



**To:** Business Coordination Board

**From:** Chief Constable and Chief Executive

**Date:** 25 March 2014

## TACKLING ALCOHOL MISUSE IN PARTNERSHIP

### 1. Purpose

1.1 To inform the board of the range of proactive work being carried out in partnership to tackle the misuse of alcohol in Cambridgeshire.

### 2. Recommendation

2.1 The Board is invited to note the contents of the report.

### 3. Background

3.1 Alcohol-fuelled disorder has cost Cambridgeshire an estimated £170 million and £11 billion nationally and is factor in half of all violent incidents. In England, over 15,000 people die from alcohol-related illness each year.

3.2 The Constabulary has a proactive approach to tackling issues relating to alcohol licensing and night time economy. Cambridgeshire's Police and Crime Commissioner Sir Graham Bright has put the issue of alcohol misuse at the top of his agenda holding an Alcohol Roundtable in December 2013. This well attended event encouraged a partnership approach to tackling the issue and secured the highest level of champions for this work.

3.3 Each of the six Area Commands has staff dedicated to dealing with licensing matters, working alongside the six Local District Councils Licensing Authorities. These members of staff report to their Area Commanders and sit on the Force Licensing Group (FLG). Members of this group link in with the Constabulary Drugs and Alcohol strategic meeting, thus ensuring best practice is captured and disseminated to all areas of business. Members of the group, supported by the Commissioner, are encouraging Peterborough and Cambridgeshire to align their

work to tackle the misuse of alcohol through the creation of a single approach and strategy.

- 3.4 Cambridgeshire Constabulary follows the Cardiff ‘traffic light system’ (TLS) for monitoring and managing licensed premises. Each Licensed premise is categorised into four sizes, very large, large, medium, small, and will get pre-determined penalty points for specific offences which occur within or as a direct result of their venue. However they will also earn a reduction in points for any positive actions they take. This could include detaining an offender for police to arrest, intervening to prevent disorder etc. Data is analysed from a number of sources and a score obtained. This score then equates to a colour; green, amber or red. Those premises that score amber and red and worked with and/or placed on action plans are then finally taken to licensing hearings if no improvement is made. In Fenland this monitoring is managed via the ECINs system, which is supported by the Commissioner, to save time through real time tasking and money by through a reduction in meetings through virtual partnership working.

#### **4. Partnership Working**

- 4.1 Cambridgeshire Constabulary works in partnership with a range of agencies to tackle alcohol misuse in the county. The tactics employed in each area are based on the particular issues faced. The following gives a brief summary of work undertaken in each area.

- 4.2 **Peterborough:** NightSafe was introduced April 2012 to replace the failing Pub Watch scheme. This wasn’t a matter of just matter of giving it a new name, but under the banner of Operation Themis involved the introduction of:

- flagship SIRCS system to Peterborough Night Time Economy – this is a web-based information sharing system into which the Police, City Council and licensees share details of incidents and photographs of people who cause problems.
- the Cardiff Traffic Light System
- a digital radio system run from the City Council CCTV office which has recently been taken over by Peterborough Business Against.
- a policing operation to support the licensees where a team of regular and Special Constables work with the licensees and SIA door supervisors to minimise disorder and crime.

- 4.3 Having taken best practice from Northumbria Police and OPCC office, the Peterborough Licensing team have just completed a programme of training to more than 60 SIA door supervisors and licensees from Peterborough NightSafe. The training addressed communication skills and conflict resolution but more importantly encouraged the door staff to help safeguard vulnerable people placing a ‘duty of care’ upon them. This training is likely to be expanded upon throughout Cambridgeshire.

- 4.4 **Fenland:** The Fenland licensing team are assisting Fenland Community Safety Partnership with their programme in 'reducing the strength' of high strength alcohol being sold in Wisbech. While their application for Local Authority Action Area Support from the Home Office was not successful work is still progressing to tackle the multi-faceted alcohol related issues on the patch.
- 4.5 **Cambridge:** A multi-agency Alcohol Related Violent Crime group meet bi-monthly to address the issues highlighted predominantly in Cambridge City Centre. Assault data from Addenbrookes is shared with the group and this is overlaid against crime data to get a better and more informed picture of the violent crime in the city centre. The meeting goes through the Traffic Light picture for city venues and this allows direct feedback to premises from the meeting via the Cambac representative.
- 4.6 The group collectively decide on future projects and will use meetings to identify appropriate projects to take forward and in 2013 obtained CSP funding for the following projects :-
- Care venue – similar to the care tent which is deployed at key dates over the Christmas period.
  - Taxi Marshalls over the Christmas period weekend
  - Street Pastors – safe refuge
- 4.7 The data gathering from A&Es is now being put forward nationally by ACPO as best practice in this area. Efforts are being made to obtain A&E data from the other hospitals attended by Cambridgeshire residents. Sir Graham Bright is highlighting and encouraging this best practice with senior colleagues in an effort to support this multi-agency work. He has also encouraged all agencies to consider how the county could recoup the costs of caring for drunk and incapacitated people.
- 4.8 **East Cambridgeshire:** following on from the Commissioner's roundtable event the Community Safety Partnership has set preventative work to tackle alcohol misuse among young people as a priority along with working with street drinkers and managing licencing through ECINs. This work is welcomed by the Commissioner.
- 4.9 **Huntingdonshire:** November 2013 saw the launch of the Ramsey 'Reducing the Strength' Community Campaign. The project involves a community partnership of retailers, local police and licensing officers, and Team Leaders from Huntingdonshire District Council Safety Team. The campaign has been championed by Dr Arun Aggarwal, GP, the clinical lead for Gainsborough Foundation which is based in Ramsey.
- 4.10 As part of the National Alcohol Awareness Week in November 2013 the 10 local off licenced premises were targeted - all who were selling High Strength Low Cost

Alcohol - those over 7.6% ABV. Retailers that have agreed to a voluntary ban on selling the beers, lagers and ciders over 6% strength.

