

To Cabinet – 14 June 2010

By: Mr Hill, Cabinet Member for Community Services
Amanda Honey, Managing Director Communities

Subject: An Alcohol Strategy for Kent

Classification: Unrestricted

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.

FOR APPROVAL

1. Background

1.1 The Kent Action on Alcohol Steering Group consulted partners, agencies, Kent County Council, Cabinet and Members, Districts, Boroughs and Parish Councils during 2009. The result of that consultation concluded with the drafting of the attached Kent Alcohol Strategy being presented to Cabinet for approval.

2. Policy Context

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. In 2008 Kent County Council convened a Select Committee to review the health implications and cost of alcohol misuse. The Select Committee report provided an excellent foundation for the development of the Kent Action of Alcohol Steering Group and indeed the foundation of the health perspective of this alcohol strategy.

3. Process

3.1 The Kent Alcohol Strategy sets out Kent's position in respect of treatment for young people and adults, the activity being undertaken to address community safety concerns and the mechanisms for managing the impact of alcohol misuse within the public realm.

3.2 The strategy identifies 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, its 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 Towards 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

4. Resource Implications

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 Through the KDAAT partnership some £2m will be invested in alcohol treatment for adults during 2010/11, PCT £1,770k, KCC £118k, and Probation £104k. These are committed funds through contractual arrangements. KDAAT Young People's Team commission services that are mainly drug and alcohol generic, and in 2010/11 planned expenditure on these services will be in the region of £1.4m. The funding in 2010/11 is confirmed and again, subject to contractual arrangements.
- 4.4 The Supporting People Programme provides funding for a wide range of client needs and the commissioning of services target provision that supports both drug and alcohol support and generic service provision. In 2010/11 planned annual expenditure on substance misuse contracts is £755k the expenditure is subject to contractual arrangement and is committed spend within this financial year.
- 4.5 All services relating to alcohol commissioning will be subject to review within the emerging financial frameworks and all services are considering options and planning a process of implementing to manage and mitigate the impact on service delivery should there be a reduction in funding levels.
- 4.6 In the short term, in the event of a significant reduction in funding levels the service contracts incorporate a provision for parties to exit or vary the contract with

a short notice period of up to 6 months. The Supporting People Commissioning Body and KDAAT Board will agree the actions for the management of resources, partners funding, and/or use of ring fenced reserves to support the contracts during the notice period.

5. Conclusion

- 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.
- 5.2 Following approval, the Strategy will be launched in July 2010. The work of the Alcohol Steering Group will continue to ensure that effective services are delivered and that Kent's response to alcohol and alcohol misuse keeps pace with the emerging agendas on health and treatment, licensing and criminal justice.

6. Recommendation

- 6.1. Cabinet Members are asked to approve the attached Kent Alcohol Strategy 2010 - 2013

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