

# COMMUNITY AND SAFER CITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

8 MARCH 2011

## ALCOHOL VIOLENCE AND THE NIGHT TIME ECONOMY DRAFT REPORT

### Report of the Community and Safer City Scrutiny Committee

**STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:** Safe City  
**CORPORATE PRIORITIES:** CI01 – Delivering customer focussed services  
CI03 – Efficient and effective council  
CI04 – Improving partnership working to deliver ‘One City’

#### 1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To receive a draft final report on the work of the Committee’s policy review into alcohol, violence and the night time economy

#### 2. Introduction

2.1 The Community and Safer City Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting on 8 June 2010, agreed that a policy review be undertaken investigating alcohol, violence and the night time economy. An initial scoping document providing several options for detailed focus was presented to the Committee on 6th July 2010. A further report was presented at the 14th September 2010 meeting which added structure to the review and further focus on the subject area

2.2 The title of the review was agreed as Alcohol, Violence and the Night time Economy. It was agreed that a task and finish group would be set up to investigate Licensing and enforcement of the city’s Licensing Policy.

#### 3. Aim of the Review

3.1 The overall aim was to examine issues relating to the prevention of violent crime as part of the City Centre’s Night Time Economy.

#### 4. Terms of reference

4.1 The agreed terms of reference for the review were:

- (a) To gain an understanding of the key issues in relation to violent crime in the City Centre and the relationship between alcohol and violence;
- (b) To examine performance against National and Local Indicators in relation to violent crime;
- (c) To examine the role partner organisations play in prevention activities in relation to violent crime in the City Centre, with particular focus on situational and social crime prevention;
- (d) To explore approaches to early intervention through consideration of educational work and the work undertaken in hotspot areas within the City Centre to prevent problems escalating;
- (e) To investigate the city's approach to enforcement action with particular focus on the enforcement of the city's Licensing Policy which can help reduce alcohol related violence;
- (f) To review support, resettlement and rehabilitation of victims and offenders by considering how victims are supported to live safely and how offenders substance misuse is addressed with the aim to reduce the chance of re-offending;
- (g) To consider best practice from other local authorities in relation to preventing violent crime in the City Centre; and
- (h) To consider the impact of violent crime on the City Centres Night Time Economy.

## **5. Membership of the Committee**

- 5.1 The membership of the Committee consisted of Councillors Heron (Chair), Scaplehorn (Vice Chair), Ball, Copeland, Ellis, Emerson, Maddison, O'Connor, John Scott, Timmins and J Walton.

## **6. Methods of Investigation**

- 6.1 The following methods of investigation were used for the review
  - (a) Desktop research – review of relevant documentation including the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill and National Crime Survey
  - (b) Evidence from relevant Council officers and our partner organisations, including Northumbria Police, NHS South of

Tyne, City Hospitals Sunderland, Northumbria Probation Service, and Sunderland Victim Support

- (c) Evidence from external organisations including Balance, the North East Alcohol Office and the Home Office
- (d) City Centre Visits with the Police and the Street Pastors;
- (e) Consultation with Licensees via Pubwatch Scheme.
- (f) Consideration of Safer Communities Survey and Balance Big Drink Debate
- (g) Review of Best Practice from Durham's Best Bar None Scheme; and
- (h) Participation in Night time Economy Seminar

6.2 A full detail of the evidence gathering is contained within Appendix 1. It should also be noted that many of the statements made are based on qualitative research, it is inevitable from this type of research that some of the statements made may not be representative of everyone's views. Opinions held by a small number of people may or may not be representative of others' views but are worthy of consideration nevertheless.

## **7. Setting the Scene**

### *National Context*

- 7.1 The Home Office defines violent crime as robbery, sexual offences, and a group of Violence against the Person offences ranging from assault without injury, through wounding, to homicide.
- 7.2 The National Crime Strategy highlights that alcohol is a key driver in nearly half of all violent crime and is a cross cutting issue. The National Alcohol Strategy states that up to 70% of A& E admissions at peak times are alcohol related, 47% of violence victims described the assailant as being drunk and alcohol is a factor in 30% of city centre arrests.
- 7.3 Alcohol is a factor in offending behaviour, particularly violent offending. The 2009/10 British Crime Survey (BCS) found that 19% of all violent incidents and 31% of stranger violence, taking place in or around a pub or club. Although the number of alcohol related violent incidents in 2009/10 was similar to the levels in 2008/9 within the context of an overall fall in violent

crimes measured by the BCS, long term trends show an increase since 1995 in the BCS violent incidents that are alcohol related.

- 7.4 The government announced the introduction of legislation that would make the police service more accountable to local people and tackle alcohol-related violence which has resulted in the introduction of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill. Members have given consideration to the Bill in the body of this report which included a review of the Licensing Act 2003.

#### *Local context*

- 7.5 Sunderland City Centre has a vibrant night time economy, with 191 licensed premises consisting of a mix of restaurants, takeaways, pubs and nightclubs. The main nights that have been identified as being problematic for crime and disorder linked to problem premises are Fridays, Saturdays and Mondays.
- 7.6 Violent Crime in Sunderland is reducing, figures for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April – 15<sup>th</sup> August 2010 show a reduction of 6.2% compared with the same period for 2009. There has, however, been an increase in relation to most serious violence and there are links to alcohol and the night time economy. Figures show that there were 69 crimes last year compared to 100 for the same period this year.
- 7.7 Sunderland is ranked in the top 15% local authorities for harmful drinking and is within the top 5% of highest ranked Local Authorities areas for alcohol specific under 18-year-old hospital admissions.
- 7.8 In 2008, the Safer Sunderland Partnership (SSP) produced an annually renewable 15 year strategy called the Safer Sunderland Strategy 2008-2023. It gives a longer term focus to the SSP's activity whilst still including short and medium terms priorities and step changes that need to take place. This is supported by a detailed delivery plan.
- 7.9 The SSP has responsibility for ensuring the Safer Sunderland Strategy is implemented and for reviewing and evaluating progress to ensure that it is achieving what it set out to do.
- 7.10 The overall outcome of the Safer Sunderland Strategy is about everyone being and feeling safe and secure. The strategy has an ambitious aim that:
- “by 2023, Sunderland will be a city where people feel, and are, safe and secure where they can enjoy life without the concerns of being a victim of crime or being harmed”.*
- 7.11 The Safer Sunderland Partnership (SSP) brings together the public, private, community and voluntary sectors to deliver the Safer Sunderland Strategy.

There are 6 'responsible authorities' on the SSP and they have the legal duty to work in partnership to tackle crime, disorder and substance misuse and to implement a strategic assessment and partnership plan.

7.12 The 6 responsible authorities are:

1. Sunderland City Council
2. Northumbria Police
3. Northumbria Police Authority
4. Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service / Authority
5. Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust
6. National Probation Service Northumbria

7.13 Tackling alcohol misuse, including alcohol-related crime and disorder and tackling violent crime are two of the Safer Sunderland Partnership's (SSP) key strategic priorities for 2010/11. There are two themed delivery groups which are relevant to this review:

- (a) The Alcohol Delivery Group (ADG) is a thematic delivery group of the Safer Sunderland Partnership. It is responsible for overseeing the implementation of alcohol misuse related outcomes from the Safer Sunderland Strategy and the national alcohol strategy, Safe, Sensible, Social in order to reduce alcohol misuse and the harm it causes including alcohol related crime and disorder.
- (b) The Violent Crime Delivery Group is responsible for the preparation and delivery of the Violent Crime Delivery Plan. The work encompasses (i) public space violent crime and (ii) private space violent crime (domestic violence). The group is also supported by the Sunderland Domestic Violence Partnership.

