Notice of Meeting and Agenda
Renfrewshire Licensing Forum

Date	Time	Venue
Monday, 22 April 2024	14:00	Remotely via MS Teams,

MARK CONAGHAN
Head of Corporate Governance

Membership

Colin Dickson; Margaret Dymond; Fiona Hewitt; Shirley McLean; Donna Reid; Ian Robertson.

Further Information - online meetings only

This meeting is on-line only. A copy of the agenda and reports for this meeting will be available online at http://renfrewshire.cmis.uk.com/renfrewshire/CouncilandBoards.aspx

For further information, please email democratic-services@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Items of business

Apologies

Apologies from members.

Declarations of Interest and Transparency Statements

Members are asked to declare an interest or make a transparency statement in any item(s) on the agenda and to provide a brief explanation of the nature of the interest or the transparency statement.

1 **Election of Convener**

2a **Minute of Previous Meeting** **4 - 6**

Minute of meeting held on 27 November 2023.

2b **Note of Inquorate Meeting** **7 - 7**

Note of Inquorate Meeting - 19 February 2024.

3 **Matters Arising**

Matters arising from the Minute of the previous meeting held on 27 November 2023.

4 **Police Scotland Update** **8 - 8**

Report by Police Scotland.

5 **Licensing Standards Officer Update** **9 - 9**

Report by Licensing Standards Officer.

6 **Health and Wellbeing Update - Work in Schools**

Update by Development Officer - Health and Wellbeing.

7 **Renfrewshire Licensing Board - Festive Hours Policy** **10 - 10**

Report by Clerk to Licensing Board - Festive Hours 2023/24

Discussion on Festive Hours 2024/25.

8 **Alcohol Focus Scotland** **11 - 41**

Alcohol Focus Scotland Newsletters:-

November 2023
January 2024
February 2024
March 2024

9 Date of Next Meeting

Members are requested to note that the next meeting of the Renfrewshire Licensing Forum is scheduled to be held on 16 September 2024.

Minute of Meeting
Joint Renfrewshire Licensing Forum and Licensing Board.

Date	Time	Venue
Monday, 27 November 2023	14:00	Council Chambers and Hybrid,

Present

D Edmonds, (Renfrewshire Alcohol & Drug Partnership); Sergeant I Robertson (Police Scotland); F Hewitt, Development Officer - Health and Wellbeing (Children's Services); C Dickson, Licensing Standards Officer and J Hampsay, Fair Trading Officer (both Environment, Housing & Infrastructure); and M Dymond (all Renfrewshire Licensing Forum).

Councillor McEwan; Councillor Gray; Councillor MacFarlane; Councillor McDonald; and Councillor Paterson (all Renfrewshire Licensing Board).

In Attendance

C Young and S McFarlane, both Fair Trading Officers (Environment, Housing & Infrastructure); R Graham, Senior Solicitor (Litigation & Regulatory Services), E Currie, Senior Committee Services Officer and D Cunningham, Committee Services & Licensing Officer (all Finance & Resources).

Apologies

Councillors Campbell, Leishman, and Steel and T Mills.

Declarations of Interest and Transparency Statements

There were no declarations of interest or transparency statements intimated prior to the commencement of the meeting.

Resignation

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, members were advised that Mr Mills had resigned as a member of the Renfrewshire Licensing Forum.

1 **Election of Chair**

It was noted that in terms of the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 the Forum must elect one of its members to Chair the meeting. Councillor MacFarlane, seconded by C Dickson, moved M Dymond. There being no other nominations, M Dymond assumed the Chair.

DECIDED: That M Dymond chair this meeting.

2 **Minute**

There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Renfrewshire Licensing Forum held on 11 September 2023.

DECIDED: That the Minute be approved.

3 **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

DECIDED: That it be noted that there were no matters arising.

4 **Police Scotland Update**

Sergeant Robertson, Police Scotland provided a verbal update on local licensing issues which had arisen during the period 1 January to 27 November 2023.

He advised that Police Scotland had attended 249 incidents; carried out 412 proactive visits to licensed premises and were involved in licensing campaigns, such as Pubwatch and Talk To.

DECIDED: That the update be noted.

5 **Licensing Standards Officer Update**

C Dickson, Licensing Standards Officer (LSO) provided a verbal update relative to licensing activity undertaken since 11 September 2023.

The LSO provided information on the number of licensed premises in the Renfrewshire area with a breakdown of on and off-sale premises; provisional licences pending; occasional licences; and outstanding Premises Licence fees.

DECIDED: That the update be noted.

6 **Publication of Statement of Licensing Policy**

The Senior Solicitor (Regulatory and Litigation Services) provided an update on the Statement of Licensing Policy.

DECIDED: That the update be noted.

7 **Festive Hours 2023/24**

The Senior Solicitor (Regulatory and Litigation Services) provided an update on the Festive Hours Policy for 2023/2024.

DECIDED: That the update be noted.

8 **Alcohol Focus Scotland**

There were submitted the Alcohol Focus Scotland Newsletters for September and October 2023.

DECIDED: That the September and October 2023 newsletters be noted.

9 **General Discussion**

The Chair requested that members pass on details of the Forum to all their relevant contacts to attempt to increase the number of Forum members. Current vacancies included members of the licensed trade, a local resident and a young person.

No local licensing issues were raised.

DECIDED:

(a) That members pass on details of the Forum to all their relevant contacts to attempt to increase the number of Forum members; and

(b) That it be noted that there were no local licensing issues raised.

10 **Date of Next Meeting**

DECIDED: That it be noted that the next meeting of the Renfrewshire Licensing Forum would be held on 19 February 2024.

renfrewshire.gov.uk

Renfrewshire Council

Note of Inquorate Meeting
Renfrewshire Licensing Forum.

Date	Time	Venue
Monday, 19 February 2024	14:00	Remotely via MS Teams,

PRESENT

D Edmonds (Renfrewshire Alcohol & Drug Partnership); Constable Cook (Police Scotland); C Dickson, Licensing Standards Officer (Environment, Housing & Infrastructure); and M Dymond.

IN ATTENDANCE

D Cunningham, Committee Services & Licensing Officer (Finance & Resources).

APOLOGY

F Hewitt.

1. QUORUM

Ten minutes after the appointed time for the meeting a quorum was not present and in terms of the constitutional document agreed at the meeting of the Forum held on 2 October 2007 the meeting stood adjourned.

