



# HM Government

## Alcohol Strategy Group

Minutes of the Government and Partners Alcohol Working Group Meeting held at Noble House, Westminster on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> September at 10:00 (**Meeting 1**)

### PRESENT

Mandie Campbell, Director of Drugs, Alcohol and Partnerships Directorate (HO)  
**(In the chair)**

Ziggy MacDonald, [REDACTED] & [REDACTED] (HO), Liz Woodeson & Chris Heffer (DH), [REDACTED] (DEFRA), [REDACTED] (DCSF), Zoe Dayan (DBIS), [REDACTED] (HM T), Bruce Ray (Bacardi), Professor Jon Shepherd (Cardiff University), Grant Eastwood (Morrisons), Brigid Simmonds (BBPA), Jacqui Kennedy (Birmingham City Council), Don Shenker (Alcohol Concern), Chris Sorek (Drinkaware Trust), Dr. Kieran Moriarty (British Society for Gastroenterology), David Poley (The Portman Group), [REDACTED] (Molson Coors), Kieran Richards (Heineken), Chief Inspector Sue Robinson (Durham Police) **ERROR ?**

### APOLOGIES

[REDACTED] (DCMS), [REDACTED], [REDACTED] (Cabinet Office), [REDACTED] (MoJ), [REDACTED] (CLG), [REDACTED], Bruce Ray (Bacardi), Ruth Hussey (DH), [REDACTED] (DfT), Professor Ian Gilmore (Royal College of Physicians), Chief Constable Jon Stoddart, Dr. Nick Sheron (British Association for the Study of the Liver), Mark Hunter (Molson Coors), Stefan Orłowski (Heineken)

### SECRETARIAT

[REDACTED] (DH / HO)

#### Item 1 Welcome and introduction to new members

**Mandie Campbell** welcomed all those present to the first meeting of the Government and Partners Alcohol Working Group which was replacing the Alcohol Strategy Group.

#### Item 2 Government and Partners Alcohol Working Group Terms of Reference

In discussions, the following points were raised:

Professor Shepherd called for the Terms of Reference to include to non-Governmental partners from the local authority, health, voluntary and third sectors as well as the alcohol industry to contribute effectively to alcohol harm reduction initiatives.

Ziggy MacDonald agreed, stating the importance of continued partnership working between the various partners needed for effective problem solving, both at the national and local level.

Grant Eastwood enquired about the need to capture deliverables and measurable objectives to the Terms of Reference.

### **Action Point**

Programme Office to circulate re-drafted Terms of Reference for agreement.

### **Item 3                      Public Health White Paper and the Responsibility Deal**

Liz Woodeson informed the Group that the Public Health White Paper was likely to be published in December and would set out the Government's direction on alcohol harm reduction as well as plans for the new Public Health Service. She stated that the Group's input would be welcomed.

In discussions, the following points were raised:

Liz Woodeson confirmed that the budget for the Public Health Service would be ring-fenced at the national level.

Professor Shepherd noted that the shift of Regional Directors of Public Health into Local Authorities will hopefully lead to even better local partnership working. Chris Heffer noted that NICE's proposed interventions on alcohol treatment had been put to Ministers for consideration.

Chris Heffer updated the Group on the Responsibility Deal. Key points included:

The Responsibility Deal seeking to identify and agree the roles and responsibility of Government, the industry and NGOs in harm reduction.

Food, exercise, alcohol, health at work and communications and marketing forming the main planks of the deal.

The alcohol section would focus on promoting the sensible drinking message (both through Drinkaware and Change for Life), labelling, promoting alternatives to alcohol, a responsible retail code for the off trade, education (especially aimed at under 18s) and alcohol in the workplace.

Early 2011 being the likeliest date for public announcement of the contents of the Responsibility Deal.

Chris Heffer also invited the Group's members to contact him should they wish to be involved in the workings of the Responsibility Deal Alcohol Network.

In discussions, the following points were raised:

Chris Heffer confirmed that health representatives were involved in the negotiations.

#### **Item 4            Rebalancing the Licensing Act**

Ziggy MacDonald updated the Group on the Rebalancing the Licensing Act. Consultation which closed on the 8<sup>th</sup> of September. Key points included:

Over 1000 written responses (and over 2000 campaign postcards from Balance Northeast) to the consultation.