7.14 The SSP has responded strategically and operationally to the following issues:

- a) Increases in recorded most serious violence
- b) Worry about violence, being physically attacked by strangers, being mugged or robbed; and being raped
- c) Perceptions of people being drunk in the street; and
- d) Feelings of safety in the city centre at night

## 8. Findings of the Review

### 8.1 *Key issues and the relationship between alcohol and violent crime*

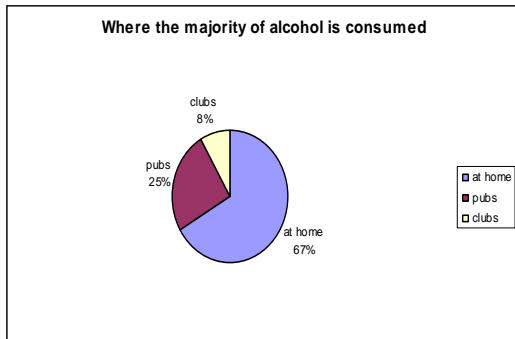
- 8.1.1 Members highlighted the importance of understanding the relationship between alcohol and violent crime and noted binge drinking can increase the likelihood of both becoming aggressive and being a victim of crime. Researchers define binge drinking as consuming eight or more units in a single session for men and six or more for women.<sup>1</sup>
- 8.1.2 Further research has shown that within the UK violence is most typically associated with young males who drink to intoxication. Although young women are drinking more than they used to, they are still far less likely than men to be violent. Where young, drunk people are gathered together there is an increased likelihood of violence. Control of drinking situations is important, such as training bar staff in monitoring and managing disorderly behaviour and policing city centres at night. Along with these measures, individuals need to take responsibility for their behaviour and those who are repeatedly violent while intoxicated may require intervention.<sup>2</sup> Members considered that these findings were important when looking at the work being undertaken in the City in response to alcohol related violence
- 8.1.3 National news and research led Members to consider the issue of pre loading. This involves drinking at home or in a public place prior to entering the City Centre. It is considered to be an embedded aspect of the UK drinking culture especially in times of recession. Members noted that there has been some research into pre loading. A Liverpool study found that 26.5% of women and 15.4% of men on a night out had drunk alcohol before going out. Pre loading was associated with: higher overall alcohol intake, more fights more sexual assaults and more injuries.<sup>3</sup>
- 8.1.4 Although data concerning the evidence of pre loading is not always consistently collected, evidence was obtained from the licensees involved in the questionnaire. (Full details of the results are included as **Appendix A** of this report.) Licensees were asked where they believed the majority of alcohol is consumed by those night time economy customers. Figure 1 shows the responses:

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/alcohol/Pages/bingedrinking.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> McMurrin M (2007) An intervention for alcohol related violence, Mental Health Journal, Volume 12 Issue 3.

<sup>3</sup> Hughes K, Anderson Z, Morleo M, Bellis MA (2008) Alcohol, nightlife and violence: the relative contributions of drinking before and during nights out to negative health and criminal justice outcomes.



From this Members noted that pre loading is definitely considered to be an issue by Members of the licensed trade.

- 8.1.5 Members considered that there were two issues to be considered with regard to pre loading. The first is that of levels of intoxication of people entering the City Centre. Serving intoxicated customers is an area Members felt needed careful consideration to ensure that partners are working together as increased amounts of alcohol consumption can lead to an increased risk of violence. Members considered it is important that those who are visibly drunk are not allowed to enter premises or be served more alcohol. There are fines for serving intoxicated people and these are given to bar staff. During the City Centre visits the police raised the issue that in many of the crowded pubs and clubs it can be difficult to establish whether an individual is highly intoxicated.
- 8.1.6 Members felt it was important to consider why people may serve intoxicated customers. Research from the Home Office<sup>4</sup> identified that in Liverpool in 2007 bar staff indicated reasons they sell alcohol to drunks or those underage. Mainly the risk outweighed the penalty where they:
- Felt intimidated by the Customer
  - Were fearful of being verbally abused
  - Were fearful of being assaulted.
- 8.1.7 Merseyside police ran short courses covering warning danger signs, body language early intervention and diffusion and conflict along with a wide range of issues within that arena. 95% of over 400 staff stated they now feel more confident to refuse sales
- 8.1.8 Members have given consideration to how this issue is addressed in Sunderland and were pleased to see that the Best Bar None application includes reference to serving drunk customers.

<sup>4</sup> Home Office (2009) The practical guide to preventing and dealing with alcohol related problems.

- 8.1.9 The second issue Members considered in relation to pre loading, was that of the price of alcohol. There is a noticeable disparity in prices between off licenses and the licensed trade and concerns that this disparity encourages pre loading. Members noted that many supermarkets were pricing alcohol as a loss leader and were concerned at the impact this would have on residents drinking levels.
- 8.1.10 Members were informed that Balance, the North East Alcohol Office, launched the North East Big Drink Debate to build a clearer picture of drinking behaviour and attitudes held towards alcohol in North East England. This was a high profile campaign to get people in the North East talking about alcohol and its place in the community. As part of the Debate, North East residents were invited to have their say on a range of topics linked to alcohol by taking part in a short survey. North East residents were able to take part in the Big Drink Debate survey between June and August 2009.
- 8.1.11 Evidence from the Big Drink Debate shows that people drink alcohol at home most often (**See Figure 2**) and although it should be noted that this does not provide evidence of pre loading it does indicate the majority of alcohol sales are from off license premises.

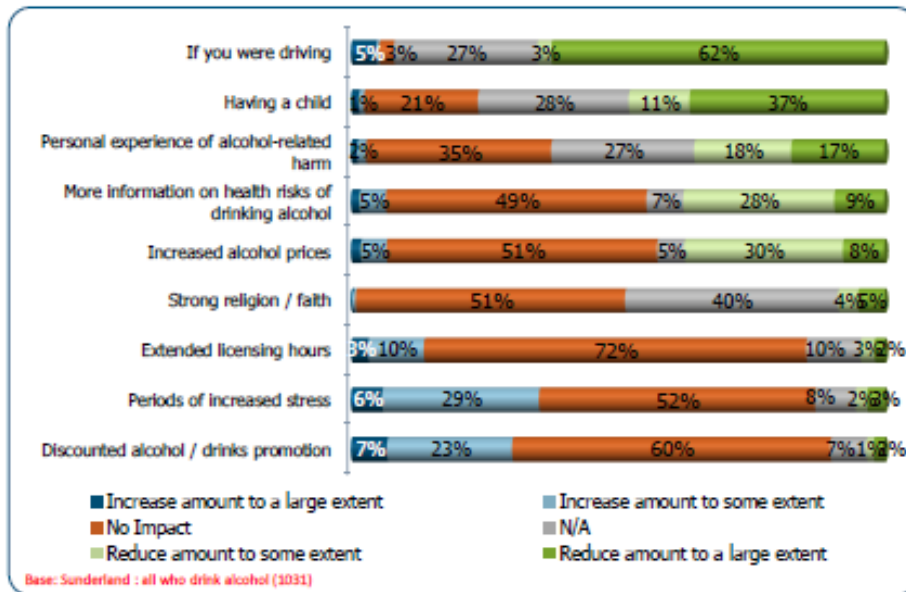
**Figure 2- Evidence from the Big Drink Debate**

Where do you drink alcohol most often? NE Total		Sunderland
At home	48%	45%
Bars / clubs / pubs	32%	34%
At a friend's / family member's house	7%	8%
At parties / social events	6%	6%
Restaurants	4%	4%
Outside – in parks etc	1%	2%
Base	9564	1031

The Big Drink Debate also queried what impact increased alcohol prices would have on the amount people drink. (See figure 3).