4.11 The tactic of voluntary asking retailers to remove such items has caused some concern in the licensing industry and with more than 80 schemes operating nationally a legal challenge is expected. The Constabulary has taken legal advice on this matter and the advice is summarised as:

- It seems clear that we can pursue such an approach but with certain prerequisites.
- There needs to be a demonstrable need based on a specific problem in a reasonably tight geographic area
- This should be reflected in a detailed impact assessment/problem profile based on crime/disorder and intelligence.
- The response to such assessment should be progressed through a multi-agency problem solving group that should wherever possible include the relevant licensed premises likely to be affected. (Making them part of the solution).
- The solutions should be wide ranging not just this tactic.
- Any decisions/actions arising should be fully documented.

4.12 The Commissioner is supportive of work to reduce the availability of super strength alcohol when it is used as part of a suite of tactics and has written to the Ipswich (the origin of the initiative) MP Ben Gummer to explore joint working to raise the profile of this tactic in the House of Commons.

## **5 Positive action being taken by Local Commands**

### **5.1 Alcohol Control Zones**

5.2 Under the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 local Authorities have the power to introduce these ( officially called Designated Public Places Orders ), which gives police the power to confiscate alcohol in a Designated zone. Since 2001, 852 have been put in place nationally.

5.3 Cambridgeshire has nine. They are at Barhill, Whittlesey, March, Wisbech, St Ives, Ely (around Cathedral) and three in Peterborough, the City Centre, Millfield area and Orton area. All are enforced by staff in Local Area commands.

### **5.4 Dispersal Notices**

5.5 Under the Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006, Section 27 Notices can be issued to order individuals to leave a given area and not return within 48 hours.

5.6 Used mainly at weekends by dedicated patrols. Three areas have operations each weekend to deal with alcohol related incidents: - Op Themis Peterborough, Op Sodium Cambridge and Op Titan in Fenland. Last year Peterborough issued 213 such notices.

#### 5.7 **Underage Selling**

5.8 The Government recently increased the maximum fine to £20,000 for persistent underage selling at the same premises, which can be just two occurrences.

5.9 This tactic is employed with the assistance of Trading Standards. Local areas have carried out the follow operations :-

- Cambridge In October four premises were visited, all passed,
- Peterborough 30 Test Purchase Operations were carried out in 2013 and only three premises failed.
- Fenland carried out five operations in 2013 with a number of premises failing. One failed twice and was taken to review.

#### 5.10 **Drinking Banning Orders/ASBOs**

5.11 This legislation is currently under review and may change in 2014. Only Fenland Courts must consider a banning order if dealing with an alcohol related matter (Fenland courts were part of the pilot project.)

5.12 No Drinking Banning Orders were issued in 2013 however Fenland have applied for and been successful with a number of ASBO's. Close liaison has also taken place with UKBA on these matters resulting in two persons being removed from the UK.

#### 5.13 **Licensees called before the Local Authority Licensing Committee. ( a review )**

- Cambridge: - Called News & More premises to review, and together with the council successfully defended an appeal at Cambridge Magistrates Court in relation to the refusal of a licence at Adana East Road, Cambridge.
- Huntingdonshire: - No reviews. A number of new Premises Licence applications have had conditions attached by Police in response to local issues - all have been issued licenses after consultation or applications withdrawn.
- East Cambridge- No reviews but mediation carried out prior to a licence being submitted.
- Fenland – Took a number of premises to review.
- Peterborough – 12 premises were taken to review in 2013. 10 went in the favour of the police.
- South Cambridge- No reviews.

## **6 Other topical legislation**

6.1 The Government has introduced two key strands of legislation as part of the government's revised approach to tackling alcohol-related crime and disorder. Namely: The Late Night Levy and Early Morning Restriction Order.

6.2 Each of the six Licensing Authorities within Cambridgeshire has discussed these options and none to date (January 2014) have decided to consult further.

## **7. Alcohol diversion scheme**

7.1 The Commissioner has supported Constabulary plans to offer people caught behaving anti-socially while under the influence of alcohol the chance to attend an Alcohol Diversion Scheme rather than being issued with a fixed penalty ticket. The new scheme takes a restorative justice approach to dealing with alcohol misuses with the individual having to both pay for the course and attend in their own time. The three-hour course teaches them the links between alcohol, violence and offending and the impact on them both physically and psychologically. The course, which has a one-off set up fee is being funded from the Restorative Justice Element of the Victim Services Preparatory Fund Funding. The course is then self-funding through the payments from attendees.

## **8 Next Steps**

8.1 Both the Constabulary and Commissioner share a joint commitment to tackle alcohol misuse in the county. Colleagues from across the statutory and non-statutory sector who attended the Alcohol Roundtable publically reaffirmed their desire to further partnership working across both authority and budget boundaries. However the success of this work depends on effectiveness of that partnership working and each agency's continuing commitment. The Commissioner has pledged to take a strategic lead on this agenda to enable innovative new ideas to flourish.

## **9 Recommendation**

9.1 The Board is invited to note the contents of the report.