POLICE SCOTLAND REPORT

RENFREWSHIRE LICENSING FORUM

Monday 22nd April 2024

Since last Forum Meeting held on Monday 19th February 2024, Police Scotland have undertaken the following to date:

- Dealt with **47** Incidents at licensed premises within the Renfrewshire area, **36** of those within Paisley Town Centre. These incidents were mainly in response to reports of disorder at entrances to licensed premises following patrons being refused entry or being ejected by premises staff.

- Undertook **103** proactive licensing inspections at licensed premises within the Renfrewshire area, the majority of these were undertaken at hotel party nights, nightclubs and popular Paisley Town Centre public houses.

- Police licensing officers continue to deliver 'bystander' training to various premises throughout Renfrewshire, promoting the safety of premises staff and patrons. Licensing officers will turn focus of attention to hotels across the division hosting party and tribute nights.

- Police licensing officers continue to promote the proxy purchase campaign 'it'll cost you' educating adults of the consequences of purchasing alcohol for persons under the legal age. This has involved leaflet drops at supermarkets, the visit to over 200 licensed premises across the Renfrewshire and Inverclyde area, where posters and stickers have been placed in licensed shop windows and doors highlighting offence and penalty if caught. The proxy campaign for 2024 will be ramped up during the summer months between 1st July and 12th August.

- Police licensing officers continue to participate in the Paisley Pub Watch Scheme with members of the licensing trade and representatives of Paisley First. Last meeting taking place on Tuesday 2nd April 2024 within Kennedy's Public House. Number of items discussed on agenda including upcoming Paisley Food & Drink Festival in April 2024, Radio Link, Personal licensing training and Impact new parking charges will have on trade and premises drugs policy.

There continues to be no licensed premises within the Renfrewshire area being monitored or considered problematic by Police Scotland.

NOTE FOR LICENSING FORUM MEETING ON 22nd April 2024.

1. The statistics provided are from the date of the last Licensing Standards Officer report to the Licensing Forum on 19th February 2024 to the present.

2. **Enforcement visits to licensed premises** – 8

3. **Details of current licensed premises** – as of 5th April 2024.

On sales	89 (Decrease of 1 from previous report)
On/off sales	187 (Decrease of 1 from previous report)
Off sales	151 (No change)
Total	427

4. **Provisional Licences:** 6

5. **Occasional Licences granted** – 140

6. **Personal Licences currently issued is** – 1516 – (Increase of 24 since last report)

7. Premises Licence annual fees were due to be paid by the statutory date of 1st October 2023. A number of premises required enforcement visits/action to secure payment but all are now up to date.

Jason Hampsay - LSO

5th April 2024

RENFREWSHIRE LICENSING BOARD
FESTIVE HOURS 2023-2024

All Licensed on sale premises (including registered clubs), except premises the primary purpose of which is to offer entertainment in the form of dancing

Terminal Hour – 1.00am	Sunday 17th, Monday 18th, Tuesday 19th, Wednesday 20th, Thursday 21st, Monday 25th, Tuesday 26th , Wednesday 27th and Thursday 28th all December 2023 and Monday 1st January 2024, Tuesday 2nd January 2024.
Terminal Hour – 2.00 am	Friday 8th, Saturday 9th, Friday 15th, Saturday 16th, Friday 22nd, Saturday 23rd, Friday 29th and Saturday 30th all December 2023.
Terminal Hour – 3.00 am	Sunday 24th December 2023 and Sunday 31st December 2023.

On Sales Premises, the primary purpose of which is to offer entertainment in the form of Dancing

Terminal Hour – 3.00 am	Sunday 17th, Monday 18th, Tuesday 19th, Wednesday 20th, Thursday 21st, Monday 25th, Tuesday 26th, Wednesday 27th and Thursday 28th all December 2023, Monday 1st January 2024, Tuesday 2nd January 2024.
Terminal Hour 4.00 am Where premises are members of Paisley Town Centre Radio Link	Friday 8th, Saturday 9th , Friday 15th, Saturday 16th, Friday 22nd , Saturday 23rd , Friday 29th and Saturday 30th all December 2023.
Terminal Hour – 4.00am	Sunday 24th December 2023 and Sunday 31st December 2023.

*The Board requested that ALL Licence holders who have the benefit of festive hours included in their Operating Plans under seasonal variations to advise the Board and Police Scotland no later than Friday 1st December 2023 of the dates they intend to utilise their seasonal hours during the festive period.

The email addresses to notify are as follows:-
Police Scotland - RenfrewshireInverclydeLicensing@scotland.pnn.police.uk
Renfrewshire Licensing Board - enforcement.licensing@renfrewshire.gov.uk

In relation to those licence holders who will require to submit extended hours applications, such applications **must** be submitted at least 28 days in advance of the first date applied for to allow for the timeous processing of applications.

Newsletter from Alcohol Focus Scotland
View this email in your browser

November 2023

Contents

- Unhealthy products driving nearly half a million people out of work
- Updated Local Alcohol Profiles
- Alcohol Advertising Broadcast Ban to be introduced in Ireland
- Alcohol is Toxic Campaign
- New ADPH position statement on alcohol
- Joint statement by WHO/Europe and IARC to the European Parliament
- AFS Response: Minimum Unit Pricing Consultation
- AFS Response: Updating labelling guidance for NoLos
- New Consultation: Draft treatment guidelines
- Alcohol Awareness Course
- Alcohol and Older Adults Course
- Change and stability in British drinking practices and culture between 2009 and 2019
- Support for policies restricting alcohol exposure in films
- CPG on Improving Scotland's Health: December Meeting
- WHO Less Alcohol Webinar Series

UPDATE

Unhealthy products driving nearly half a million people out of work

A coalition of health charities is calling on the UK Government to put in place a comprehensive strategy to prevent ill-health from commercially driven risk factors, and redress the balance between industry influence and the public's health.

The Alcohol Health Alliance (AHA), which Alcohol Focus Scotland is a member of, alongside Action on Smoking and Health (ASH), and the Obesity Health Alliance (OHA), have joined forces to outline the scale of harm caused collectively by tobacco, alcohol, and unhealthy food and drinks, which are major causes of death and chronic disease.

Big businesses are currently profiting from ill-health caused by smoking, drinking alcohol and eating unhealthy foods, while the public pay the price in poor health, higher taxes and an under-performing economy.

The wage penalty, unemployment and economic inactivity caused by tobacco, alcohol and obesity costs the UK economy an eye-watering £31bn and has led to an estimated 459,000 people out of work.

Read the coalition's recommendations

UPDATE

Updated Local Alcohol Profiles

We have updated our **Local Alcohol Profiles** with recent data on alcohol deaths and child protection. The profiles demonstrate the high level of alcohol harm within Scotland's 32 local authorities. We have also developed a new **Scotland Alcohol Profile** which gives a national picture.