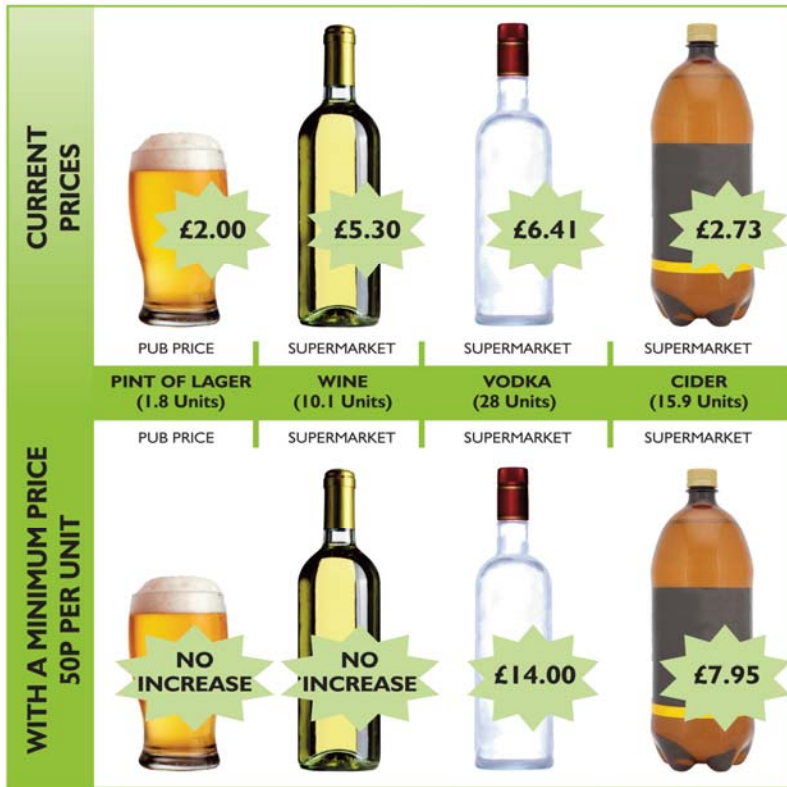
**Figure 3: What impact would the following have on the amount that you drink?**





- 8.1.12 This shows that 38% of residents in Sunderland felt that increased alcohol prices would reduce the amount of alcohol they drank either to some extent or to a large extent. Evidence that the Committee received from Balance also referenced a quote from the World Health Organisation Global Alcohol Strategy “Increasing the price of alcoholic beverage is one of the most effective interventions to reduce harmful use of alcohol.”
- 8.1.13 Members noted that on the 18<sup>th</sup> January 2011 a written ministerial statement was laid in the House of Commons. This announced the introduction of a ban on sales of alcohol below the rate of duty plus VAT. Within this statement the government acknowledged the growing concern over how cheaply some alcoholic drinks are being sold, and is itself concerned about the link between alcohol and crime and disorder - in many cases as a result of 'pre-loading' in preparation for a night out.
- 8.1.14 Members noted that there had been varying reactions to this statement with many Health Campaigners noting that this would not have any impact as in practice it would only mean that a 1 litre bottle of vodka could not be sold for less than £10.71 and a 440 ml can of lager could not be sold for less than 38p. There has however been support for this measure for example a representative from the Wine and Spirit Trade association described it as a 'pragmatic solution'
- 8.1.15 Members considered that in 2009 the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) for England recommended setting a minimum price for alcohol at 50p per unit. The CMO's report argued that the policy would target harmful binge drinking whilst the more moderate drinker would be unaffected.”

8.1.16 Members were interested to receive evidence on how this would impact on prices of alcohol on specific drinks. The evidence received from Balance is shown below in Figure 4 :



8.1.17 During the evidence gathering session with Bridget Phillipson MP, Members were informed that the issue of minimum pricing had been considered by the Home Affairs Section and reference was made to Local Authorities that were investigating how policies could be implemented at a local level.

8.1.18 Members were informed of a briefing paper completed by the Home Office<sup>5</sup> which identified two local authorities who had expressed an interest in setting a minimum price at a local level. The Association of Greater Manchester Authorities has given consideration to creating a Bye Law which would make it illegal to sell alcohol for less than 50p per unit across the region. In November the press noted that the plans in Manchester were on hold due to grounds of enforcement and legal challenge.

8.1.19 Middlesbrough Council has also attempted to deal with this issue through their Licensing Policy statement. The document states that action is needed as it does

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.parliament.uk/briefingpapers/commons/lib/research/briefings/snha-05021.pdf>

not consider the Governments proposals will tackle the cheap supermarket deals. Under the policy it states:

'9.24 The Licensing Authority will encourage all licensed premises to apply a minimum unit price of 50p to all alcoholic products sold under their premises license. (The unit pricing will be reviewed in line with National Guidance.) Where the premises are found to be selling alcohol below this price , and problems associated with that premises are in breach of the licensing objectives, a responsible authority or interested party may bring a review. Following the review, the Licensing Committee may impose a condition in relation to the pricing of alcohol, in order to uphold the licensing objectives.

The Licensing Authority will expect applicants to demonstrate in their operating schedule how the pricing of alcohol on sale in their premises will not negatively impact on the licensing objectives.'

- 8.1.20 The Home Office briefing paper explains that there have been suggestions in the Trade Press that actions of this type could be open to legal challenge and research commissioned by the European Commission notes that minimum pricing practices have tended to be seen as trade distorting by the European Courts and are therefore not typically put in place in the EU.
- 8.1.21 When considering evidence of the impact of the price of alcohol at a local level Members met with Licensing Officers from Northumbria Police and reference was made to a licensed premises in the city centre which had been experiencing problems but has managed to rectify these problems to win a Best Bar None award. Members were informed that raising the price of alcohol at this pub had contributed to improvements at the premises.
- 8.1.22 Members concluded that there was a great deal of evidence to suggest that the introduction of a minimum price per unit of alcohol would lead to people drinking less and that increases in alcohol prices tend to be associated with reductions in Crime. The balance of evidence tends to support an association between increasing alcohol price and decreasing levels of violence<sup>6</sup> Although not the only factor affecting levels of alcohol consumption it is certainly worthy of detailed consideration and debate.
- 8.1.23 Members noted that the importance of this issue must not be underestimated and efforts should be taken to monitor other authorities' introductions and opportunities explored to work with Balance on any further work in this area.

## **8.2 Performance against National and Local Indicators**

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<sup>6</sup> Home Office (2011) The likely impacts of increasing alcohol price: a summary review of the evidence base

- 8.2.1 Members considered performance against National and Local Indicators in the review. Members noted that a new performance framework was implemented during 2008/2009. This included 198 new National Indicators which replaced previous national performance frameworks. As part of this new framework 49 national indicators were identified as key priorities to be included in the Local Area Agreement (LAA). The LAA priorities have been a key consideration in CAA in terms of the extent to which the partnership is improving outcomes for local people. CAA was introduced in April 2009 to provide an independent assessment of how local public services are working in partnership to deliver outcomes for an area. However, the coalition government have abolished CAA with immediate effect. Progress in the LAA was continued to be monitored through 2010/11) through the Council and the Sunderland Partnership's performance management and reporting arrangements. Members noted that the performance framework will be reviewed when further national direction is available to ensure that it is fit for purpose.
- 8.2.2 The Safer Sunderland Partnership has a comprehensive performance framework to monitor performance against a range of national and local indicators relating to alcohol and violence. The three most prominent performance measures for this review are currently:
- a) NI 39 - Alcohol Related Hospital Admission Rates (this NI is managed by the Healthy Partnership but a report is also given to the Alcohol Delivery Group)
  - b) NI 20 - Assault with injury crime, which is monitored by the Violent Crime Delivery Group and;
  - c) Most Serious Violent Crime, also managed by this group.
- 8.2.3 Alcohol related hospital admissions in Sunderland remain on the increase with a rate per 100,000 of population of 2,604 reported for the 2009/10 period, against a target of 2207. This constitutes a 10% increase over 2008/9.
- 8.2.4 Members considered performance against these three indicators in December 2010, which showed the latest position of September 2010.
- 8.2.5 The number of serious acquisitive crimes per 1,000 population has improved when compared to the same period the previous year. From 5.40 per 1,000 population to 4.55 per 1,000 population, this represents an 18% reduction for the year to date from 1,842 to 1,514. The number of actual bodily harm crimes (assault with injury) per 1,000 of the population also improved when compared to the same period from the previous year. The rate was 3.92 per 1,000 population at end September 2009 and it has improved to 3.42 per 1,000 population at end September 2010. Based on current performance it is anticipated that the target of 8.67 per 1,000 population will be achieved.
- 8.2.6 Members noted that there has however, been a rise in the number of most serious violent crimes per 1,000 population from 0.32 per 1,000 to 0.42 per 1,000

population. Following the rise in most serious violent crimes, Operation Barracuda was developed by Northumbria Police and supported by the Council make additional visits to licensed premises to ensure they are adhering to their licensing standards. Enforcement action has also been taken where appropriate. Initiatives also include taxi marshalled ranks, Pubwatch, Street Pastors and Best Bar None.

