

WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCRUTINY PROGRAMME BOARD – 5th January 2011

REPORT OF THE ALCOHOL SCRUTINY PANEL MEMBERS

ALCOHOL SCRUTINY REVIEW - FINAL REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides background information regarding the Final Report of 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 / community 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

The panel has been supported by a Scrutiny Support Officer, Alan Veitch.

2. Focus for the Review

2.1 The Scrutiny Programme Board agreed the Scope for the review in January 2010. 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 proposed 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 main issues for the review were identified in the Scope document as:

- 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

The Panel have used a number of methods to gather evidence for the review:

- Meetings with key officers
- Visits by panel members to local communities accompanied by Youth Outreach workers
- Written evidence

The Panel expresses its thanks to all those who have assisted the review by so readily giving their time, experience and suggestions.

4. The Final Report

The Final Report, 'Access to Alcohol by Young People in Wirral', which includes eleven recommendations, is attached for consideration by the Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the contents and recommendations of the Alcohol Scrutiny Review be supported;
- (2) that the Alcohol Scrutiny Report be forwarded to the Health & Wellbeing, Children & Young People and Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committees;
- (3) that the Alcohol Scrutiny Report be presented to the next appropriate Cabinet meeting;
- (4) and that further reports be presented to the Scrutiny Programme Board to update members regarding the outcomes of the recommendations.

Report of the Alcohol Scrutiny Panel Members:

Cllr Ann Bridson

Cllr Chris Meaden

Cllr Dave Mitchell (Chair)

Cllr Sue Taylor

(13/12/10)