Find your Local Alcohol Profile and the Scotland Alcohol Profile

UPDATE

Alcohol Advertising Broadcast Ban to be introduced in Ireland

Irish Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly, has signed the commencement order of Section 19 of the Public Health (Alcohol) Act 2018 (PHAA) which places a 9 p.m. broadcast watershed for alcohol advertisements on television. On radio, the watershed will apply from midnight to 10am, and then from 3pm to midnight. The restrictions will come into force on 10 January 2025.

This measure will help reduce the level of children's exposure to alcohol marketing, which is known to be a key driver of both initiating alcohol use by children and increasing use. It is a particularly important restriction given that Diageo is currently the Number 4 advertiser to children in Ireland and at least 50,000 children start to drink every year.

Read more from Alcohol Action Ireland

CAMPAIGN

Alcohol is Toxic Campaign

Balance North East have launched a new campaign supported by Cancer Research UK to highlight that alcohol is a Group 1 carcinogen which causes 7 types of cancer.

The campaign video follows the journey of alcohol through the body, mutating cells and leading to the formation of a tumour. It has been developed with input from doctors to depict the evidence on how alcohol causes cancer.

The campaign was launched due to low awareness in the North East of England that alcohol causes cancer, with only 1 in 3 people aware of the causal link. However, the information provided is important for everyone, no matter where they live in the UK.

Read more and watch the video

POLICY

New ADPH position statement on alcohol

In the new statement, the Association of Directors of Public Health (ADPH) call for alcohol policies to move their focus from treatment to prevention to reduce the affordability, availability and appeal of alcohol. The number one policy priority for ADPH members in their most recent policy survey was minimum unit pricing. They also call for mandatory health labelling and for a reduction in children's exposure to alcohol through restrictions on advertising and sponsorship.

Read the statement and their policy recommendations

Read a blog post about the statement by Alice Wiseman, Policy Lead for Addiction, ADPH

POLICY

Joint statement by WHO/Europe and IARC to the European Parliament

A joint statement on raising awareness of the link between alcohol and cancer has been issues by WHO Regional Director for Europe Dr Hans Henri P. Kluge and Director of the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) Dr Elisabete Weiderpass.

In the statement, they note that alcoholic beverages have been identified as a Group 1 carcinogen since 1988. Alcohol has been causally linked to seven different types of cancer: mouth, upper throat, larynx, oesophagus, breast, liver, and bowel cancer.

They make two recommendations for Europe's Beating Cancer Plan and related initiatives:

- The contribution of alcohol consumption to cancer incidence and mortality should be clearly recognized without the use of any qualifiers or misleading adjectives such as "harmful" or "heavy" consumption of alcohol or "responsible drinking"

- Measures should be taken to clearly inform the public of this risk, which is not well known among the general population.

Find out more

CONSULTATIONS

AFS Response: Minimum Unit Pricing Consultation

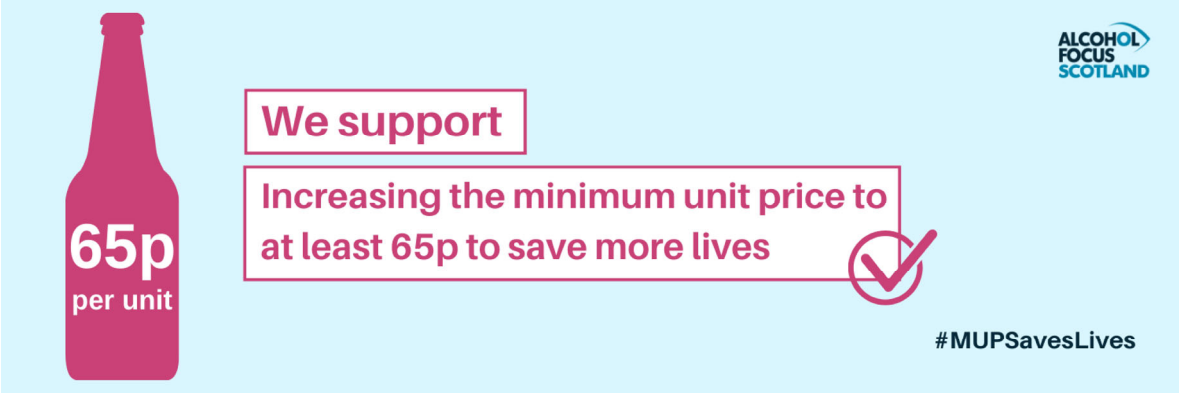
Alcohol Focus Scotland has responded to the Scottish Government's consultation on the continuation and future pricing of alcohol minimum unit pricing (MUP). Alcohol Focus Scotland strongly welcomes the proposal to continue MUP and to increase it to at least 65p per unit.

The evidence is clear that the policy has achieved its aim of reducing alcohol-related harm by both reducing population consumption and by targeting the consumption of people drinking at higher levels. It has also contributed to reducing alcohol-related health inequalities. Any negative unintended consequences have not been prevalent or typical.

It is essential that the minimum unit price is increased to at least 65p. The benefits of MUP have been eroded by inflation over the last 5 years, as alcohol has become more affordable than when the price was introduced in 2018. Failure to uprate would critically undermine the policy and reverse the positive effects we have seen so far.

In addition to continuing MUP and increasing the price to at least 65 pence, AFS recommends the Scottish Government introduces further legislation to provide an automatic uprating mechanism to ensure MUP rises in line with inflation. An Alcohol Harm Prevention Levy would enable any additional profits from MUP to be recovered from retailers and used to fund local action on prevention and treatment and recovery support.

Read our response



CONSULTATIONS

AFS Response: Updating labelling guidance for NoLos

Alcohol Focus Scotland responded to the UK Government's consultation on updating labelling guidance for no and low-alcohol alternatives (NoLos). We believe it is essential for regulations to be set out in legislation, not in voluntary guidance.

The current system and definitions are confusing. To provide clarity, regardless of descriptors, we are calling for all NoLos to clearly display their ABV content on the front of the label or packaging, and be clearly indicated at the point of sale online.

We also advocate for mandatory inclusion of health-related information such as age restriction warnings and the CMO's low-risk drinking guidelines.

We raise concerns as to the potential for increased harm from greater visibility and promotion of NoLo products due to brand-sharing, whereby alcohol substitutes are used to promote the alcohol brand.