8.2.7 Members considered that there were areas of performance that need to be improved and have considered some of the work being undertaken in the course of this review.

### **8.3 Preventative work to ensure a safe city centre**

#### **Marketing**

8.3.1 Members considered that marketing and communication activity is a vital tool in preventing violent crime by raising awareness of issues and helping people to take steps to ensure their own safety. This also helps to improve perceptions of safety. Members were informed that there are a number of initiatives being carried out by the Safer Sunderland Partnership (SSP) to help tackle alcohol related violence in the night time economy and improve feelings of safety.

8.3.2 Members were pleased to note the SSP does not just rely on recorded crime data to identify problems. It routinely carries out community engagement and survey work to identify local priorities, monitor changes in perceptions of crime, worry and feelings of safety and better understand what influences these perceptions. This data helps inform the work of the SSP's marketing and communication group.

8.3.3 Several interventions have been developed to address problems of alcohol related crime. All of them have been supported by the Marketing and Communications Group. The following is a list of the interventions that have been implemented:

- a) A personal safety campaign was developed and targeted at young women and girls
- b) Operation Barracuda was set up to tackle city centre violent crime. This was backed up by a strong marketing element (The difference between drink and drunk is U)
- c) New Drinking Banning Orders (DBOs) were introduced with the first two successful applications in July 2010. Again, these were backed up by strong local media coverage and posters

- d) The Best Bar None (BBN) scheme was re-launched citywide with 22 assessors (police, council and fire service) trained to assess premises against the BBN criteria. The Marketing and Communications group funded the promotion of the scheme to licensed premises and filmed it for SSPTV to show the positive outcomes
- e) Pubwatch continues and has also been filmed and promoted on SSPTV
- f) The 2 Taxi marshalled ranks at Green Terrance and Park Lane have been extended to also cover Monday nights. This scheme has also been filmed for SSPTV
- g) A World cup campaign on domestic violence was promoted during June and July 2010. This followed a 2 week long campaign on domestic violence in May 2010 in the Sunderland Echo
- h) A region wide rape campaign was developed by Northumbria, Cleveland and Durham Police forces and promoted locally
- i) The Street Pastors scheme went live on 16th July 2010. The scheme has already been filmed and promoted on SSPTV. The Marketing and Communications Group also funded some banners, calling cards, leaflets, flyers, posters and some equipment such (e.g. flip flops)
- j) An evaluation was carried out on the polycarbonate glasses pilot, funded by the Marketing Group and the positive outcomes were covered in the local media
- k) A series of Lock Em Inn leaflets were produced to raise awareness of the consequences of alcohol related crime and disorder. This was also filmed for SSPTV.

8.3.4 Members were also informed of two specific campaigns. The first campaign was Regarding Personal Safety and the Night Time Economy and was entitled "Keys, Money, Phone, Plans to Get Home" This personal safety campaign for the city centre was developed to improve feelings of safety and provide crime prevention advice on how to stay safe on a night out. It was launched in May 2010 and is being repeated

at key times during the year e.g. bank holidays weekends and Christmas/New Year.

The campaign had 3 communications objectives. These were to:

- a) Encourage the target audience to consider and think about their personal safety when planning a night out.
- b) Raise people's awareness about the ongoing work Northumbria Police and its partners are doing to tackle crime linked to the night time economy
- c) Promote standard advice and a safety slogan to the target audiences to reduce the risk to themselves of becoming a victim or perpetrator of crime linked to the night time economy

8.3.5 The second campaign was: Operation Barracuda to Tackle Alcohol Related Violence: "The Difference between Drink and Drunk is "U" Campaign

8.3.6 Throughout February and March 2010, a hard hitting police operation (Barracuda) focussed on license holders in the city. As well as carrying out additional joint visits to licensed premises, extra officers were on patrol to stamp down on crime and disorder linked to the night time economy. The Operation was hailed a success and now runs intermittently over weekends and focuses on hot spots right across Sunderland.

8.3.7 Operation Barracuda was backed up by a joint SSP and Northumbria Police Marketing and Communications campaign. The purpose was two fold:

- a) It provided a clear message that the police and partners were cracking down on drunken disorder in the city
- b) It also promoted the positive message that the SSP and Northumbria Police were working together to make Sunderland an even safer and enjoyable place to enjoy a night out.

8.3.8 The target audience for the campaign were people aged 18 to 30 coming into the city centre to enjoy a good night out in the pubs, clubs and bars. The campaign strapline was "The Difference between Drink and Drunk is U". The overall theme was that "we're working hard to make the city centre an even safer place to enjoy a night out –don't let being drunk ruin it for you.

The key messages were:

- a) Sunderland is a good, safe vibrant place to enjoy a night out

- b) Have fun but don't take it too far
- c) Excess drinking makes you more likely to commit offences
- d) Crime and disorder won't be accepted.

8.3.9 Members noted that the campaign costs for the additional activity funded through the SSP for the 'Keys, Money, Phone' campaign second campaign were £11,430 and the campaign has continued to run at key time throughout the year (e.g. bank holidays) since it was launched in March. This was a Sunderland specific campaign, rather than force wide. In comparison, the estimated social and economic cost of a single 'violence against the person' offence is £10,407 (this is based on 2003 figures from the Home Office). Members considered that the marketing activity was an important part of promoting a safe night time economy.

### **Best Bar None (BBN)**

8.3.10 Members were informed that BBN is a national award scheme supported by the Home Office and aimed at promoting responsible management and operation of alcohol licensed premises. It was piloted in Manchester in 2003 and found to improve standards in the night time economy. It has since been adopted by 100 towns and cities across the UK and is now being taken up internationally. The aim of BBN is to reduce alcohol related crime and disorder in a town centre by building a positive relationship between the licensed trade, police and local authorities. It reduced the harmful effects of binge drinking as well as improving the knowledge and skills of enforcement and regulation industries, licensees and bar staff to help them responsibly manage licensed premises.

8.3.11 Members noted that in Sunderland in 2009, fifteen Sunderland city centre licensed premises took part in the first Sunderland BBN scheme and thirteen premises received the highly acclaimed accreditation.

8.3.12 The aim of the Sunderland scheme is to work with the licensed trade to create a safer city centre for all and thus encourage even more visitors into the city centre by raising public awareness of the benefits of choosing well run license premises. Other partners include Northumbria Police, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue, Sunderland Council Licensing Team, Community Safety Partnership, City Centre Management and Pubwatch.

8.3.13 Members were informed that in the second year of BBN scheme, year two in Sunderland, has been extended to include all off licensed premises within the City as a whole with the aim of all partners continuing to work together to reduce the risk of alcohol related harm, disorder and crime by identifying and rewarding responsible operators and sharing good practice. In 2010 20 premises took part with 14 premises receiving accreditation. Members noted that there is an ongoing monitoring process following the accreditation.



