

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**MEETING WITH CABINET MEMBER, HEALTH AND COMMUNITIES**

**10 February 2015**

**Report of the Strategic Director, Health and Communities**

**TACKLING ALCOHOL RELATED HARM**

**1 Purpose of the Report:**

To update the Cabinet Member on activities undertaken to tackle alcohol related harm.

**2 Information and Analysis:**

Tackling alcohol related harm has been one of the top priorities for the County Council, dating back to the first Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement. It remains a priority within the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, the Community Safety Partnership Agreement and the Policing Plan.

From 2003 until 2013, the Derbyshire Drug and Alcohol Chief Officer's Partnership was responsible for developing and driving forward the local Drug and Alcohol Strategy and securing cooperation and co-ordination across the different agencies. Following the establishment of the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Partnership was disbanded and has been replaced by a Substance Misuse Strategic Commissioning Group reporting to partner agencies and Boards as appropriate.

The County Council, working with partners, has made some significant strides over the years to tackle the harms and support those who need treatment to recover from their addiction. Ten years ago, alcohol treatment services were non-existent in parts of the county and the substance misuse budgets were heavily weighted towards drug users. Today, alcohol treatment services are consistent across the county and budgets are being rebalanced, recognising the demand for services.

Activity from a community safety perspective has focused heavily, but not exclusively, on the night-time economy and we have seen reductions in alcohol related incidents, violence and ASB. There is a significant amount of community safety and trading standards activity which has now become embedded as core business, as detailed below:

- Violence, Alcohol Harm and Licensing Groups (VAL's) were established in 2008 with the purpose of bringing a consistent approach to tackling problematic premises. There are six VALs covering the county and they continue to add value by supporting the Licensee and targeting problem premises.
- The Alcohol Diversion Scheme was launched in 2009 and is available to those receiving a Fixed Penalty Notice for Drunk and Disorderly behaviour. Offenders are offered the opportunity to pay half the fine and attend a three hour alcohol awareness course. It is cost neutral as attendees cover the costs.
- A night-time economy management plan was introduced for Chesterfield following a self-assessment in 2010. One-off actions to improve the infrastructure were completed and other actions have now become core business, including Street Pastors and the Police providing a "night-time economy manager" on key nights. Chesterfield also has a Cumulative Impact Zone in place for the Town Centre.
- Arrest Referral Treatment workers are available within custody suites to provide advice and support and to make referrals into specialist services as appropriate.
- Underage sales of alcohol are tackled in line with a county enforcement protocol that establishes a lead role for Police in relation to on-licence premises such as pubs, clubs and bars with an equivalent role for Trading Standards at off-licences, convenience stores and supermarkets. In recent years Government-influenced 'Better Regulation' initiatives and reviews of regulatory powers have directed that underage test-purchasing should not be used routinely, but focussed on businesses giving rise for concern. The VAL partnerships provide for intelligence-sharing to identify premises where underage test-purchasing may be appropriate. Additional targeting methods include assessments of underage precautions and checks using over-18s that proof of age is being requested by shops.
- Recruitment and management of young volunteers for test-purchasing requires considerable resource and the Community Safety budget has provided funding for Trading Standards to provide volunteers and work alongside Police colleagues during underage checks at pubs, clubs and bars conducted outside of normal 'office hours'.

- Police and Trading Standards jointly promote 'Challenge 25' as the recommended age-verification policy to be adopted in Derbyshire and both agencies seek this as a condition on Premises Licences when they have an opportunity to make representations as 'Responsible Authorities' under the Licensing Act 2003. Within the County Council, Public Health and the Safeguarding Children Board are also Responsible Authorities and the Trading Standards Service manages an internal co-ordination of these roles through a process using the EDRM system, allowing for a single point of contact for licence applicants and a common response by the County Council to local licensing authorities.
- Advice, training and support is offered to local businesses to prevent under-age sales, but when they do occur, a range of enforcement sanctions can be applied from additional conditions placed on the alcohol licence to suspension and revocation of the licence; and the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices and/or Formal (Simple) Cautions through to prosecution. The proportion of licenced premises selling alcohol to young people has fallen significantly in Derbyshire in recent years.
- 'Intoxicated' began as an initiative to promote the responsible retailing of alcohol and to highlight the offence of serving people who are drunk. It was launched in Police B Division but is now in place across the county. The initiative consists of accredited training for bar staff and provision of information and advice to licensed premises. In 2014 we were successful in gaining 200 free training places funded through SABMiller. 'Intoxicated' has now been expanded and is used as branding on all community safety based activity. In Buxton, a pilot is being undertaken to provide accredited training on alcohol harm/awareness to year 12 and 13 students.
- Work with Chesterfield Royal is in place to obtain data on assaults linked to alcohol. This data is received monthly, analysed and fed into the VAL meetings.
- The Derbyshire Alcohol Advisory Service has been commissioned to develop and deliver bespoke training for Community Safety Practitioners. In total, six courses will be delivered by March 2105 to approximately 160 officers.
- The B-Safe Programme was originally delivered in a number of areas and evolved differently depending on local need. The youth service and police worked together doing out-reach work, identifying and engaging with young people who were intoxicated, and where

appropriate removing them to a place of safety. This programme continues as a working model in a number of areas.