Increasing use of NoLos alone is unlikely to achieve the UK Government's intended aim of reducing alcohol harms. We recommend implementing evidence-based measures including increasing the price of alcohol, restricting its marketing, and reducing its availability. The UK Government should publish their consultation on alcohol labelling without further delay.

Read our response and additional recommendations

CONSULTATIONS

New Consultation: Draft treatment guidelines

The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities at the UK Government are **consulting** on draft UK clinical guidelines for alcohol treatment. They have worked with the devolved governments in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland to produce the first ever UK clinical guidelines for alcohol treatment.

The main objectives of the UK clinical guidelines for alcohol treatment are to:

- Develop a clear consensus on good practice

- Help services to implement interventions for harmful drinking and alcohol dependence that are recommended by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence.

Respond to the consultation by 11:59pm on 8 December 2023

TRAINING

Alcohol Awareness Course

Alcohol Focus Scotland runs training sessions for people who want to understand alcohol, its impact and ways in which they can provide basic support and signpost others affected by it. Our alcohol awareness course is especially useful for people working in supportive roles such as caring and support services, such as housing, addictions, and community-based support services.

Find out more and register: Thursday 7 December, 09:30-12:30

TRAINING

Alcohol and Older Adults Course

Ideal for anyone supporting older adults, from healthcare professionals to sheltered housing staff, this training session will help you learn about age-specific problems caused by alcohol and how to support older adults. The session will also improve your understanding of how to engage with support functions and local activity and increase your awareness of interventions.

Book your place for Tuesday 12 December, 09:30-12:30

RESEARCH

Change and stability in British drinking practices and culture between 2009 and 2019

Although the types of drinking practices have remained stable, their frequency and characteristics like location and accompanying activities has changed, according to new research from the Sheffield Addictions Research Group (SARG). Changes included shifts away from habitual home drinking of wine, substantial transformation of the 'Big night out', and persistence in some but not all aspects of pub drinking and meal-based drinking practices.

Read the study

Read a Twitter/X thread from the lead author

RESEARCH

Support for policies restricting alcohol exposure in films

People are supportive of not showing alcoholic beverages or alcohol use in films aimed at children under 15 and not glorifying alcohol consumption in films, finds new research from the La Trobe University Centre for Alcohol Policy Research.

Study participants were asked to rate their support of eight policies aimed at addressing alcohol consumption in films. People who were older, female or reported lower alcohol use were more supportive of the policies.

One group of participants was shown an infographic outlining the actual amount of alcohol in films, to determine if this would impact their views of the policies, while the other was not. Only one policy received higher support from the group that received the infographic, which was: "Information about alcohol sponsorship should be provided."

Read the study

EVENT

CPG on Improving Scotland's Health: December Meeting

There is still time to join the next meeting of the Cross-Party Group on Improving

Scotland's Health. This will be held as a hybrid meeting, online and in Parliament on Wednesday 6 December 2023, 18:15-20:00.

We will be joined by Paul Johnston, Chief Executive of Public Health Scotland. Paul will share his thoughts on Scotland's wider health trends, pressure on the NHS, and the importance of addressing the role of health-harming commodities as a key element of making progress on these trends.

Members will have received details of how to book an in-person space and register for online attendance.

To become a member of the CPG please contact the secretariat at CEO@ashscotland.org.uk.

Find out more about the CPG

EVENT

WHO Less Alcohol Webinar Series

The hour-long webinar, organized by the World Health Organization, will include a keynote presentation, three to four spotlight country cases, active moderation and an interactive experience for online participants. The event is free with prior registration available below:

- **Measuring alcohol policy implementation: are existing tools and methods fit for purpose and use?** Wednesday 7 February, 13:00 CET

Newsletter from Alcohol Focus Scotland
View this email in your browser

January 2024

Contents

- **First Minister commits to reduce children's exposure to alcohol marketing**
- **Support for a Public Health Levy on alcohol sales**
- **Evidence Session on Minimum Unit Pricing**
- **New IAS Film: "Alcohol Marketing: Explained"**
- **Binge-pattern alcohol consumption and genetic risk as determinants of alcohol-related liver disease**
- **Characteristics of high- and low-risk drinkers who use online alcohol home delivery in Western Australia**
- **Type and prevalence of nutrition-related claims on alcoholic ready-to-drink beverages**
- **Measuring alcohol policy implementation: are existing tools and methods fit for purpose and use?**
- **CPG on Improving Scotland's Health: March Meeting**

UPDATE

First Minister commits to reduce children's exposure to alcohol marketing

First Minister Humza Yousaf has signed up to support our **joint campaign** with Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs, Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems, and BMA Scotland.

In the new video, the First Minister acknowledges the concerning levels of alcohol brand awareness among children and young people in Scotland, recognising that this exposure

He said, “The Scottish Government is fully committed to improving public health and reducing the health risks faced by young people. When we improve the welfare of children in Scotland we make a positive difference for generations to come. So I fully support the campaign to reduce children and young people’s exposure to alcohol marketing.”

Find out more

Contact us to pledge your support

First Minister supports Alcohol Free Kids campaign

UPDATE

Support for a Public Health Levy on alcohol sales

Scottish Labour is calling for the implementation of a Public Health Levy on alcohol sales to ensure income generated by Minimum Unit Pricing can fund vital, life-saving treatment. Currently, additional revenue from MUP is lining the pockets of alcohol retailers.

In the recent Budget, the Scottish Government announced they are considering reintroducing the Public Health Supplement. This is a tried and tested approach. The supplement, which applied to large retailers selling both alcohol and tobacco, raised £95 million over its 3-year duration.

In response to Scottish Labour’s call, Alison Douglas, chief executive of Alcohol Focus Scotland said, “Alcohol sales revenues have increased significantly in recent years and as a result retailers are likely making greater profits. At the same time, alcohol harm is on the rise, with deaths up by 25% over the last three years and the impact felt throughout our NHS. Alcohol Focus Scotland and the NCD Alliance Scotland have been

Read more

UPDATE

Evidence Session on Minimum Unit Pricing

On Tuesday 6 February, the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee will be taking oral evidence on Minimum Unit Pricing (MUP). Ahead of the session where chief executive Alison Douglas and others will be giving evidence, Alcohol Focus Scotland submitted **written evidence** highlighting the positive impact of MUP on reducing consumption, saving lives, and reducing hospital admissions. We also outline the reasons why the minimum unit price must be increased to at least 65p.

Following the evidence session, the Committee will report to Parliament with recommendations on whether MUP should be renewed beyond April 2024, and if the price should be increased to 65p.

