

REVIEW OF LICENSING POLICY STATEMENT

HEALTH INFORMATION FOR EAST AYRSHIRE LICENSING BOARD

PREPARED BY PUBLIC HEALTH, NHS AYRSHIRE & ARRAN

BACKGROUND

The Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on Licensing Boards to publish a statement of their licensing policy outlining how they will protect the public's interests with regards the supply of alcohol by promoting the five licensing objectives of:

- Preventing crime and disorder;
- Securing public safety;
- Preventing public nuisance;
- Protecting and improving public health; and
- Protecting children from harm

This information has been prepared and provided by the Public Health Department in NHS Ayrshire & Arran to support the Licensing Board in its review of its Licensing Policy Statement and assessment of overprovision of licensed premises in its area. In addition, it is intended to support the Licensing Board in its role in protecting and improving public health.

WHAT INFORMATION HAVE WE PROVIDED?

Two documents are included:

1. Infographic illustrating:

- Alcohol related health harms in the Licensing Board area.
- Alcohol availability in the Licensing Board area.
- Chief Medical Officer alcohol guidelines.

2. Traffic light report illustrating:

- Alcohol related health harms (hospital stays and deaths) for each community¹ compared to the Scottish average (at 2018).
- Contextual inequalities indicators (life expectancy, population income deprived and working age population employment deprived) for each community compared to the Scottish average (at 2018).

The report also provides further analysis on alcohol related hospital stays showing:

- Information for each community ranked from worst to best.
- Changes and trends for each locality and community and over the period 2011-2016.
- Maps illustrating where and to what extent things have got better or worse over time for whole Licensing Board area and Kilmarnock hub.
- The top 7 communities which are significantly worse than Scotland.

¹ Community level information is for Intermediate Zones which are a statistical geography that sit between data zones and local authorities, created for use with the Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics (SNS) programme and the wider public sector.

WHAT DOES THE INFORMATION TELL US?

From the information we can see that the availability or ease and convenience of obtaining alcohol has a direct link to the overall culture of increased alcohol consumption in the population which in turn increases alcohol related harm. The higher the density of alcohol outlets, the higher the rate of alcohol hospitalisation and deaths.

In East Ayrshire, the majority of alcohol is sold in off sales and, in particular, supermarkets as an ordinary commodity which can be purchased (and delivered) along with general household groceries. This makes it increasingly easier for consumers to purchase large quantities of alcohol for home consumption. In turn this has resulted in less drinking taking place in the relatively controlled environments of on sales premises.

Alcohol related harm occurs across East Ayrshire, however, the greatest harms can be seen in those communities which also experience the highest levels of income and employment deprivation. Alcohol related hospitalisation is higher in middle aged men from these communities.

Of the 30 communities in East Ayrshire, on average, in recent years :

- 21 have experienced a decrease in alcohol related hospital stays; and
- 9 have seen an increase in alcohol related hospital stays.

The 7 communities with the **highest levels** of alcohol related hospital stays (which are significantly worse than the Scottish average) are:

- Bonnyton and Town Centre
 - Mauchline Rural
 - Bellfield and Kirkstyle
 - Newfarm Loch South
 - Shortlees
- } Increasing in recent years
- Altonhill South, Longpark and Hillhead
 - Altonhill North and Onthank
- } Decreasing in recent years, however, still significantly worse than Scotland.

The 5 communities with the **lowest levels** of alcohol related hospital stays (which are significantly better than the Scottish average) are:

- Doon Valley North
 - Cumnock Rural
 - Northern and Irvine Valley Rural
 - Southcraig and Beansburn
 - Grange, Howard and Gargieston
- } Decreasing in recent years

WHAT ARE OUR RECOMMENDATIONS?

In order to maximise its impact on preventing further alcohol related health harms it is recommended that the Licensing Board:

- Consider the evidence linking alcohol supply, the culture of alcohol consumption and health harms. There is a robust evidence base showing that limiting further alcohol availability will have a positive impact on reducing health harms from alcohol.
- Take action, where possible, to help tackle the unequal burden of alcohol related harm experienced by communities in their area. The health harms maps provided enable the Board to review areas affected. Practically, the Board may agree action is necessary to limit availability of alcohol across the Licensing Board area to take account of purchasing habits not being restricted to individual communities.
- Given that the majority of alcohol is sold in off-sales, consider limiting further alcohol licenses of these premises in East Ayrshire.

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