- 8.3.14 The process for BBN includes assessing venues who have entered the scheme against a variety of categories which include how they manage the internal and external environment of the premises, their drink and drugs policy, crime prevention and emergency procedures. Applications are collated and venues receive an inspection visit from the Sunderland BBN team (trained to national standard) to assess their practices and policies.
- 8.3.15 Premises that meet the criteria will then be awarded 'Accredited' status and will be able to display the Best Bar None logo. This will show customers that they are socialising in a venue that is committed to their care and safety.
- 8.3.16 Members were impressed with the aims of the scheme and the partnership working that it promoted. Particular issues that the Committee had recognised as being important in addressing alcohol related violence are referred to in the BBN application form. For example how do the premises promote sensible drinking policies, do they have a staff training package with regard to drunkenness and how the premises ensure that under 18s do not consume alcohol from the bar. Members recognised the importance of this scheme and that it continues to develop and expand in order to make the night time economy even safer. Members considered that if more premises applied to the scheme that this would have an impact on the safety of the night time economy.
- 8.3.17 To gain a better understanding of what might encourage licensed premises to apply the Committee sought the views of licensees through their consultation, They found that those who did not apply for the status would like to have improved knowledge of the benefits of the scheme, more promotion and a shorter application form would encourage them to apply in the future.
- 8.3.18 Members also considered the Durham Best Bar None Scheme which has been recognised as good practice and found (information to be complete following meeting 1<sup>st</sup> March)

### **Pubwatch**

- 8.3.19 Members were informed that Pubwatch was originally set up in 1997 and its aim was to promote safety for customers, staff and the local community. All premises are linked together by a two way hand portable radio. This helps constant communications direct to the local police. Pubwatch Members meet regularly with the Police, City Centre Management, City Council and Apex to discuss ways of improving safety and sharing of information.
- 8.3.20 Members noted the main benefits of the scheme are that it is:
- a) A community based crime prevention scheme

- b) Organised by the licensees themselves to afford each other confidence and support, as well as some form of protection
- c) At its simplest, is a message-passing link between licensees, the object of which is to combat violence and other criminal conduct
- d) Provides better communication between licensees and police
- e) Provides a forum for the discussion and solution of problems relating to violence on licensed premises

8.3.21 Members noted that the Pubwatch scheme was considered to work based on police statistics show a significant decrease in violent offenders in pubs where Pubwatch is in operation. The rapid growth of the scheme also shows the value placed on Pubwatch by both the licensed trade and the Police.

8.3.22 Evidence from the consultation with Licensees shows that a high number of those who responded considered Pubwatch to be important in maintaining safety in Licensed Premises.

### **Taxi Marshals**

8.3.23 This service helps people get home safely from the city centre after a night out. It consists of three fully licensed and trained marshals being on duty at the taxi ranks on Green Terrace and West Street on Friday and Saturday nights. Funding for a pilot scheme on a Monday night is in place until March 2011. The Taxi Marshals job is to help keep the taxi queues moving, resolve any problems that might arise and ensure that all members of the public feel safe in and around the taxi ranks. The scheme is also monitored by the Council's Security and Licensing sections. In England, taxi ranks and bus stops are often key hotspots for violence, linked to long waiting times and competition for scarce resources<sup>7</sup>.

8.3.24 Members observed the scheme on the City Centre visits and noted the positive effect that it had on the management of the queues and feelings of safety in the City Centre. Taxi Marshals were identified as being the third most effective method of maintaining a safe environment outside of licensed premises from the consultation with licensees.

### **Door Staff**

8.3.25 Members considered the role of Door Staff in the night time economy. Members noted that the Security Industry Authority (SIA) will no longer be a Non-Departmental Public Body.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.cph.org.uk/showPublication.aspx?pubid=295>

- 8.3.26 One of the main duties of the SIA is the compulsory licensing of individuals working in specific sectors of the private security industry. An SIA licence is required if you undertake the licensable activities of a door supervisor. To apply for a front line door supervisor licence you must undertake an appropriate qualification and there is a cost to applying for a licence.
- 8.2.27 Members noted that the SIA will change from the current set up and that the government have asked the SIA to lead the security industry in setting up a new system of regulation and there will be no major changes before the London Olympics 2012. Members noted that the Government had made it clear that the private security industry in the UK will continue to be regulated. Until a new regulatory system is in place the current law will continue to apply.
- 8.3.28 Members have observed how crucial door staff are in the management of the night time economy and feel that the current system is working well. During the city centre visits with the Street Pastors Members were informed that the Street Pastors are linked with door staff via radio and often attend premises to provide assistance if there are any incidents. Members observed positive working relationships between the Street Pastors and the Door Staff during the visit with informal discussions occurring. Police also maintain positive relationships with the Door Staff and Members observed collaborative working during the City Centre visits with the police.
- 8.3.29 During the Consultation with Licensees a number also identified that although door staff were there primarily to deal with problems on the premises they could also assist with keeping areas outside of the premises safe. This could be by liaising with the police and other services. Discussion with the Chair of Pubwatch also supported these views.
- 8.3.30 Members also commented that door supervisors have undertaken training at cost and time to themselves and believe it will be appropriate to ensure that any future system to allow the transfer of qualifications.
- 8.3.31 Members feel that the current SIA regulation is working well and believe that if there are changes to be implemented then this needs to be monitored to ensure the service to the residents of Sunderland is still at a high standard. Members believe that this situation will need careful monitoring to ensure that the City of Sunderland responds effectively to these government proposals and that Door Staff in Sunderland are fully aware of the changes.

### **Street Pastors**

- 8.3.32 Members received evidence from the Street Pastors. A Street Pastor is a Church leader/minister or member with a concern for society. They help people who have

had too much to drink or who are left feeling vulnerable. Street Pastors regularly work with young people and are willing to engage people in a number of locations including the streets, in the pubs and clubs or at parties. Support provided can range from; practical help supplying flip flops or water, to support and guidance to those who are unable to look after themselves properly. The first 40 volunteers were officially recognised as Street Pastors by the Church in Sunderland Minster on Friday 9 July 2010. They are now on patrol in Sunderland city centre from 10pm until 4am on Friday, Saturday and Monday nights.

8.3.33 When the Committee received evidence from the Street Pastors in November 2010 they had given out 592 pairs of flip flops 144 bottles of water, picked up 907 glass bottles or glasses from the streets and administered first aid to 63 people.

8.3.34 Members were impressed with the work of the Street Pastors and arranged a subsequent visit to observe the work they do. Members on the visit considered that the Pastors had an excellent rapport with members of the public, door staff and police. Street Pastors are linked to door staff via radio which allows efficient responses to incidents at premises should the assistance of the Street Pastors be required.

8.3.35 Street Pastors are also willing to work with fellow activists, church and community leaders, and with agencies and projects, both statutory and voluntary, to look at collaborative ways of working on issues affecting youth, and initiatives that will build trust between them and the Street Pastors.

## **8.4 Early Intervention**

### ***Ensuring data sharing through partnership working***

8.4.1 Members noted that data collection and intelligence sharing are vitally important when tackling alcohol related violence. There are a number of potential data sources which could inform partnership working, which the Committee considered through the evidence gathering process.

### **The Cardiff Model**

8.4.2 Members received evidence regarding the implementation of the Cardiff Model in Sunderland which is an approach to reduce the levels of alcohol related violence. The Cardiff Model was developed from a dataset based upon a study carried out by Dr. Jonathan Shepherd in Cardiff, which looked into the effects of alcohol upon the night time economy, and also studied the numbers of alcohol related

assaults which present to Accident and Emergency Departments, and the best way to tackle this issue in order to drive down the number of presentations.

8.4.3 Members noted that in Sunderland the Cardiff Model has been implemented in the following way.

- a) On attendance patient is clerked into reception using HISS (Patient Administration System)
- b) Minimum Dataset is available as a screen built into HISS system and completed by reception staff if patient has suffered alcohol related assault. The data set is shown in figure 2.

The screenshot shows a window titled 'NEIL'S PC1.4 MIS (BALIVE.MIS(BALIVE.MIS/2105) - OWEN,NEIL'. Inside the window is a form titled 'View Customer Defined Screen'. The form contains the following fields:  
Incident Type: [text box]  
Assault Location: [text box]  
If other: [text box]  
Pub Name: [text box]  
Street: [text box]  
Locality: [text box]  
Town: [text box]  
County: [text box]  
Postcode: [text box]  
Inside/Outside Pub: [text box]  
Weapon used: [text box]  
Where was your last drink: [text box]  
Reported to Police:   
At the bottom of the form is an 'Options' dialog box with two buttons: '<Return>' and '<Exit>'. The window has a standard Windows-style title bar and a vertical toolbar on the right side.