Watch on Scottish Parliament TV

UPDATE

New IAS Film: "Alcohol Marketing: Explained"

Alcohol marketing is all around us: at our favourite sports matches, on our TV screens, online, at bus stops and on billboards. It affects what we think and how we drink, nudging us to drink more and during more occasions. But how does it reach us, why are current regulatory structures failing to deal with a growing problem, why does the World Health Organization recommended comprehensive bans on alcohol marketing, and what can be done to protect the most vulnerable in society from being bombarded by alcohol ads?

marketing intersects with perceived gender and gender norms; how alcohol marketing became so prevalent in sport; and why controlling alcohol marketing is a human rights issue.

Watch the film

RESEARCH

Binge-pattern alcohol consumption and genetic risk as determinants of alcohol-related liver disease

New research from UCL, the Royal Free Hospital, the University of Oxford, and the University of Cambridge finds that in the long run, the pattern of drinking is more important than volume. The risk is further increased when genetic predisposition and Type 2 diabetes are also present. These factors provide more accurate information with which to identify people most vulnerable to liver disease.

Pamela Healy, Chief Executive of the British Liver Trust said: “This research is important because it reveals that it’s not just how much you drink overall but the way that you drink matters. Drinking a lot, quickly, or drinking to get drunk can have serious consequences for your liver health. Over the last twenty years, as alcohol has become more accessible and affordable, there has been a disconcerting shift in the UK's drinking culture. The UK needs to tackle increased alcohol consumption through a joined up ‘alcohol strategy’ that includes taxation, stronger controls on alcohol advertising and marketing and improved awareness of the dangers of binge drinking.”

Read the study

RESEARCH

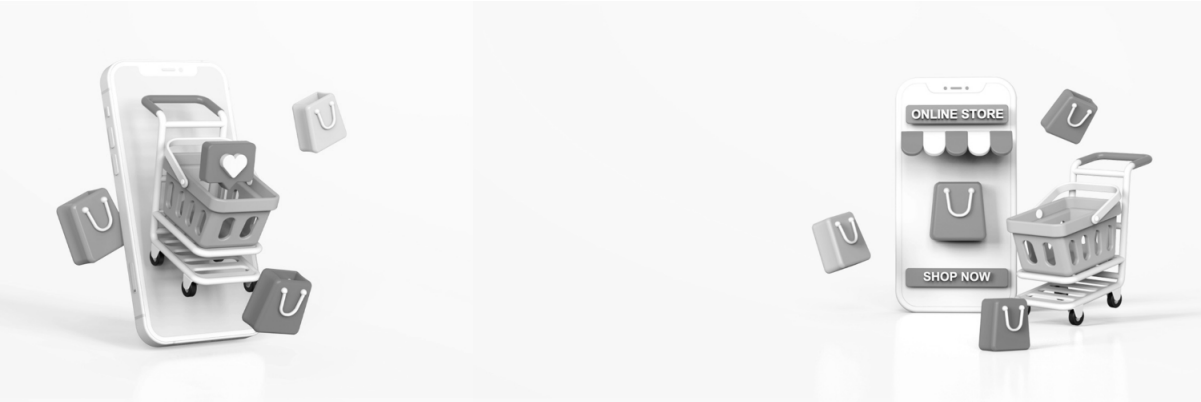
Characteristics of high- and low-risk drinkers who use online alcohol home delivery in Western Australia

High-risk drinkers purchase larger amounts of alcohol, purchase alcohol more often, and are more likely to use rapid delivery online options compared to low-risk drinkers, according to a **study** published in Drug and Alcohol Review.

The removal of physical restraints to obtaining alcohol, enabled by easily-accessible online purchasing options, may facilitate harmful drinking practices among people already considered at high-risk of an alcohol use disorder. Increased availability of alcohol is closely associated with increased level of consumption and alcohol-related harms. The

possible impacts of home delivery on their clients' ability to reduce, or abstain from, alcohol use.

Read more



RESEARCH

Type and prevalence of nutrition-related claims on alcoholic ready-to-drink beverages

Nutrition-related claims are prevalent and can mislead consumers about the healthiness of alcohol products, according to **new research** published in the Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health.

The researchers analysed almost 500 ready-to-drink beverages in three major alcohol retailers and found that over half (52%) has at least one nutrition-related claim, despite alcohol being inherently unhealthy. Nutrition claims were found on almost all hard seltzers (96%) which are predominately targeted at younger people, with an average of 3.4 claims per product. This is particularly concerning as young people's decreasing alcohol consumption has been attributed to increased awareness of alcohol-related health harms. The researchers conclude that more stringent regulation of nutrition-related claims is needed to provide appropriate consumer protection.

Read the study

EVENT

Measuring alcohol policy implementation: are existing tools and methods fit for purpose and use?

interactive experience for online participants.

Register for the event on Wednesday 7 February 2024, 13:00 CET (12:00 GMT)

EVENT

CPG on Improving Scotland's Health: March Meeting

The next meeting of the Cross-Party Group on Improving Scotland's Health will be held as a hybrid meeting, online and in Parliament on **Tuesday 26 March 2024, 18:15-19:30.**

We will be joined by **Jenni Minto MSP, Minister for Public Health and Women's Health**. The Minister will speak about progress made so far in tackling non-communicable diseases (NCDs), by addressing the risk factors of alcohol, tobacco, and unhealthy food; the Scottish Government's future priorities; and how the CPG can support the aim of creating a public health Parliament.

The meeting is for interested MSPs and registered group members who have completed a declaration of interest (DOI) form. The registration links for in-person and online attendance will be sent in due course. Please contact the secretariat at CEO@ashscotland.org.uk if you would like to become a member of the CPG.

Find out more about the CPG

166 Buchanan Street, Glasgow G1 2LW
0141 572 6700
enquiries@alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk

Newsletter from Alcohol Focus Scotland
View this email in your browser

February 2024

Contents

- Scottish Government announce plans to increase MUP
- People in recovery and MUP
- Levy on supermarkets could raise £57 million a year
- Wellbeing And Sustainable Development Bill
- A review of alcohol services in Scotland's acute hospitals
- Policy Actors' Perceptions of Conflicts of Interest and Alcohol Industry Engagement in UK Policy Processes
- 'Just a colour?': Exploring women's relationship with pink alcohol brand marketing within their feminine identity making
- Neurodiversity in schools: Intro to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)
- How can we raise awareness of the link between alcohol and breast cancer?
- CPG on Improving Scotland's Health: March Meeting

UPDATE

Scottish Government announce plans to increase MUP

Following a **consultation** on minimum unit pricing (MUP) in late 2023, the Scottish Government has brought forward two pieces of secondary legislation: one to continue the policy and one to increase the price to 65p per unit. The Scottish Parliament is expected to vote on the two draft items of legislation before the end of April 2024.