A number of responses gave useful feedback on unintended consequences and practical implications of the proposals as well as examples of how outcomes could be achieved without the need for regulation.

He also informed the Group that Section 182 Guidance for the Licensing Act was currently being amended (to be laid in Parliament on 11<sup>th</sup> October) in advance of the remaining two conditions of the Mandatory Code of Practice coming into force on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October.

In discussions the following points were raised:

Brigid Simmonds raised concerns that licensing authorities would begin enforcing these new measures without licensees being informed of the legislative changes. She noted that partners (including the British Hospitality Association) should be used to disseminate details of the new legislation.

Ziggy MacDonald stated that Minister had yet to decide on whether or not parts (or all) of the Mandatory Code would be repealed.

Brigid Simmons argued repeal of the condition relating to age verification as she believed that the Challenge 21 and 25 schemes already operated by the industry were effective in limiting sales to those under age and ensuring that those purchasing alcohol were challenged to prove their age.

Jacqui Kennedy welcomed proposals in the consultation on giving local, elected officials a greater input in the licensing process.

Updated guidance to partners for new mandatory conditions:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/drugs/alcohol/alcohol-licensing-conditions/>

#### **Item 6            Community Alcohol Partnerships**

Jeremy Beadles presented the Community Alcohol Partnerships.

In discussions, the following points were raised:

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██████████ enquired as to whether or not there underage drinking had been reduced or simply moved to in the home as a result of the Community Alcohol Partnerships.

Jeremy Beadles responded that it was likely that there had been a shift of underage drinking to the home where it could be more easily supervised by parents.

Professor Shepherd outlined his support for this approach to tackling public underage drinking and stated the need to tackle environmental factors such as litter and graffiti.

Brigid Simmonds argued for the need to ensure that any increases in licensing fees were capped to ensure that licensees were still able to engage in schemes such as the Community Alcohol Partnerships, Business Improvement Districts, Best Bar None and Pubwatch.

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██████████ highlighted the partnership work which has been begun by Heineken partners such as Turning Point to tackle alcohol harm. He gave details of the new scheme in Manchester to tackle alcohol-related re-offending.

Jeremy Beadles informed the Group that there would be an exercise to map partnerships in the country as part of the Responsibility Deal.

Chris Sorek also informed the Group of the Drinkaware Trust's use of the Home Office's priority areas list to target grant funding to areas of most need.

Don Shenker raised the need to capture about young people's consumption and whether or not areas were seeing increases in young people admitted due to alcohol-related issues. Furthermore, he stated that Alcohol Concern would call for all hospitals to monitor alcohol-related attendance of young people as part of Alcohol Awareness Week.

## **Item 7      Reducing Regulation**

Zoe Dayan outlined the Government's commitment to the principle of better, more targeted regulation and the spectrum of legislation and voluntary approaches to problem solving.

in discussions, the following points were raised:

Brigid Simmonds gave details of proposals in the BBPA's consultation response which included removing the necessity to publish a licensing consultation every three years. She also raised the need for some sort of professional body to oversee door staff should the SIA be devolved.

Doe Dayan informed the Group that any proposed deregulation will be consulted on.

## **Item 8      Departmental Updates**

██████████ informed the Group that there had been over 80 responses to the Treasury's review of alcohol taxation with autumn the likely announcement date of next steps. In addition, he added that Finance Bill was the likely vehicle for any legislative changes.

██████████ informed the Group that the Department for Education was focusing on under 15s, looking into evidence of effective prevention intervention and how best to make these available to schools.

Don Shenker added that Alcohol Concern research had showed young people did wanted separate alcohol and drugs awareness lessons.

██████████ notified the Group that that responsibility for food labelling which had been previously held by the Food Standards Agency had moved to DEFRA with nutrition policy moving to DH and FSA has retained its focus on food safety. Press release for info:

<http://ww2.defra.gov.uk/news/2010/07/20/fsa-news/>

Ziggy MacDonald informed the Group that Home Office Ministers had agreed to fund Best Bar None, Purple Flag and the Proof of Age Standards Scheme.

**The next meeting of the Group will take place from 1:30 pm until 3:30 pm on 9<sup>th</sup> December at the New Nelson meeting room at Somerset House, Strand, London, WC2R 1LA.**