- c) Data is shared on a two weekly basis with the Safer Sunderland Partnerships performance and information analysts
- d) Information is included on a monthly basis with the Police as part of their Tasking and Coordination Groups, particularly in relation to the Violent Crime Section
- e) When the information is of sufficient quality it will also be shared with Sunderland City Council's Trading Standards Department for licensing reviews

8.4.4 Members were informed that there are a number of benefits as a result of adopting the Cardiff Model including the following:

- a) Large numbers of violent offences which result in Emergency Department treatment are not reported to the police.
- b) Information about location and time of assaults, which can easily be collected in Emergency Departments can help police and local authorities target their resources much more effectively.

- c) Burdens on Emergency Departments can be reduced, particularly late at night at the weekend when services are stretched and alcohol-related disorder is commonplace, including in the Emergency Department itself.
- d) Involvement can help other agencies to realise the seriousness of violence from a health standpoint, particularly the numbers and seriousness of injury sustained.
- e) Legislation includes the NHS as a statutory partner in local crime prevention (e.g. Crime and Disorder Act 1998): emergency medicine is able to contribute a great deal in this context.
- f) Data sharing provides a new objective measure of community violence which helps the public, the police, local government and the Home Office to understand the true size of the problem. Emergency Department staff can facilitate increased reporting of violence to the police by those injured who are not in a position to report.

8.4.5 Members considered that the use of the Cardiff Model in Sunderland was a positive step in gaining a more complete picture of incidents of violence within Sunderland and enhancing the targeted intervention that takes place. Members noted that there were areas for improvement with the current system. This could include improving current data quality, to access to additional data from Walk-In Centres across the City to improve intelligence and to help identify hot spots for alcohol related disorder. Members noted that often people might use the walk in centres the following day and so this would provide an additional tool for identifying hotspot areas.

### **Neighbourhood Helpline**

8.4.6 Members were informed that in June 2006, the Northumbria Partnership launched a Home Office funded initiative, the 101 Non Emergency Helpline. Sunderland was one of 14 partners involved in the initiative along with other Local Authorities and the Police. In March 2008, the Home Office withdrew the funding for the initiative. Two of the partners, Sunderland and Newcastle decided to continue what had become, a very successful Helpline. On 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008, a new 'It's your Service Partnership' was formed and the 101 service transitioned into the 'Neighbourhood Helpline'. The Helpline is delivered in partnership by Sunderland and Newcastle City Councils.

8.4.7 The Neighbourhood Helpline operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year with Customer Service Advocates trained to handle a range of enquiries and requests for service. During the last financial year 2009/10, there were a total of 33,564 calls to the Helpline, an average of 92 calls per day.

8.4.8 All requests for service are logged immediately onto the Customer Contact System and referred to Service Delivery Teams within relevant Departments.

8.4.9 Members were informed that reports are also produced directly from the system with data utilised to inform specific courses of action. For example, the Assistant Head of Streetscene takes relevant data along to the Responsible Authority Group, a multi-disciplinary team of officers who discuss issues of mutual concern relating to licensed premises. Members were pleased that such processes were in place but were aware that there had been instances where members of the public had called the Neighbourhood Helpline and the information had not been shared with the police. The task and finish meeting with licensing officers from Northumbria Police also revealed that information from the Neighbourhood Helpline was not routinely shared with them.

8.4.10 Members would like to see process reviewed to ensure all data is appropriately recorded and shared with the police and other relevant agencies.

### **Alcohol Treatment Programmes**

8.4.11 As violent incidents are often associated with those who are drinking excessive amounts Members explored the Sunderland's approach to alcohol treatment programmes. The Director of Public Health and Joint Commissioning Officer from NHS South of Tyne provided evidence regarding this.

8.4.12 .As there is no central government funded budget it has been left to local NHS services to deliver alcohol interventions within their own budgets. NHS South of Tyne made an annual recurrent investment and £2.6 million for the development of alcohol treatment services in Sunderland. This has brought about a comprehensive range of services with the overall aim of reducing alcohol related harm. The key national indicator used to measure this is NI39. Although national monitoring of this target has been discontinued, NHS South of Tyne will continue to measure effectiveness at a local level using this.

8.4.13 Members noted that NHS South of Tyne and Wear has worked in partnership with agencies including Sunderland City Council, City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust, Northumbria Police, Northumbria Probation Service and Sunderland Supporting People to ensure a more responsible and responsive approach to tackling alcohol related harm. Services are commissioned in line with the Department of Health Models of Care for Alcohol Misusers and are based around a four tiered framework.

#### **8.4.14 Tier 1**

##### Brief Intervention Training

Brief Intervention training programmes have been commissioned to provide training to non specialist professionals and voluntary sector and community organisations to enable them to screen and offer brief interventions to those that have been identified as using alcohol in a hazardous way. The training also

provides information about specialist services in Sunderland so that participants sign post individuals who they feel may be displaying signs of risky drinking. One hundred training places have been commissioned annually.

### Alcohol Grants

The Safe, Sensible Social Small Grant Scheme was implemented in October 2008. The fund is to assist the voluntary and community sector to be innovative in seeking ideas for projects and activities that help alleviate alcohol related issues. The grant scheme has been successful in targeting groups from BME communities that wouldn't necessarily access mainstream services and educating them on the harms associated with alcohol misuse.

## 8.4.15 Tier 2

### Community Integration Team

NECA (the North East Council on Addictions) have been commissioned to deliver community integration interventions for those service users coming to the end of their treatment programmes who have successfully completed treatment and are looking to rebuild their lives in their local communities. The service offers help and support on education, training and employment as well as getting service users involved in leisure, community groups and exploring personal interests.

### Housing

Supporting People have been commissioned to support individuals with alcohol issues to gain access to appropriate housing. Brief Intervention and housing support workers have been recruited to work within various projects including NECA floating support, the Housing Options Team and Wearside Women in Need. The aim of these services is to address alcohol issues alongside housing support to maximise the chances of successful tenancy orders. Additionally, £20,000 has been allocated for a Housing Bond Scheme to fund access to the private rented sector for service users identified as having a housing need and an alcohol issue.

### Hospital Project

The Hospital Liaison Project, based at Sunderland Royal Hospital, has been in operation since 2006. The recent investment from NHS SoTW has allowed the project to be mainstreamed and substantially enhanced.

It currently operates with three full time members of staff hosted within the Turning Point Engaging and Motivating Team. The workers offer screening and brief interventions to those individuals that have had an alcohol related admission to hospital. The service also offers initial assessment and referral into structured



treatment for those requiring additional support. They are based in the Accident and Emergency Department and offer services during standard working hours.

Funding has also been made available to employ a Young People's Brief Intervention worker to target younger binge drinkers. This part of the service is also undergoing re-design to strengthen its links into other specialist wards and offer extended hours to cover evenings and weekends.

A specialist Gastroenterology Nurse has also been appointed to work with chronic drinkers both within the hospital and in the community to offer interventions that will reduce the necessity for some alcohol-related hospital admissions. This role has been recruited from within the Foundation Trust to coincide with best practice models nationally.

In support of the project a data analyst has been recruited within the Foundation Trust. The role includes the daily review of all alcohol related attendances and enables the identification of a cohort of repeat attendees that could be targeted with appropriate interventions. It also supports the implementation of the Cardiff Model in Sunderland by handling the collation of data concerning alcohol related violence and subsequent liaison with the Safer Sunderland Partnership.

### NERAF

The North East Regional Alcohol Forum is an independent peer support charity for people wishing to recover from, or suspecting they may have an alcohol misuse problem. The service offers support groups and a 1-to-1 mentoring service run by people who have previously experienced alcohol related problems.

### **Tier 3**

#### Criminal Justice

The Alcohol Treatment Requirement (ATR) is a court order aimed at reducing alcohol related offending. It provides mandated access to a tailored treatment programme with the aim of reducing drink dependency linked to violent offences. The requirement can last between six months and three years.