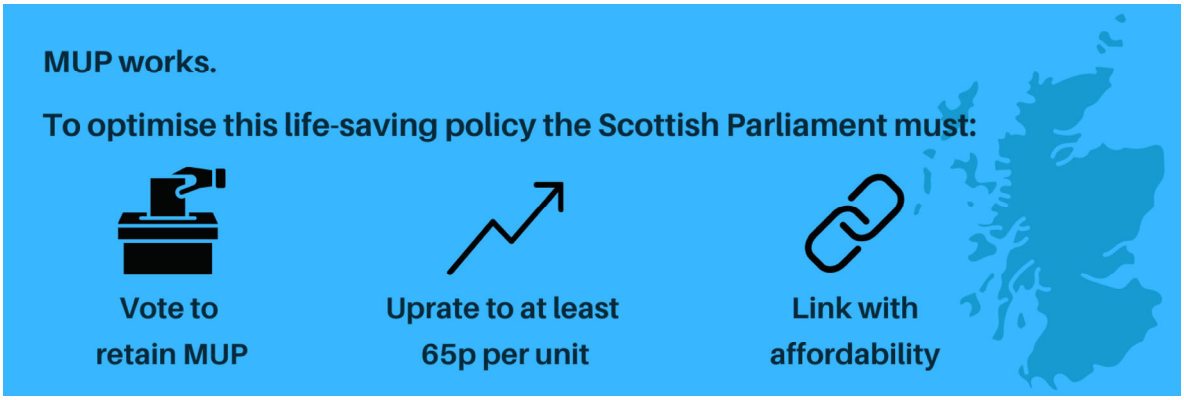
Welcoming the announcement, Alison Douglas, chief executive of Alcohol Focus Scotland, said, "It's encouraging to see cross-party support on the issue. With the recent

rise in alcohol deaths, and the impact of the pandemic, we need the Scottish Parliament to work together. Without support to increase the price, the positive effects we've seen will be reversed, with hundreds of people experiencing suffering and loss because of alcohol. This is particularly true for people living in our most deprived communities, where we've seen the greatest benefits from MUP."

The announcement came after a Health, Social Care and Sport Committee **meeting** where MSPs took evidence on the impact of minimum unit pricing from public health advocates including our chief executive, Alison Douglas, as well as from industry representatives. **Read our written evidence.**

Ahead of the vote, we are campaigning to ensure that the policy is maintained and increased. **Write to your MSP** and ask them to vote in favour of continuing and increasing MUP, to save and improve the lives of people in Scotland.

Read our full comment
More on MUP



UPDATE

People in recovery and MUP

Listening to and highlighting the voices of lived and living experience is an important part of our work at Alcohol Focus Scotland. Over the past 2 years, our **Involvement team** has been working with people and organisations to help guide the development of alcohol policy.

More recently, our Involvement Team has been speaking with people in recovery about their thoughts on MUP. Last month, the team spoke with people from **Borders in Recovery** to hear their opinion of MUP.

The group were strongly in favour of raising the MUP, feeling that it should be set even

higher than 65p. Whilst recognising the limited impact of MUP on current dependent drinkers, they felt that MUP was important in preventing people from developing dependency in the first place. An alcohol harm prevention levy was a very popular idea; the group were shocked to discover that retailers profit from the policy and thought the money would be better spent on alcohol treatment and care. **See their views demonstrated in illustration.**

Check out our MUP playlist on YouTube

UPDATE

Levy on supermarkets could raise £57 million a year

New research from the Fraser of Allander Institute at the University of Strathclyde shows that a levy on shops and supermarkets that sell alcohol could raise £57 million a year.

While off-sales of alcohol have gone down by an estimated 3.5% due to minimum unit pricing, this research provides new estimates that suggest revenue from alcohol has increased by more than £30m a year. This means shops and supermarkets are likely making greater profits.

The report findings demonstrate the potential for retailers that profit from the sale of alcohol to contribute towards the financial burden alcohol places on society. According to recent estimates, alcohol costs Scotland up to £10 billion every year, including £700 million in health and social care costs.

Alcohol Focus Scotland have welcomed the Scottish Government's announcement in the recent Budget that they are considering reintroducing the Public Health Supplement.

Read more

Get in touch to discuss the levy

CONSULTATIONS

Wellbeing And Sustainable Development Bill

Alcohol Focus Scotland has responded to the Scottish Government **consultation** on proposals for a Wellbeing and Sustainable Development Bill, intended to help improve decision-making and the implementation of the National Performance Framework.

AFS believes it is crucial that the health and economic impacts of health harming products, such as alcohol, are actively considered as part of Scotland's Wellbeing Economy, and continue to be reflected in the National Performance Framework. We highlighted that the development of a wellbeing economy could provide an opportunity to reduce the harm caused by alcohol by prioritising policies and interventions that focus on improving overall societal well-being rather than solely focusing on economic growth. This approach could involve implementing measures such as investing in public health campaigns, enhancing access to treatment and support services, promoting community engagement, and regulating alcohol marketing and availability to create a healthier environment for individuals and communities.

By adopting a wellbeing-focused approach, Scotland could also address the root causes of alcohol-related harm and work towards creating a more resilient society.

Read our response

RESEARCH

A review of alcohol services in Scotland's acute hospitals

Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems (SHAAP) commissioned a review of alcohol services in major Scottish hospitals, finding provision is fragmented.

SHAAP have urged the Scottish Government to rapidly improve the provision and impact of alcohol care teams, to ensure people with alcohol problems get the support and treatment they deserve.

Read the report

RESEARCH

Policy Actors' Perceptions of Conflicts of Interest and Alcohol Industry Engagement in UK Policy Processes

Alcohol industry interference has been identified as a major barrier to public policy progress in reducing alcohol harm. New research published in the International Journal of Health Policy and Management examines how different policy actors view alcohol industry involvement in policy, and their beliefs on what sorts of interactions are appropriate and not appropriate.

The researchers aimed to address the current lack of alcohol-specific guidance on conflict of interest (COI) and a lack of agreement amongst researchers, policymakers, and civil society actors on what constitutes a COI and thus what forms of industry engagement should be precluded.

The Institute of Alcohol Studies will draw on this research to inform the development of guidelines for UK government to mitigate risks associated with commercial conflicts of

interest in alcohol policy settings.

