

## CABINET MEETING – 16 JANUARY 2013

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

**Title of Report:**

National Minimum Price of Alcohol Consultation

**Author(s):**

Deputy Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executive and Director of Public Health

**Purpose of Report:**

The report seeks Cabinet's agreement to respond to the Government consultation on the national minimum price level of the unit cost of alcohol, as part of a consultation on the National Alcohol Strategy.

**Description of Decision:**

Cabinet is recommended to:

- a) Respond to the Government consultation on the National Alcohol Strategy indicating its support for the establishment of a Minimum Unit Price for alcohol in the range of 50 – 60p
- b)

**Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework?      \*Yes**

**If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework**

**Suggested reason(s) for Decision:**

To provide a response to the Government consultation on the national alcohol strategy indicating its support for the establishment of a Minimum Unit Price (MUP) for alcohol in order to generate better health and wellbeing and community safety outcomes.

**Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:**

**Do Nothing:** The Council could decide not to support a minimum unit price for alcohol. However, a letter indicating regional support for a minimum unit price has already been submitted on behalf of the North East local authorities by ANEC and as such this option is not recommended.

**Support a MUP, but not to provide an opinion as to the level of pricing:** This is not recommended as significant evidence exists on the impact of specific MUP levels to support a decision.

**Support the proposals in the Home Office consultation of a 45p MUP:** This is not recommended as it would have a lower impact on crime and disorder figures and on the health and wellbeing of Sunderland residents than 50-60p rate. It would also reduce the impact of the regional minimum 50p campaign and further consideration would also need to be given to cross-border purchases if a MUP below that proposed for Scotland (50p) is set.

**Impacts considered and documented:**

Equality  Y Privacy  Y Sustainability  Y Crime and Disorder  Y

**Is this a “Key Decision” as defined in the Constitution?** No

**Is it included in the 28 Day Notice of Decisions?** No

**Scrutiny Committee**

**NATIONAL MINIMUM PRICE OF ALCOHOL CONSULTATION**

**REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE, ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

**1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The report seeks Cabinet's agreement to respond to the Government consultation on the national minimum price level of the unit cost of alcohol, as part of a consultation on the National Alcohol Strategy.

**2.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE DECISION (RECOMMENDATIONS)**

- 2.1 Cabinet is recommended to:
- a) Respond to the Government consultation on the National Alcohol Strategy indicating its support for the establishment of a Minimum Unit Price for alcohol in the range of 50 – 60p.

**3.0 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 When the National Alcohol Strategy was launched by the Government in March 2012, it stated it would introduce a MUP for alcohol as one of the measures to reduce the availability of cheap alcohol and reduce consumption by linking the price of alcohol to its strength. A consultation on a MUP of 45p was launched on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2012 and runs until 6<sup>th</sup> February 2013.
- 3.2 A MUP at a slightly higher level of 50p is supported by the British Medical Association, the Association of Chief Police Officers, Alcohol Concern and Balance (the regional alcohol office) as they believe this level would impact more significantly on alcohol consumption and generate better health and wellbeing and community safety outcomes. This view is echoed by the Sunderland Director of Public Health.

**6.0 REASON FOR THE DECISION**

- 6.1 To provide a response to the Government consultation on the national alcohol strategy indicating its support for the establishment of a Minimum Unit Price (MUP) for alcohol in order to generate better health and wellbeing and community safety outcomes..

**7.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 7.1 Cabinet could make a decision not to support a minimum unit price for alcohol. However, a letter indicating regional support for a minimum unit price has already been submitted on behalf of the North East local authorities by ANEC and as such this option is not recommended.

- 7.2 Cabinet could make a decision to support a MUP, but not to provide an opinion as to the level of pricing. This is not recommended as significant evidence exists on the impact of specific MUP levels to support a decision.
- 7.3 Cabinet could support the proposals in the Home Office consultation of a 45p MUP. This is not recommended as it would have a lower impact on crime and disorder figures and on the health and wellbeing of Sunderland residents. It would also reduce the impact of the regional minimum 50p campaign and further consideration would need to be given to cross-border purchases if a MUP below that proposed for Scotland (50p) is set.

## 8.0 IMPACT ANALYSIS

**Equalities** – MUP is a targeted measure and is estimated to affect harmful drinkers and those who generally consume cheap alcohol. It would affect moderate drinkers in a minor way (under a minimum price of 50p per unit a moderate drinker would spend an extra 25p a week on alcohol)

**Crime and Disorder** – It is anticipated that the introduction of a MUP would impact positively on crime and disorder.

**Privacy** – there are no privacy impacts identified

**Sustainability** – MUP will provide long term and sustainable improvements around health, economic and crime conditions in Sunderland, regionally and nationally

## 9.0 RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

- 9.1 At its meeting in October 2012, the Safer Sunderland Partnership (SSP) Board confirmed its commitment to supporting MUP as have the Adults Partnership Board and Children's Trust.
- 9.2 Balance is seeking support across the region for a 50p MUP and is asking key partners and key strategic partnerships to respond. This would include the SSP, Health and Wellbeing Board, Adults Partnership Board and Children's Trust.

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

§ Home Office Alcohol Strategy Consultation  
<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/about-us/consultations/alcohol-consultation/>