

## KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

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### SELECT COMMITTEE - ALCOHOL MISUSE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Select Committee - Alcohol Misuse held at Swale 3, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Tuesday, 17 March 2009.

PRESENT: Mr D A Hirst (Chairman), Mrs A D Allen, Mrs T Dean, Mr W V Newman, DL and Mrs E D Rowbotham

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr C Bainbridge (Director Of Community Safety & Regulatory Services), Mr G Bridgland (Staff Officer to Cabinet Members for Adult Services and Children & Family Services), Ms D Fitch (Assistant Democratic Service Manager (Policy Overview)), Ms T Gailey (Public Health Policy Manager) and Ms A Slaven (Director Youth Services and KDAAT)

### UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

#### 1. Alcohol Misuse Select Committee 'One Year On' Monitoring Report (Item. 1)

(1) The Chairman invited the officers to use the papers they had submitted and to up date the Select Committee on progress made with each of its recommendations. The Committee discussed the progress made on each of the 28 recommendations and Officers answered specific questions on the action taken to date and action proposed which included those set out below:-

##### *Recommendation 1*

- In relation to a question on the cost of each alcohol related admission to Accident and Emergency (A & E), Members were informed that it cost £1,000 per head.
- Ms Slaven referred to the multi-agency Kent Action on Alcohol Steering Group (KAASG) and gave details of the membership both from within KCC and from other partner bodies such as the Police, Health and the Probation Service. There were also two sub groups of the KAASG which were the Communication and the Data Information Sub Groups. These sub groups were meeting on a three monthly basis. Ms Slaven undertook to provide Members with the Membership of the KAASG and its sub groups. **(Action – Ms Slaven)**
- In response to a question on whether, cases came before adoption panels where a child was being placed in care because of parental alcohol or drug dependency, KDATT had any input into this, Ms Slaven referred to the draft Hidden Harm strategy, which supported the Alcohol strategy, and was due to be considered at the meeting of the Communities POC on 25 March 2009. The Hidden Harm Strategy was about all types of substance misuse and how to safeguard children.
- Regarding who was responsible for implementing this recommendation and carrying out a needs assessment, Ms Slaven explained that the KAASG were established in June 2008 and they have been asked to produce an annual

update on treatment, when the results of the first annual update were available it would give an indication of need.

- Ms Slaven explained that the Data Sub Group were looking at how information was shared with partners and identifying what data was not available. Once there was clarity on what data was available they would then move on to look at how it was used.
- Ms Slaven referred to detailed need analysis work that had been commissioned from the Oxford Public Health Unit. Their report was expected at the end of the month.
- Ms Slaven undertook to supply to Committee Member a breakdown of the additional funding for alcohol treatment. **(Action - Ms Slaven).**

### *Recommendations 2*

- The Chairman asked about the support for children of parents who misused alcohol. Ms Slaven referred to the draft Hidden Harm strategy and the multi agency work that was being carried out with head teachers to raise awareness of these issues.
- In response to a question Ms Slaven explained that there were distinct services for people with different requirements and social needs. In relation to alcohol misuse, A & E units were effective in helping people to find the right mechanism for support.
- In response to a question on what was being done to help older people who were misusing alcohol, Ms Slaven stated that she was discussing with Mr Leidecker (KASS) the issue of older carers with alcohol problems.
- A Member made the point that it would have been helpful if the report had included timescale and facts/figures to assist Members in their discussion on the progress made with the recommendations.
- The issue of the desirability of Parish Councils being consulted on licensing applications was raised. Mr Bainbridge explained that the applications themselves were lengthy documents but if parish councils could just be notified when an licensing application was submitted he agreed that this would be helpful. He undertook to have a dialogue with District Council colleagues via the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships. **(Action – Mr Bainbridge)**

### *Recommendation 3*

- It would be helpful for Members to see the data strategy.

### *Recommendation 4*

- Ms Slaven stated that funding had been made available for the brief intervention model for another year. The initial results had been impressive, there was evidence to suggest that repeat appearances of people with alcohol issues at A & E units was beginning to decline. The funding for this was due to end in March 2010. She stated that there had been an improvement in the communications between the police and A & E regarding alcohol hot spots.

#### *Recommendation 6*

- Ms Slaven referred to the conference that was being held on 20 November 2009. This was being run by the European Alcohol and Health Forum and was focusing on young people and alcohol. Also closer links were being established with the University of Kent.