The ATR model currently commissioned in Sunderland comprises of a Probation Officer and a Probation Support Officer who are the offender managers for the ATR. Additionally, two workers have been employed by DISC (Developing Initiatives Supporting Communities) to deliver a range of psychosocial interventions including 1 to 1 support sessions, group work, motivational interviewing and relapse prevention. A specialist nurse has also been allocated to the ATR team to offer testing and community detoxification or inpatient detoxification if required.

## Counted4 CIC

Funding has been made available for the sustainability of existing nursing, detoxification and support staff within Counted4. Nursing capacity has also been increased within the service to ensure there is appropriate resource for people requiring specialist alcohol interventions within the community.

## Oaktrees

Oaktrees is a community rehabilitation service based within Gateshead but accessible for service users across the North East region on a spot purchase basis. The programme offered is a structured 12 step programme based upon a recovery model of abstinence and links into mutual aid groups such as AA and NA across the City of Sunderland.

## **Tier 4**

### Inpatient Detoxification

There has been funding allocated for inpatient detoxification within the Huntercombe Centre. A care co-ordinator has also been commissioned from within the Adult Services Drug and Alcohol Team to organise access to this intervention.

### Residential Rehabilitation

Residential Rehabilitation is made available via spot purchase arrangements and placements can be made wherever appropriate facilities for the client can be sourced.

Members were pleased with the investment in services and considered that the four tiered model addressed the wide variety of needs that service users might have.

## **8.5 Enforcement activity**

### **Northumbria Police Operations**

8.5.1 Members received information on a number of key operations employed by Northumbria Police to tackle alcohol violence and the night time economy.

- a) Operation Barracuda  
Throughout February and March 2010, a hard hitting police operation focussed on license holders in the city. As well as carrying out additional

visits to licensed premises, extra officers were on patrol to stamp down on crime and disorder linked to the night time economy.

The operation resulted in 121 licensed premises visited within Sunderland Area Command, predominantly within the City Centre, Coalfields and Washington areas. Operation Barracuda also involved agencies such as the Border Agency, Trading Standards, and Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service.

The Operation was hailed a success and now runs intermittently over weekends.

b) Operation Calculate

Inspections were carried out under Operation Barracuda identified premises where under 18s were found within the premises consuming alcohol.

As a result of Operation Barracuda, evidence was gathered with regard to under 18s on licensed premises. An operation was instigated using young persons to undertake test purchases of alcohol. The test purchasing resulted in prosecutions.

All premises identified as selling to the Test Purchase Operatives have attended Gillbridge Police Station to be given guidance and advice on how to make sure it doesn't happen again. Premises concerned were given a formal warning.

c) Operation Jaws

Research has revealed a potentially dangerous interaction between cocaine and alcohol when taken together. The two drugs are converted by the body into a third drug named cocaethylene. Side effects of this drug include an increase in aggressive and risk taking behaviour.

Operation Jaws consists of a Sergeant and Police Constables visiting licensed premises in the City Centre to support door supervisors in preventing use of illicit drugs on licensed premises. The operation also allows Police Inspectors to test for drugs on arrest.

d) Operation Guardian

The key focus of this operation is to provide engagement and reassurance via officers on foot during the main periods of the night time economy at key identified points. The primary objective is early intervention through a firm, friendly policing style.

8.5.2 Members noted high visibility policing campaigns are widely recognised as being successful in preventing incidents of violence and are referred to in the Practical guide for preventing and dealing with alcohol related problems by the Home

Office. Members were pleased to note that there were a number of operations in the City with preventative and enforcement objectives. During the City Centre visits with the police Members observed the policing that happens in Sunderland City Centre.

8.5.3 Members highlighted the importance of continued joint working between the police and local authority with regard to these operations, especially over the coming months when resources may be stretched.

8.5.4 Members were also pleased to note from their Consultation that Licensees rated the relationship between themselves and the police and Local Authority as positive.

### **Licensing and the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill**

8.5.6 At the onset of the review members noted the importance that licensing policy and enforcement could have on alcohol related violence. Members initially had concerns over powers that Members of the Licensing Committee had to reject licenses.

8.5.7 Members were informed that currently the Licensing Authority is obliged to grant a licence unless there is an objection. If there is an objection from an interested party or responsible authority there will be a sub-committee hearing. Rejection of a licence application is usually a last resort as there is the opportunity to add conditions to the final licence.

8.5.8 Residents are able to object to a licence but will need evidence to support their objection. The police also need evidence to support any objection they make. Objections must be relevant to the Licensing Act and issues such as parking and the 'need' for a new premises are not considered relevant objections.

8.5.9 There is a Responsible Authorities Group which meets on a regular basis to discuss any issues around particular premises.

8.5.10 Members acknowledged that it is difficult for members of the public to successfully object to a licence being granted and Members noted that this may lead to a sense of apathy with the public. If premises fail to comply with the conditions of the license this is considered an offence. In most instances premises comply with requests and prosecution is a last resort.

8.5.11 Throughout the course of the review the coalition government produced the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill. Part 2 of the Bill includes a number of changes to the Licensing Act 2003. One area that could potentially have an impact

is the lowering evidential burden which is referred to in Clauses 109-111 of the Bill:

to require licensing authorities to take steps which are “appropriate” for the promotion of Licensing objectives in place of “necessary.” Members noted that further guidance may be required regarding the practical implications of the use of the word appropriate.

8.5.12 During the evidence gathering session with Bridget Phillipson MP it was highlighted that a number of introductions and omissions in the Bill that were being debated. These include:

- a) Late Night Levy and the proposed split between the Police and the Local Authority being 70/30 respectively.
- b) The removal of the test of vicinity and whether this may lead to frivolous complaints. It was highlighted that there will be situations when residents who were not considered to live in the vicinity will have legitimate cause to make representations.
- c) The absence of Public Health as a fifth licensing objective. This is not currently in the Bill and there has been discussion regarding the need for this.

8.5.13 Members have given consideration to other aspects of the Bill including Early Morning Restriction Orders (EMROs). A similar amendment to the 2003 Licensing Act was proposed previously but was not commenced. The previous proposals would have applied to the period 3am-6am but the Bill’s proposals relate to the period 12am-6am. They allow licensing authorities to decide the hours they would like premises to be open in support of the promotion of the licensing objectives.

8.5.14 During the City Centre visit Members were informed by Police Officers that in Sunderland some premises have extended their licensing hours beyond 3:00am and this has caused issues with regard to the policing of the night-time economy. Due to shift patterns a number of police officers finish their shift at 3:00am leaving a smaller number to deal with problems after this time. Options have been explored with regard to changing shift patterns however, none have been viable. It was considered that if all premises were to close by 3:00am this would significantly improve the policing of the night time economy.

8.5.15 Through the Consultation with Licensees, Members noted that when asked views regarding the impact of later licensing hours the majority of those who responded to the question felt that there had been a negative impact. Observations included people entering the city centre at a later time than under previous licensing hours and many individuals are consuming a large amount of alcohol at home prior to entering the City Centre. When members met with the

Chair of Pubwatch she explained this was an issue of concern for a number of premises and late opening would not necessarily increase trade as the premises often don't get busy until later on in the evening.

- 8.5.16 The Bill is currently at Committee Stage in Parliament, however Members considered the merits of exploring the option of a voluntary agreement whereby licensed premises agree to an earlier terminal hour. This would allow for a scheme to have a more immediate impact. Members considered that the Pubwatch scheme would provide an ideal forum for this. Members were of the view that any agreement should take into account all of the views of those effected.
- 8.5.17 Members will also be interested to monitor the effect that the amendments to the Licensing Act 2003 will have on licensing within Sunderland.
- 8.5.18 Members also noted that along with the joint operations with the police highlighted above trading standards also carried out a number of test purchasing operations. Members were informed that the under 18s carrying out test purchases are always accompanied by a member of Trading Standards staff. They are asked to attempt to buy a typical young person's choice of drink e.g. lambrini, alcopops.
- 8.5.19 There have been recent test purchases at 38 off-licences, of which 15 sales were made to under 18s. When under age sales are made the Police give out fixed penalty notices. Trading Standards always return to off-licences that have sold to under 18s within the next 3 months to ensure they do not continue selling to children.
- 8.5.20 Members were informed that the trading standards team are trying to encourage off-licences to operate a Challenge 25 policy. This would allow test purchases by people over 18 which is an easier technique as a Member of staff does not have to be sent in with the young person. Members considered this was a positive step in tackling issues of underage drinking.

