reduce the ability of young people to access alcohol.
- 4.2 To further enable young people to make positive choices regarding alcohol.

5. What specific value can scrutiny add to this topic?

To use new evidence to enable changes which would lead to the outcomes listed in section 4 above.

6. Who will the Committee be trying to influence as part of its work?

- 6.1 Appropriate Cabinet members and Directors, Wirral Borough Council
- 6.2 Signatories to the Wirral Alcohol Strategy

7. Duration of enquiry?

Aim to complete by the end of the current municipal year (May 2010)

8. What category does the review fall into?

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Policy Review | x <input type="checkbox"/> | Policy Development | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| External Partnership | <input type="checkbox"/> | Performance Management | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Holding Executive to Account | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

9. Extra resources needed? Would the investigation benefit from the co-operation of an expert witness?

The review will be conducted by councillors with the support of existing officers. However, the panel are looking for advice from people with expertise on this topic.

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10. What information do we need?	
<p>10.1 Secondary information (background information, existing reports, legislation, central government documents, etc).</p> <p>Wirral Alcohol Strategy (and the Implementation Action Plan)</p> <p>Recent Committee / Cabinet reports.</p> <p>Statistics regarding the scale of the problem in Wirral, comparative to statistical and geographical neighbours.</p> <p>Relevant Government Departmental documents</p> <p>Relevant national documents</p> <p>Reports from other councils into similar topics.</p> <p>Examples of good practice from other Councils</p>	<p>10.2 Primary/new evidence/information</p> <p>Introductory multi-agency presentation to panel members</p> <p>Interviews with key officers</p> <p>Assessment of the impact on young people</p> <p>Assessment of the impact on Wirral residents</p>
<p>10.3 Who can provide us with further relevant evidence? (Cabinet portfolio holder, officer, service user, general public, expert witness, etc). council officers to include:</p> <p>Peter Edmondson / Steve Pimlott / Terry White (Children and Young People Department / Youth Outreach)</p> <p>Wirral DAAT</p> <p>Wirral NHS</p> <p>Planning Department</p> <p>Licensing Team (Margaret O'Donnell)</p> <p>Trading Standards (John Malone)</p> <p>School Governors Forum</p> <p>Schools Forum</p> <p>Young People Alcohol Prevention Programme</p> <p>Merseyside Police (Dave Peers)</p> <p>Relevant third sector groups</p>	<p>10.4 What specific areas do we want them to cover when they give evidence?</p> <p>How many young people are involved?</p> <p>Where are the hotspots?</p> <p>What activities already take place to encourage young people to make positive choices regarding alcohol?</p> <p>What is the impact on local communities of young people drinking excessive amounts of alcohol?</p> <p>What restrictions to access are currently in place in Wirral?</p> <p>What further restrictions to access are feasible?</p>

11. What processes can we use to feed into the review? (site visits/observations, face-to-face questioning, telephone survey, written questionnaire, etc).

11.1 Meetings with officers

11.2 Visits with outreach workers / Response / Respect team

11.3 Desk-top analysis

12. In what ways can we involve the public and at what stages? (consider whole range of consultative mechanisms, local committees and local ward mechanisms).

12.1 Area Forum meetings / Focus groups

12.2 Youth Parliament