Read the blog post
Read the research

RESEARCH

‘*Just a colour?*’: Exploring women's relationship with pink alcohol brand marketing within their feminine identity making

New research concludes that in the current context of contemporary feminism, in which (young) women are endorsing feminist identities, women's relationship with feminism influences their attitudes to marketing, such as pinking; the overuse of the colour pink as a feminine aesthetic, and their likelihood of consuming such products.

The research, published in the International Journal of Drug Policy, explored how women relate to and view the pinking of alcohol products and marketing, and how such products feature in their performance of femininities through drinking practice. Whilst pink marketing is effective in appealing to some women as part of their feminine identity-making, the pinking of products actually prevents others from purchasing and consuming such products as it is deemed unrelatable to their identities.

Read more

EVENT

Neurodiversity in schools: Intro to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)

This online webinar on **Wednesday 13 March** hosted by Education Scotland will be of interest to practitioners working across all sectors of education who are interested in expanding their knowledge and understanding of neurodevelopmental presentations in the classroom.

The session will provide a brief introduction to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and signposting to access further information, guidance and support in relation to supporting learners with FASD in Scottish education settings.

Read more and sign up

EVENT

How can we raise awareness of the link between alcohol and breast cancer?

Breast cancer is the most common cancer in the UK. In women, even low levels of alcohol consumption increase breast cancer risk. Overall, the more someone drinks, the more their risk of breast cancer increases.

Researchers at Oxford Brookes University conducted a study about alcohol and the risk of breast cancer. They asked:

- How can we raise awareness of the link between alcohol and breast cancer?
- How can we support women who are thinking about reducing their alcohol consumption?

Join the free webinar on Thursday 21 March to hear about their findings

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EVENT

CPG on Improving Scotland's Health: March Meeting

The next meeting of the Cross-Party Group on Improving Scotland's Health will be held as a hybrid meeting, online and in Parliament on **Tuesday 26 March 2024, 18:15-19:30.**

We will be joined by **Jenni Minto MSP, Minister for Public Health and Women's Health**. The Minister will speak about progress made so far in tackling non-communicable diseases (NCDs), by addressing the risk factors of alcohol, tobacco, and unhealthy food; the Scottish Government's future priorities; and how the CPG can support the aim of creating a public health Parliament.

The meeting is only for interested MSPs and registered group members who have completed a declaration of interest (DOI) form, who will have already received the registration link for in-person and online attendance. Please contact the secretariat at CEO@ashscotland.org.uk if you would like to become a member of the CPG.

Find out more about the CPG

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March 2024

Contents

- **HSCSC votes in favour of continuing and increasing MUP**
- **New PHS Dashboard reveals true scale of alcohol harm in Scotland**
- **Alcohol related hospital admissions down but alcohol harm still too high**
- **Questioning initiatives funded by the alcohol industry**
- **Junk food ads banned from Sheffield City Council-owned billboards**
- **Overstatement undermines health interventions**
- **Gender-responsive approaches to the acceptability, availability and affordability of alcohol**
- **Consultation on the united Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act**
- **Restricting promotions of food high in fat, sugar or salt**
- **The impact of introducing alcohol-free beer options in bars and public houses on alcohol sales and revenue: A randomised crossover field trial**
- **Alcohol and the Brain**

UPDATE

HSCSC votes in favour of continuing and increasing MUP

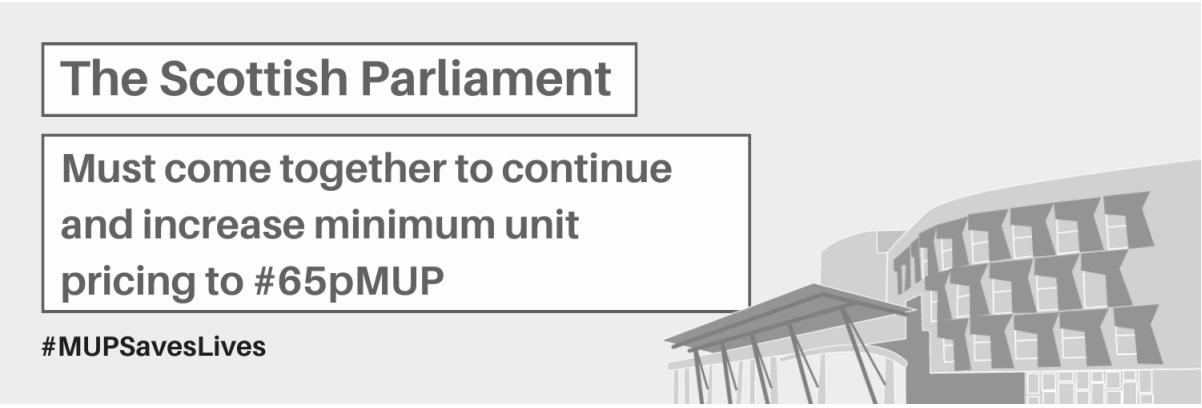
The Health, Social Care and Sport Committee has now voted in favour of retaining and uprating MUP to 65p – with strong cross-party support.

The Committee voted after more than 80 organisations from across Scotland and beyond, including dozens of medical, faith organisations and charities, **wrote to them** calling for

The Committee's decision came on a day when Public Health Scotland **released figures** showing the true scale of alcohol harm, with 2820 people estimated to die from alcohol each year when deaths from conditions such as alcohol-related cancers and cardiovascular disease are counted. This is more than twice as high as alcohol-specific death figures that are reported annually.

Responding to the news, **Alison Douglas, CEO of Alcohol Focus Scotland said** the vote is "another big step forward towards renewing and uprating the minimum unit price (MUP) for alcohol to 65p per unit, and we're delighted that there is strong cross-party support for this policy.

Read more about the letter
Read the Official Report
Read our reaction to the vote



UPDATE

New PHS Dashboard reveals true scale of alcohol harm in Scotland

Public Health Scotland has published a new **Alcohol Dashboard**, which includes figures on alcohol attributable deaths and hospital admissions for the first time since a **Scottish Public Health Observatory Report in 2018**.

In addition to the 1185 deaths wholly attributable to alcohol in 2020, reported as alcohol-specific deaths, there were 1635 deaths partially attributable to alcohol. This means that in total there were 2820 deaths due to alcohol in 2020, more than double the number reported in annual death statistics.

Commenting on the new Alcohol Dashboard figures, **Alison Douglas, CEO of Alcohol Focus Scotland said:** "We welcome the launch of Public Health Scotland's Alcohol Dashboard which can help inform policy and practice on reducing alcohol harm in Scotland both nationally and locally. It is particularly useful to have new data on alcohol

massive burden alcohol is currently placing on our NHS."