### **Drinking Banning Orders (DBO'S)**

- 8.5.21 Members noted that DBO's are Civil Orders that can be sought by various authorities such as the police, transport police and local authorities in England and Wales. They are a power that can be used to target those who abuse alcohol to the extent that it leads to alcohol related crime and disorder. DBO's can result in an individual being banned from pubs, clubs and bars in defined areas. They can also restrict the individual from drinking in a public place and entering any premises which sells alcohol.
- 8.5.22 DBO's can be pursued within the following category of offences:  
Public Order Offences

Criminal Damage  
Minor and Serious Assaults  
Violent Offences: and  
Traffic Offences

- 8.5.23 The Chief Officer of a Police Force, Chief Constable for British Transport or a local authority can make an application for a DBO. This is known as a DBO on application. At present in Sunderland an application must make an application to the Court to impose a DBO. Members noted that there was a cost associated with this and the issue of officer time.
- 8.5.24 There is an alternative method of imposing a DBO and this is known as a DBO on conviction. This does not require the Local Authority to make an application to the Court. The Police will instruct the Crown Prosecution Service in those cases where there is merit to a DBO being attached to the offence being pursued in Court. The court will determine whether the offence was committed by the person under the influence of alcohol based on the circumstances of each individual case. If the court decides not to impose a DBO it must give it's reason in open court.
- 8.5.25 Members were informed that while DBOs on application have been introduced nationally, DBO's on conviction have been introduced in 25 local justice areas across the country. Sunderland is not included in the 25 areas at this stage.
- 8.5.26 Members were also informed of Drinking Banning Orders warning letter can be sent to those people who have been arrested by Northumbria Police for certain offences relating to criminal or disorderly conduct whilst under the influence of alcohol. Members considered that this warning letter would be a successful way of bringing to peoples attention that their behaviour will not be tolerated.
- 8.5.27 Members concluded that DBO's are an important tool in tackling alcohol related violence and considered that efforts could be made to establish if Sunderland could be an area where Drinking Banning Orders can be imposed on conviction.

## **8.6 Support for Victims and Intervention work with Offenders**

### **Victims**

- 8.6.1 During the consideration of evidence. Members recognised the importance of not forgetting the victim especially in the incidents of violent crime when the impact can be severe.
- 8.6.2 Members received information from Victim Support which is a National Charity giving free and confidential help to victims of crime, witnesses, their family and anyone else affected by crime

- 8.6.3 Victim Support Sunderland work to help support the victims of crime. In doing so, they work closely with key partners such as the Council, housing providers and Northumbria Police.
- 8.6.4 As well as providing practical and emotional support to victims, they also help access better security measures, deal with insurance markets, liaise with the police and other agencies, help in applying for criminal insurance compensation and provide support throughout the court or criminal justice process. The service is free and confidential and users of the service do not have to report crime to the police.
- 8.6.5 Victim support provides help and guidance for victims of crime in relation to alcohol issues and gives advice on safe, sensible drinking
- 8.6.6 Members were pleased to hear the work victim support were undertaking and noted that there were also a number of other voluntary organisations providing support to victims of crime.

### **Work with Offenders**

- 8.6.7 A representative from the Probation Service attended the Committee to provide Members with further information regarding work with Offenders. Members were informed that two Probation Offender Managers were co-located at Bridge House in central Sunderland with 3 treatment staff. The team's initial target was to work with a minimum 70 offenders per year to address their alcohol misuse where their offending was violent and alcohol was a major contributory factor in their offending.
- 8.6.8 This group of staff has since become part of the larger IOM (Integrated Offender Management) Team.
- 8.6.9 Referrals to the team come from colleagues in the Turning Point team based at Gillbridge Police Station and probation colleagues in Sunderland. Offenders are approached at various stages prior to sentencing. They are asked to work through a short (20 questions) screening tool called Audit. Audit is a World Health Organisation devised screening tool.
- 8.6.10 Members were informed that those who score under the Alcohol Treatment Requirement threshold of 20 points fall into the categories of "hazardous" (score of 8—15) or harmful (score 16—19) drinkers: They will typically be referred into contact with NECA, NERAF, Turning Point etc. either on a voluntary basis, or as



part of a Court Order supervised by probation staff working from Hendon, Pennywell/Southwick or Houghton le Spring teams.

- 8.6.11 Offenders who have committed a violent offence and score 20+ points on the Audit screening are “flagged up” for the more intensive Alcohol Treatment Requirement. Close collaboration with Turning Point staff and colleagues in Probation teams allowsthe team to identify and assess such individuals at various stages prior to sentencing. DISC, a drug and alcohol treatment provider, and probation staff jointly assess offenders to gauge their suitability for an ATR and to put forward a comprehensive package of treatment and support.
- 8.6.12 Most ATR’s are made for an initial period of 6 months but the intervention can be made for up to 3 years. The ATR forms part of an over-arching Court Order and obliges the offender to:-
- a) “Submit to treatment by or under the direction of a specified person.....with a view to the reduction or elimination of the offender’s dependence on alcohol.
  - b) Each offender has to consent to the making of the ATR and to agree to the treatment plan which the team puts before the Court.
- 8.6.13 Members noted that typically the Court Order will combine a Supervision requirement with an Alcohol Treatment Requirement and an Accredited Programme Requirement (for example, ASRO – Addressing Substance Related Offending). Some offenders have committed offences of domestic abuse and they would be expected to attend the Community Domestic Violence accredited programme.
- 8.6.14 These elements of the Order are all supervised and compliance is rigorously enforced by probation staff working jointly with the Courts.
- 8.6.15 DISC staff add value to this process through the delivery of a treatment plan. Typically this begins with one to one brief intervention sessions to help the offender begin to safely reduce their drinking to less harmful levels. Work continues to stabilise their drinking and to help them establish a greater degree of equilibrium in their day to day life.
- 8.6.16 Each client is assessed for either community based or residential alcohol detoxification; Counted 4 takes the clinical lead in this part of the process and the community-based detoxifications. A small number of bed spaces are funded at the Huntercombe Centre for residential detoxifications; the adult Drug and Alcohol team take responsibility for allocating funding for this resource, following a comprehensive assessment.

- 8.6.17 When a point of stability is reached, clients begin work with DISC and the Structured Day care Programme. One to one work and group work sessions based on evidence- based therapeutic models aim to rebuild the persons ability to manage their life with reduced alcohol use or abstinence.
- 8.6.18 Members noted that the focus is on understanding what triggers alcohol misuse and on learning to manage these factors. Offenders work on strengthening their own innate personal resources to overcome the personal, social and lifestyle factors that have led to the imbalance in their use of alcohol. Counselling and support run alongside this work , as do sessions on relapse prevention and a programme of community reintegration. Links are also made to community facilities that can provide ongoing support in developing a more “mainstream” lifestyle once the intensive period of the ATR is complete.
- 8.6.19 The Unit is in its second year of operation and has observed a positive level of compliance with the ATRs. It is difficult to extrapolate meaningful arrest / conviction data over such a short period of time, but initial data from the police on a limited cohort shows a steady reduction in arrest data. Some offenders who might otherwise have served prison sentences have been successfully engaged in this disposal and very few of our clients have been seen again due to further offending.
- 8.6.20 Members concluded the importance of working with offenders to reduce the chance of them reoffending and considered that there is a comprehensive programme in place to enable them to do this.

### ***Conclusions***

### ***Recommendations***

### ***Acknowledgments***