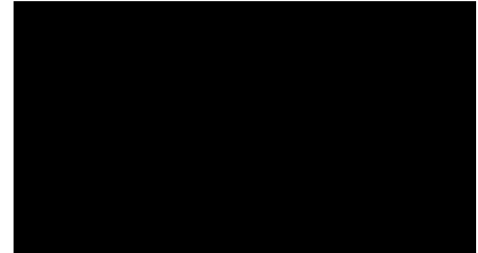


The Home Office
Alcohol strategy consultation 4th Floor Fry
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

By email



Our Ref:
Your Ref:
Date: 06 February 2013

Dear Colleagues,

Alcohol Strategy Consultation

the Council's Licensing Committee considered the issues discussed in the consultation document at its meeting of 22 January 2013, and resolved that I write on behalf of the Committee to communicate its views, which are as follows:

5. A Minimum Unit Price for Alcohol

The Licensing Committee supports the proposal to impose a minimum price for a unit of alcohol, considering that it would assist in discouraging some forms of high risk alcohol misuse. However the Committee felt that a minimum unit price of 50p would be more effective than the 45p proposed in the consultation document, and would have the advantage of consistency with legislation in Scotland.

6. A Ban on Multi-Buy Promotions in the Off-Trade

The Committee welcomed the proposals to prevent the types of multi-buy promotions listed in the consultation document endorsing the reasoning that there should be no encouragement for customers to buy more alcohol than they may have intended.

7. Review of Mandatory Licensing Conditions

The Licensing Committee while supporting existing mandatory conditions considered that there was a case for conditions relating to "irresponsible promotions" to be strengthened to reflect the proposals to discourage multi-buy promotions in the off-trade. The Committee was aware that in the on-trade, discounts were effectively available for buying in greater quantity, for example several cocktails in a single pitcher.

The Committee also felt that consideration should for public safety reasons be given to using mandatory conditions to support the wider use of plastic glasses and particularly, plastic bottles where drink is served without a glass.

8. Health as a Licensing Objective for Cumulative Impact Policies

The Licensing Committee welcomed the recent extension of responsible authority status to health Authorities, and supported growing information exchange and relationship building between interested parties/agencies.

9. Freeing Up Responsible Business

Whilst welcoming reasonable relaxation of Licensing Act requirements, the Committee was concerned that due care be taken not to create loopholes. Currently there is an clear understanding that supply of alcohol requires a licence. If that ceased to be the case, there would be a risk sending mixed messages about alcohol use, and of creating a growing enforcement burden as perceived loopholes were tested or unreasonably exploited.

While unnecessary "red tape" should be lifted, this should not be at the expense of necessary controls.

The Committee disapproved of the proposal to lift the prohibition of sale of alcohol at motorway service areas and associated accommodation; and in fact would support extension of prohibition of sale to petrol stations so that alcohol was further dissociated from motoring.

The Committee was opposed to removing requirement to renew personal licences every ten years, because it was concerned that the status of licence holders as fit and proper persons for the role should be subject to checking from time to time: and any proposal for the licence holder, the police, or courts to notify the Licensing Authority of any development such as a relevant conviction would be too prone to error to suffice.

I trust that these comments are of assistance in framing further legislation: please do not hesitate to contact the Council, however, if you have any query in relation to the foregoing.

Yours faithfully,