#### *Recommendation 7*

- Ms Slaven highlighted the work of “GP’s with special interest”, there was a core group of GP’s with an interest in the identification and treatment of alcohol who could work with GP colleagues to raise knowledge and awareness. She also referred to the campaigns that public health colleagues had been involved with which had been targeted on key dates such as Christmas Day and Valentines Day.

#### *Recommendation 10*

- The issue of the importance of voluntary organisations being made aware of what appropriate temporary accommodations was available for those being discharged from hospitals etc following treatment of alcohol related issues was raised. Ms Slaven stated that information about what temporary sheltered accommodation was available would come through via the needs analysis.

#### *Recommendation 11*

- In relation to the detrimental health issues especial for young women, Ms Slaven referred to the HOUSE project, which provided a good opportunity to share information with young people in an informal setting.

#### *Recommendation 12*

- Ms Slaven explained that the issue of a logo which identified all alcohol services in the county was a contentious issue, the Communication Sub Group were leading on this.

#### *Recommendation 13*

- Ms Slaven informed Members that the Communications Sub Group would be looking at using Kent TV to get the messages about alcohol misuse across but there was a cost implication for this. The Alcohol Strategy highlighted a need for a budget to be allocated for this work. Currently the Department of Health’s literature was being use to provide information.

#### *Recommendation 14*

- Regarding effective alcohol education via Physical, Social and Health Education (PSHE) Ms Slaven stated that this was work in progress and that every school now had a PSHE specialist. She also referred to the “Oi” magazine which was produced by young people for young people and had 4 – 5 pages of health matters.

#### *Recommendation 15*

- Ms Slaven explained that the Local Children Services Partnerships were just beginning to be functioning groups, she was not aware whether they were engaging with former service users in the way suggested in the recommendation.

#### *Recommendation 16*

- Ms Slaven stated that the current consultation on the guidance produced by Sir Donaldson was due to close in April. The outcome of the consultation would have an impact on how this recommendation was taken forward.

#### *Recommendation 17*

- Mrs Dean asked that officers ensured that they spoke to the Fire Authority about their initiative “Licence to kill” and the potential to build the alcohol message into this successful initiative.

#### *Recommendation 19*

- Ms Slaven confirmed that the work with CDRP’s was well underway.

#### *Recommendation 22*

- Ms Slaven explained that training for Magistrates on Alcohol treatment was being commissioned, but only for those n adult courts as very few young people were charged with alcohol related offences. KADATT commissioned services to support the youth offending service.

#### *Recommendation 23*

- A Member raise the issue of large quantities of alcohol being given as a prize in a public house for a competition that would attract young people. Mr Bainbridge stated that this was not illegal, even though may be undesirable, unless there was antisocial behaviour on or around the premises there was little that could be done.
- Mr Bainbridge referred to the three local pilot areas (Edenbridge, Canterbury city centre and part of Thanet) for the KCAP project (Kent Community Alcohol Project). This was due to run from 1 April for six months. He stated that they were working well with the alcohol retail industry (off licences such as Tesco. Sainsbury) and major on licence representatives. The Head of Legal Services for Sainsbury’s (as the Chair of the national Retail of Alcohol Strategy Group which represents all the major supermarket etc chains) and representatives of the on licence trade such as Mr J Neame had attended meetings. There had been an enthusiastic response to this pilot amongst the licensed trade who saw it as a positive scheme. All agencies had signed up to it.

*Recommendation 24*

- In response to a question on Alcohol Disorder Zones, Mr Bainbridge explained that often when new legislation came into force it took some time before people became confident in using it, which was why progress with using the legislation appeared to be slow.

*Recommendation 26*

- It was acknowledged that this was now being considered at national level.

(2) The Chairman informed the Select Committee that Mr Marsh, as the Cabinet Member Public Health had requested that a further update on the recommendations be produced in a year's time. The Chairman did not consider it necessary for the Select Committee to meet again as this could be picked up by the Policy Overview Committee

(3) In summary the Chairman reminded officers that the Members of this Select Committee would like to be kept informed of Kent based alcohol initiatives and conferences. He acknowledged that there was a lot going on locally around the recommendations. He was pleased with the work that was being carried out and appreciated that it was a challenging area which involved moving towards a culture change, and therefore progress was likely to be slow, but as a county council it was possible for us to make a difference.

(4) RESOLVED that the update on the recommendations be noted