Alcohol (Minimum Pricing) (Scotland) Bill
Silverton and Overtoun Community Council

At our recent Community Council meeting, we discussed the general principles of minimum pricing for alcohol.

In Dumbarton we have the usual problems of alcohol abuse – association with crime, domestic abuse, anti-social behaviour, drink driving offences, litter, addiction leading to ill-health, retail abuse of alcohol licensing law, and a diversion of domestic/family income to fund alcohol consumption. We have no evidence that Dumbarton is worse than anywhere else, but it seems reasonable, from anecdotal evidence, that our problems are similar to other towns.

A majority of our councillors would see the main advantage of a minimum alcohol price per unit as a deterrent to alcohol abuse, especially among those least able to afford the cost and those most likely to abuse alcohol. We would support the view that many of the problems outlined above would be reduced if alcohol was more expensive.

Our community council was not unanimous in this view. One disadvantage voiced was that those people really determined to obtain alcohol would not be deterred by an increase in price. They might be even more likely to resort to crime, or spending income to the detriment of their families.

Several people also voiced the opinion that minimum pricing would penalise responsible and moderate drinkers, but a majority felt that this was a price that responsible people should be willing to pay to reduce the overall harm done by alcohol abuse.

We agreed with the unit price of 45p suggested in the draft Bill.

Rose Harvie
Secretary
Silverton and Overtoun Community Council
14 November 2011