

By: Angela Slaven, Director of Youth Services and KDAAT
To: Adult Social Services POC, 15 July 2009
Subject: An Alcohol Strategy for Kent

Purpose: To set out the development of the Alcohol Strategy for Kent

Summary: The Alcohol Strategy for Kent sets out the way forward for agencies across Kent to work in partnership to prevent the harm caused by alcohol misuse. It aims to provide a structure for the development of treatment programmes, a preventative strategy for adults and young people and a community approach to issues such as policing, licensing and trading standards. It sets in context the current resources allocation and the necessary improvements to ensure that the County of Kent has in place an effective and responsive system.

Classification: Unrestricted

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The National Treatment Agency was established in 1988 and the principal focus of its work has been tackling drug misuse. In 2007 the Government published Safe, Sensible, Social to address alcohol misuse, an update of the 2004 National Harm Reduction Strategy. This is supplemented by a series of other strategies including those within the Public Health realm and significantly the Licensing Act of 2003. All the strategies bring alcohol misuse into much sharper focus and a requirement for the public sector to work in partnership with the alcohol industry at both production and retail levels.
- 1.2 In 2007 Kent County Council convened a Select Committee to review the health aspects of alcohol misuse. This focussed upon treatment provision, preventative services and in particular the impact of patterns of alcohol consumption by young people. The Committee received evidence from a wide body, including treatment providers, the health service, young people and the police. The review concluded with a report detailing some 28 recommendations and this report provided a very useful foundation for the development of an alcohol strategy for Kent.

2. An Alcohol Strategy for Kent

- 2.1 The Strategy has been developed using the framework recommended by the National Treatment Agency and has been supported by Alcohol Concern, agencies from across Kent County Council, Police and Health Services. It reflects the national evidence base of the harm caused by alcohol to health, employment/industry and criminal justice and makes local comparators from which to build and develop service responses.

- 2.2 It sets out Kent's position in respect of treatment for young people and adults and the activity being undertaken to address the community safety concerns and the mechanisms for managing the impact of alcohol misuse within the public realm.
- 2.3 Alongside this work, in 2008 an increasing focus on what is called Hidden Harm has emerged and this has been brought into very significant attention following the tragic death of Baby P and safeguarding practice. The strategy will incorporate work being undertaken to ensure that Kent is addressing issues relating to families and the welfare of children and young people.
- 2.4 The strategy identifies the priorities for action which include:
- a. Communication: how to convey important public health messages without alienating the general public, ensuring that key professionals have a understanding of alcohol misuse, it's symptoms and outcomes, and seeking to have an informed employer group that can support and manage workplace issues
 - b. Treatment: improving the current level of treatment provision across a range of needs from prevention, early diagnosis to acute care
 - c. Community Safety: working with the Police and other Criminal Justice agencies to develop responses that minimise the impact of alcohol misuse and within, for example the prison system, that education programmes are developed alongside treatment
 - d. Licensing: working within a partnership arrangement to ensure the intentions of the Licensing Act 2003 are achieved and fulfilling the 2010 Strategy to work with off-licenses and other trade organisations
 - e. Children & Young People: working with education, schools and colleges to provide evidence based programmes about alcohol and where necessary providing the appropriate level of treatment interventions
 - f. Hidden Harm: as outlined above

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 The Strategy highlights the need for a coherent and rigorous analysis of expenditure relating to alcohol. Kent has used national data to achieve an estimate of the impact of alcohol misuse across the county and we are currently commissioning the Public Health Resource Unit (PHRU) to give a more in depth assessment of investment against outcomes.
- 3.2 The key funding providers will remain Health and Social Care in particular for those people where alcohol misuse has reached a chronic state. The Police and other emergency services make a considerable investment when responding to disorder, road accidents and injury and fires within the home, all of which will continue to arise unless the messages contained within this strategy are achieved.
- 3.3 Through the KDAAT partnership some £1,772k is currently invested in treatment, KCC £121k, PCT £1,622, and Probation £29k. Supporting People funding supports a wide range of clients needs including alcohol. Within the annual funding of £542k, £95k is specifically allocated for the provision of a floating alcohol support service.

- 3.4 Investment in 2009/10 will increase a further £390k with much of this coming from Health, Supporting People, and Probation to support improved and targeted community alcohol service provision.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 The consultation period commenced on 19 June and will finish on 19 September. Bodies that are being consulted include:

- Kent MPs
- KCC Members
- KDAAT
- Kent Criminal Justice Board
- Safer Stronger Communities Group
- Children's Trust Board
- Provider services
- PCTs
- Kent Youth Council
- Borough and districts (including Licensing)
- CDRPs
- Service users
- Carers
- Kent Police Authority

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The Alcohol Strategy for Kent is a partnership strategy that aims to address alcohol misuse, provide improved information, advice and guidance and combat the negative outcomes within our communities when the consumption of alcohol leads to disorder or other injury. It is a strategy that will be progressed as new information comes forward, treatment services improve and our response via policing or other emergency services are developed. The Strategy is a significant Partnership agreement that will lead to enhanced service provision and a better understanding of the impact of alcohol misuse in our communities and how best to promote safe, sensible and social drinking.

6. Recommendations:

- 6.1 Members are asked to note the contents of this report and the accompanying Strategy and Delivery Plan
- 6.2 Members are asked to comment on the strategy and delivery plan via the consultation process.

Name of Officer: Angela Slaven
Title of Officer: Director, Youth Services and KDAAT
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