

Briefing Note for Scrutiny

Alcohol Action Plan

As the alcohol action plan is so broad we have decided initially to concentrate on two key projects:

1. Early Intervention/Prevention Project in Schools

The aim is to secure support for the introduction of a comprehensive prevention and education programme within some or all of the Secondary Schools within Newcastle Borough. A key component of this is to refresh the Personal, Social, Health and Education agenda within Schools ensuring that alcohol and drugs education cross cuts throughout the whole curriculum.

Currently two secondary schools have signed up to be early implementers with a further 2 middle and secondary schools willing to take part.

The Education Transformation Team (ETT) has been awarded the contract to initiate this programme of change.

Currently over 40 front line Learning Support Families First staff have been trained up to deliver the resources within the Schools.

Current internal developments

Staffs County Council via the Alcohol Change Lead have asked Districts to lead on this project.

This project was articulated both verbally and in a written report to the Partnership Delivery Group (PDG) on 1st November. The PDG are considering the projects but require more information/clarity from the Alcohol Change Lead at Staffs County Council who has been invited to the next meeting to answer questions.

2. Strengthening families programme

This project covers ages from 10 to 14 and looks to prevent and deter a number of issues such as anti-social behaviour, substance misuse, alcohol fuelled violence and domestic abuse. It is a prelude to the Troubled Families agenda which focuses on intervention after the event has occurred. Although this project has been driven by Staffs County Council the Alcohol Change Lead has asked each District to take some local governance over this project.

Current progress: Learning Support Teams have been engaged, training has been delivered, extra funding is being sought, and a course approach with looked after children and parents with drug issues are being formulated.

Current internal developments

As with the previous project the Strengthening Families project was articulated both verbally and in a written report to the Partnership Delivery Group (PDG) on 1st November. The PDG are considering the projects but require more information/clarity from the Alcohol Change Lead at Staffs County Council who has been invited to the next meeting to answer questions.

East Cheshire alcohol pricing update

Regarding the East Cheshire pricing work my understanding was that their plans were being put on hold pending the Government taking forward primary legislation, which they had been campaigning for very strongly as the panacea. The introduction of a nationwide approach towards minimum unit pricing overcomes some of the challenges associated with 'border' areas etc.

As I recall, at the time they felt there was little point in spending money and effort trying to introduce something that would happen anyway and there were some benefits in someone else taking responsibility. However, if following consultation, the government choose not to pursue this then they would still be able to pick up from where they left off. I am not sure whether this was their 'formal' position as I don't think it had gone to their partnership board.

Trevor Smith
Community Safety Officer