Read more

Alcohol related hospital admissions down but alcohol harm still too high

New figures published by Public Health Scotland have shown that there were 31,206 alcohol related hospital admissions (stays) in Scotland in 2022/23. This represents a significant 11% reduction on hospital admissions in 2021/22 at 35,187.

Responding to the data, **Alison Douglas, CEO of Alcohol Focus Scotland said**: “While welcome, this reduction in alcohol related hospital admissions is no cause for complacency. The level of admissions due to alcohol remains high and represents an entirely preventable burden on our already overstretched NHS.

“Worryingly, there is evidence of increasing inequality in these data, with people in our most deprived communities now seven times more likely to be hospitalised due to alcohol than those in our most well-off communities – compared with six times more likely in the previous year.”

Read more

Questioning initiatives funded by the alcohol industry

The Scotch Whisky Association (SWA) have recently announced an investment of £300,000 to reduce young people’s drinking.

industry-funded Community Alcohol Partnerships (CAPs) in the UK, found little evidence of their effectiveness and concluded that “Their main role may be as an alcohol industry corporate social responsibility measure which is intended to limit the reputational damage associated with alcohol-related anti-social behaviour.”

The existence of and support for such initiatives is also used by Big Alcohol as an alternative to evidence-based policies which threaten how they market and sell their products, such as minimum unit price which SWA delayed for over six years at a cost of hundreds of lives.

Alison Douglas
CEO, Alcohol Focus Scotland

UPDATE

Junk food ads banned from Sheffield City Council-owned billboards

Sheffield City Council has banned adverts for unhealthy food, pollution and alcohol from all authority-owned hoardings, online media, and sponsorship opportunities.

The ban also covers short-term loans, low or zero alcohol drinks from alcoholic brands, fossil fuel products, some breast or infant milk formulas, petrol, diesel and hybrid plug-in vehicles, gambling and betting products, and airlines and airports. The ban is expected to come into force next month.

Greg Fell, Sheffield’s public health director, said that when Transport for London banned junk food ads, the loss of income predicted by some never actually happened.

AdFreeCities has reported that in Sheffield, 60% of advertisements were found in the poorest areas of the city, while just 2% of adverts were found in the most affluent locations.

Learn more

POLICY

Overstatement undermines health interventions

The Social Market Foundation (SMF) has launched the final briefing in a trilogy exploring the merits and political case for more interventionist public health measures. The final briefing, ***Weighing the pounds***, evaluated economic arguments for and against public health interventions, finding that exaggeration on both sides, but especially from industry, is missing the bigger picture of being able to save/improve lives.

Economic arguments are often used to resist public health measures, and increasingly to promote them, though they often confuse quite different types of costs and benefits. It is important to remember that a loss of spending in one particular sector will be at least partly offset by higher spending in others. Ultimately, the objective of public health interventions should be helping us live healthier, longer lives – economic gains, which we have seen are real, are just a bonus.

The **first briefing** in the trilogy looked at the effectiveness of interventionism, while the **second briefing** explored the political constraints on implementing more interventionist policies.

Read the briefing

Gender-responsive approaches to the acceptability, availability and affordability of alcohol

In a **new briefing**, the World Health Organization (WHO) highlights that gender-related norms persist in our societies, including in the consumption of alcohol.

Despite knowing that men and women consume alcohol differently and are affected by its harm differently, alcohol control policies remain gender blind. Highly gendered approaches to alcohol marketing and gender differences in patterns of alcohol consumption and its associated harm are well documented. Relatively little evidence has examined the different effects of population-level alcohol control policies on different genders, and even less has addressed how gender intersects with socioeconomic status, age, ethnicity, and other factors.

The WHO calls on governments to develop alcohol-control policies that address dimensions of acceptability, availability and affordability and incorporate considerations of gender and gender equity. Additionally, decisionmakers should consider the inclusivity of existing and future alcohol control policies. The WHO also calls on researchers to analyse and present data separately for men and women, rather than just controlling for sex. They note the importance of monitoring and reporting direct and indirect policy effects by gender.

Read the briefing

CONSULTATIONS

Consultation on the united Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act

The UNCRC has already been incorporated into Scottish law, but Scottish Ministers are required to publish guidance to help public authorities understand and fulfil their duties according to the act, helping to ensure that children's rights are proactively protected, respected and fulfilled. The Scottish Government are seeking views on the following draft statutory guidance:

- **Part 2: Compatibility with the UNCRC requirements, and child rights-respecting practice**
- **Part 3: Reporting duty of listed authorities**

Find out more and respond by 16 May 2024

CONSULTATIONS

Restricting promotions of food high in fat, sugar or salt

The Scottish Government are consulting on the detail of proposed regulations to restrict the promotions of food and drink high in fat, sugar or salt (HFSS) where they are sold to the public, including across retail and out of home settings, both in-store and online.

Read more and respond before 21 May 2024

CONSULTATIONS

Draft Charter of Rights

The National Collaborative have issued a consultation on a **draft Charter of Rights** for people affected by substance use.

This consultation aims to capture people's views and opinions on the draft Charter of Rights, and inform its continued development.

Read more and respond before 3 June 2024

RESEARCH

The impact of introducing alcohol-free beer options in bars and public houses on alcohol sales and revenue: A randomised crossover field trial

A **study** carried out by Bristol City Council and the Tobacco and Alcohol Research Group (TARG) at the University of Bristol has found that making alcohol-free beer more available on draught in pubs and bars may help people switch from alcoholic beer.

A group of 14 pubs and bars across Bristol temporarily changed the drinks they offered. When alcohol-free option was available, venues sold 51 fewer alcoholic pints on average. This was replaced by an equal increase in sales of the non-alcoholic options. There was no impact on the money earned by the pubs.

Dr Angela Atwood, associate professor at TARG, said: "This does not restrict consumer

Read the study

Alcohol and the Brain

A group of international alcohol experts have come together to develop a new report presenting the evidence regarding alcohol's effect on the brain.

The report explains how alcohol physiologically affects the brain, why younger brains are so susceptible to harm, how alcohol is a risk factor in depression and suicide, and how alcohol ages the brain faster than it would age otherwise.

The authors conclude that reducing alcohol consumption, both total consumption as well as binge drinking, is arguably the most important way to promote cognitive and neurological health and prevent or reduce brain harms.

They advocate for:

- effective alcohol control policies, including raising the price and reducing the availability of alcohol
- health care screening and treatment resources including medications to treat alcohol dependence
- individual-level information and behaviour change informed by drinking guidelines

Read the report

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