In 2013 the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner held an Alcohol Summit, this focused on:

- Enforcement within Licensed Premises
- Public Health Responsibility Deal
- Cardiff Model –Data Sharing
- Management of the Night Time Economy
- Alcohol and Homicide
- Minimising the Risks
- Alcohol Treatment Requirements
- Young Offenders and Alcohol

The Summit has acted as a catalyst to re-energise work already in place or in early stages of development.

### **Future Opportunities and Work Under Development**

Through the Partnership annual Risk and Threat process, it was felt that additional work was necessary in relation to harm minimisation for adults. In April 2013, a workshop of stakeholders was held to inform the development of a harm minimisation plan. The key themes emerging from this were;

- Workforce development
- Workplace policies
- Review of the Alcohol Diversion Scheme
- Improvements in Alcohol data
- Communication Campaigns
- Public Health Responsibility Deal
- Consideration of the Ipswich Model which aims to tackle higher strength beers
- Support for Families, linking to the Troubled Families initiative.

Relevant actions from this plan will be incorporated into a new Substance Misuse Strategic Plan, which is currently being drafted and which will be reported in due course.

Other initiatives being piloted or considered include:

- Restorative Justice Pilot -Through the Police's external Restorative Justice Scrutiny Panel, it was identified that a number of offences receiving a restorative justice sanction were alcohol related. This has led to the development of a pilot project in D Division (Derby, Erewash and South Derbyshire). In addition to the restorative

element of the sanction, offenders are given an appointment with an alcohol treatment worker to undergo an initial assessment. The scheme will be reviewed in April and, if successful, will be rolled out across the County.

- Life Course Mapping - Following discussion at the Health and Wellbeing Board in November 2013, work has started to map alcohol activity using the life course model. This will be further developed if it proves to be a useful way of identifying gaps in provision.
- Access to real-time data - The LAPE information has a significant time lag and is not available below district level. Access to the raw real-time data would facilitate more in-depth analysis and help to improve understanding of high-risk/vulnerable groups to target interventions more effectively. This is being pursued, but information governance issues remain sensitive and can be difficult to overcome.
- Communications Campaigns - There have been numerous campaigns to inform, persuade and shock people into changing excessive drinking habits. It is difficult to change cultural behaviour and, locally, we continually strive to be creative with both the message and how it is delivered.
- Troubled Families - It is recognised that substance misuse is a key issue facing families within the Troubled Families cohort. Work is on-going to identify specific need and ensure that services are accessible. Alcohol misuse has been integrated into the outcomes framework for phase two.

Although locally we have been successful in reducing alcohol related incidents, violence and ASB, it doesn't necessarily mean that people's attitudes to alcohol have changed or that they are drinking less. There is clear evidence to suggest a change in national policy on price, availability, and advertising is needed to bring a real step-change to change attitudes, supported by a strong local programme, such as that which exists in Derbyshire.

This report focuses primarily on community safety and trading standards activity. The Health and Wellbeing Board will be considering the Liver Disease Programme being taken forward by PHE East Midlands. Liver disease is the only major cause of mortality which is on the increase in the UK and 95% of cases are attributable to preventable causes; alcohol, obesity and viral Hepatitis. PHE feel that the time is right to galvanise support for action across the East Midlands following the recent publication of the Lancet Commission on Liver Disease and

the forthcoming National Liver Disease Framework from PHE due for publication in 2015.

Tackling alcohol harm remains a county council priority and it is proposed to bring further reports to this meeting as a regular update.

**3 Other Considerations:**

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, legal, finance, equality of opportunity, environmental, health, human resources and property considerations.

**4 Key Decision:**

No

**5 Call-In:**

Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No

**6 Background Papers:**

Papers held in Community Safety – Contact Christine Flinton

**7 Officer's Recommendations:**

1. That the work undertaken by the County Council and partners to tackle alcohol related harm be noted.
2. To agree to further regular update reports.

**David Lowe  
Strategic Director  
Health and Communities**