North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership & North Ayrshire Council

Alcohol (Licensing, Public Health and Criminal Justice) (Scotland) Bill

1. Do you support the Bill as a whole?

North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership and North Ayrshire Council support the intention of the bill to reduce alcohol related harm.

2. Do you support particular provisions in the Bill?

We support the following sections-

Section 1 – (Minimum price of packages containing more than one alcoholic product) we understand by closing the loophole in having a minimum price for packages containing more than one alcoholic product will prevent retailers selling multiple units of alcohol at a discount, in comparison to the price of a single unit.

Section 2- (Alcoholic drinks containing caffeine) – this will place a restriction on the caffeine level of alcoholic drinks. There should be consideration around further analysis of the association between alcoholic caffeinated drinks and criminal behaviour.

Section 4 – (Container marking: off-sales)- we have seen the positive benefits of ‘bottle marking’ initiatives within North Ayrshire, where Police Scotland and Trading Standards work in partnership to target responsible agent sales

Section 5 – (Applications for, or to vary, premises licence: consultation and publicity) we welcome the requirement to extend the application notification period to encourage wider community involvement though this is only in areas that do not have a Community Council. The consultation period may not be an efficient timeframe for Community Councils who do not meet on a regular basis.

The ADP engages with the Licensing Board where data was submitted to the Over Provision and Licensing Policy Statements. There is discussion in how people in recovery from addiction issues can contribute meaningfully with the Licensing Board.

Sections 6-13 – (Restrictions on Advertising of Alcohol) – we welcome the restriction of alcohol advertising near places used by children and events aimed at children. This should be further extended to cover young people engaging within youth clubs, community centres, and colleges

Section 14 – (Alcohol education policy statements) this statement is supported and should be delivered through a whole population approach in taking cognisance of all age groups and social circumstances.
3. **Do you have concerns about particular provisions in the Bill?**

   **Section 31 – (Offences involving alcohol: notification of offender’s GP)** we have concerns about the offender’s GP being notified when there has been a conviction where alcohol has been a contributory factor. It is unclear what will be achieved through the sharing of this information with the GP. If there is an expectation for the GP to then undertake an ABI, they would require an additional payment as per current arrangement with the ADP.

4. **How will the particular provisions in the Bill fit with your work, or the work of your organisation?**

   The minimum pricing could impact positively on some of the adults at risk of harm who are referred mainly by Police in relation to incidents connected with drinking alcohol. Other provisions within the Bill will mainly impact on those under the age of 18 years (in relation to advertising etc) and could have beneficial impacts for those young adults between 16 - 18 years who would meet the criteria for adults at risk of harm.

   Alcohol awareness training as an alternative to fixed penalty notices would enhance earlier intervention and prevention approaches with individuals who may not access mainstream addiction services. This will support the ADP’s whole population approach in preventing alcohol related harm to individuals and communities without the requirement of intervention from specialist addiction service providers. However where the police is identified to deliver ‘alcohol awareness training’ this may place additional resource pressures on them and would be helpful if the police worked alongside partners to undertake the training.

   The ADP is required to deliver Alcohol Brief Interventions, as one of the ministerial priorities, within priority and non-priority settings. The delivery of alcohol awareness training would allow for wider engagement.

5. **Will the Bill have financial or resource implications for you or your organisation?**

   As in section 3 above, there will be financial implications of notifying the GP and any subsequent intervention.

   Consideration should be given to identifying those services/resources that would be required to deliver ‘approved courses’. The impact on Police Scotland and Court Service should be considered for the administration of alternative to fines and individuals engaging in required sessions.
6. Do you have any other comments or suggestions relevant to the Bill?

PART 2 – OFFENCES ETC. INVOLVING ALCOHOL

CHAPTER 1 – DRINKING BANNING ORDERS

(Sections 15 – 30) - Whilst drinking banning orders is welcomed there is no requirement for all those subjected to the order to undertake an ‘approved course’. For those individuals, who do not take up the approved course, it is unclear if any other level of support is provided. In addition, if those people subject to a DBO are required to pay to undertake the course this will impact on the uptake and an opportunity to address underlying issues.

Section 30 – (Fixed penalty offences involving alcohol: alcohol awareness training as alternative to fixed penalty) - people should have the opportunity to access alcohol awareness training. Where individuals are issued with financial penalties this may place them under further financial pressure or non-payment which will exasperate the situation and avoid the possibility of addressing underlying issues.

Alcohol (Licensing, Public Health and Criminal Justice) (Scotland) Bill