

POLICY COMMISSION BRIEFING DOCUMENT

RESPONSIBLE BODY	
Policy Commission for Safer Communities	
ENQUIRY NAME	REFERENCE NUMBER
Consumption of alcohol in public places	Saf3/05
BACKGROUND	
<u>The National Context</u>	
<p>Alcohol is significant factor in the social lives of almost 90% of the UK's adult population and in most cases does not cause any significant problems. However, alcohol misuse can cause serious problems. Over 60% of all crime is drink related. Drink related criminal activity, such as violence, vandalism and urinating in public places, disorder and other anti-social behaviour cause social distress and impact heavily on the quality of life of others. Alcohol misuse not only causes injury to other people (in the form of aggressive attacks) it also poses a serious risk to the health of those drinking and can trigger long term personal health issues such as heart and liver disease costing the NHS an estimated £1.7 billion per annum.</p> <p>According to <i>crimereduction.gov.uk</i>:</p> <p>Alcohol misuse contributes significantly to crime levels, through alcohol specific offences, for example being drunk and disorderly in public, offences against the licensing laws, such as selling or serving alcohol to under-age drinkers, or offences committed under the influence of alcohol: it has been estimated that 40% of violent crime; 78% of assaults and 88% of criminal damage cases are committed while the offender is under the influence of alcohol. Alcohol is often consumed by offenders and victims prior to the offence being committed, and it is inextricably linked to disorder around licensed premises. In addition, fear of alcohol related violence or intimidation may well mean that large numbers of people avoid city centres on weekend evenings.</p> <p>In August 2000 the Home Office launched an Action Plan to deal with alcohol related crime, disorder and nuisance by reducing the problems arising from under-age drinking, reducing public drunkenness and preventing alcohol-related violence.</p> <p>The <i>Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001</i> provided further measures to restrict anti-social public drinking in specified places, close down unruly licensed premises and further restrict drunkenness on licensed premises. These measures have replaced the byelaws formerly used by Local Authorities to help tackle the anti-social effects of public drinking.</p>	
<u>The Local Context</u>	
<p>In their election manifesto the Conservative Administration sought to 'introduce an Island wide byelaw to ban the consumption of alcohol on our streets except for specifically approved areas and events' in response to the need to tackle the anti-</p>	

social consequences of such activity.

It has been decided that the introduction of a byelaw would be an inefficient use of resources due to the *Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001* that causes such byelaws to cease effect on 1 September 2006.

The Policy Commission for Safer Communities have therefore been charged with identifying viable alternative options to deliver the outcomes intended by the introduction of a byelaw.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ISLAND

- A reduction in the level of alcohol related antisocial behaviour.
- A reduction in the level of alcohol related violence.
- The enhanced attractiveness of local areas for residents and visitors.
- A clear understanding for residents and visitors of where alcohol can be consumed safely.
- A cleaner safer Island for all.

FURTHER WORK WITH TIMESCALES

1/10/05–18/11/05	Receive evidence from experts and stakeholders
15/12/05	Submit draft Blue Paper to PC for approval
17/1/06	Recommendation to Cabinet

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