

Report

Body:	Scrutiny Committee
Date:	28 th January Pre Agenda 9 th February 2009 Scrutiny Meeting
Subject:	Alcohol & Young People Review - Progress Report
Report Of:	Kareen Plympton, Licensing Manager
Ward(s)	All
Purpose	Information & Progress Report on Scrutiny Review – Alcohol & Young People.
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1.0 Background

- 1.1 Following direction from the Scrutiny Panel in September 2008, Councillors Heaps and Goodyear, in conjunction with Kareen Plympton, Licensing Manager, commenced work examining the issues involving alcohol misuse in the Borough.

2.0 Scope of Review

- 2.1 The focus of the Scrutiny Review was discussed at length at an initial scoping meeting on 11th November 2008. An overview of the meeting is included at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 The issue of those defined as “problem drinkers” and “street drinkers” was covered during this exercise. It was recognised that the Licensing Manager, Assistant Director, Contracts and Amenities in conjunction with the Councils Legal Services Team and Sussex Police are currently carrying out work in this area. It was agreed that this would not be the focus of the Review, however any outcomes arising from this work could be reflected as part of a wider Scrutiny Action Plan, since the issues are intrinsically linked
- 2.3 It was agreed that the focus of the Scrutiny Review in this instance should be around young people and alcohol misuse. All parties recognise that a significant amount of work has already been undertaken in this area, and that existing Action Plans and Partners play a key role in influencing the Review
- 2.4 It is recognised that a series of focus groups and associated Action Plans already exist which have significant influence and impact on the Review.

These include:

- Violent Crime Group
- Anti Social Behaviour Group
- Prevent and Deter Group
- Devonshire Project
- Safer Communities Plan
- Alcohol Strategy Group
- Priority Prolific Offender Group
- Youth Development Service – various groups and plans
- Play Strategy
- Intelligence gathering Forums – Licensing Action Group, Joint Action Group, Business Crime Reduction Partnership
- Crime Reduction Partnership

2.5 It was agreed at the meeting on the 11th November 2008 that the Review needed to ascertain the extent of the challenges posed in relation to young people and alcohol. This is being progressed in a number of ways, and is detailed in Section 3.

3.0 Information Gathering

3.1 Councillor Heaps and the Licensing Manager attended a seminar in London on the 12th November 2008 which explored the issues of binge drinking and alcohol misuse amongst young people.

3.2 This helped to confirm that the issues raised in relation to underage sales, proxy purchasing, education and enforcement are key in tackling underage consumption, alongside an overall need to improve youth services and activities are not Eastbourne specific, but follow trends and challenges nationally. It is hoped, will have significant impact in shaping future actions and youth provision in the Borough.

4.0 Citizens Panel

4.1 Councillor Heaps and Goodyear have been involved in the development of a questionnaire, its final form agreed on 16th January 2009. It was also recognised that the previous Citizens Panel in relation to youth activities provides a valuable resource in indicating the type of facilities that the young people of Eastbourne want, and will be used to help inform this Review.

4.2 In common with previous Citizen Panels, this will be conducted with 1000 Eastbourne residents, but on this occasion, in the form of a telephone interview. It was agreed at a further meeting with SMSR, the company commissioned to undertake the Citizens Panel Review that this was likely to solicit the highest response rate.

4.3 In addition to the standard set of questions to be asked, which are included at Appendix 2, it has been agreed that respondents will be asked if they wish to participate in Focus Groups to discuss the issues raised in more detail.

4.4 It is anticipated that the Citizen Panel Survey will be conducted in March 2009, with the results anticipated at the end of April 2009.

5.0 Partnership Working

5.1 A series of meetings have been undertaken or are planned with statutory partners and businesses. A schedule of undertaken or planned is detailed in Appendix 3.

5.2 There is already significant work being undertaken by statutory partners in relation to alcohol misuse, particularly amongst young people, including:

Police. Council Licensing and Trading Standards Test purchasing in off licences and pubs

- Targeted enforcement activity in relation to sites allegedly selling alcohol to under 18s and subject to proxy purchasing (over eighteens purchasing on behalf of under eighteens)
- Bottleneck Campaign – concealed marking of alcohol products by retailers to identify the point of sale.
- Education and media campaigns promoting health and safer socialising messages (Have Fun Stay Safe, Safe Haven Bus)
- Research is being undertaken into the availability of potential venues for under eighteen events.
- Exploration of the Street Pastor Scheme

5.3 It was agreed that the Citizen Panel focuses on the adult population of Eastbourne and that research is needed amongst young people of the Borough in relation to the alcohol and youth activities.

5.4 To this end, it is proposed that the Review looks to use a variety of mechanisms to engage with young people including, via the Youth Development Service, Youth Forums, Youth Parliament, educational establishments and attendees involved in youth focussed activities.

5.5 It is anticipated that this will boost existing information sources to ascertain the following:

- Why young people drink
- Where they drink
- Where and how they obtain alcohol
- What they drink and why they choose that product
- What would stop them drinking alcohol
- What, if any activities would divert them from engaging in alcohol consumption, related anti social behaviour and nuisance.

5.6 In order to achieve maximum feedback from the target age group 14-18, it is intended that a variety of mechanisms are adopted, including:

- Internet and face to face questioning/discussion
- A dedicated Youth Forum on either the 4th or 11th March 2009 to discuss the issues of youth

- Focus Groups as appropriate
- Via "Have Your Say" Council webpage
- Explore the opportunity of using other social network sites (Bebo / Facebook)

5.7 At is intended that the Review is carried out as detailed below. Given the complexities surrounding the Review, and the extent of research and interviews still to be undertaken to ensure that the Review has maximum impact, it is requested that the timeline for completing the Review is extended, and the final report is presented to the Panel in July 2009.

Proposed Schedule Of Activity

January	Investigative Interviews with Partners. Scope questions and explore opportunities for information gathering
February	Investigative Interviews with Partners . Scope & finalise questions for surveys. explore opportunities for information gathering. Plan focus groups & associated activities – web based work. Engage with schools to ensure maximum turn out at Youth Forum - Progress Meeting with Cllrs
March	SMSR Citizens Panel to undertake survey. Plan Focus Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SMSR respondents - Youth Forum - Youth Development Service - Youth Parliament - Other (Venues/Business Involvement) Progress Meeting with Cllrs
April	- Liaise with SMSR regarding Citizen Panel Results. - Collate Focus Group Responses and other questionnaires/web results Progress Meeting with Cllrs
May	Collate Information Draft Report and Action Plan Progress Meeting with Cllrs
June	Draft Report to Pre Agenda for comment Feedback Meeting Cllrs
July	Incorporate revisions into Final Report Present Final Report