Selby District Alcohol Strategy

1. Introduction

Alcohol plays an important role in the cultural, social and economic life of Selby District and many of its residents. However, when misused alcohol causes substantial harm to individuals, families, communities and businesses. In England the annual monetary cost of alcohol-related harm is estimated to be £20 billion\(^1\). This includes:

- up to 22,000 premature deaths a year
- around half of all violent crimes
- 17 million working days a year lost
- around a million children affected by their parents' alcohol problems.

In 2004 the government launched its Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy for England (AHRSE), which sets out 4 aims:

1. to improve the information available to individuals and start the process of change in the culture of drinking to get drunk
2. to better identify and treat alcohol misuse
3. to prevent and tackle alcohol-related crime and disorder and deliver improved services to witnesses and victims
4. to work with the industry in tackling the harms caused by alcohol\(^2\).

This strategy sets out Selby District's response to the problems caused by alcohol misuse, taking into account both the national approach in the AHRSE and other documents, and our local needs and priorities. It is structured around 4 key areas for alcohol policy at present: health, crime, young people and licensing.

Alcohol related harm: local profile

Over the winter of 2004/5 the Community Safety Partnership commissioned Alcohol Concern to carry out an alcohol impact study to look at the effects of alcohol misuse on the community and on local services\(^3\). This highlighted a lack of data surrounding alcohol issues (which mirrors the national picture) but tapped into a great deal of concern and commitment amongst local people and professionals. Generally, their findings showed that alcohol misuse in Selby is not greatly different from the national picture; so where local data isn’t available we have used national or regional information.

Levels of drinking

Yorkshire and the Humber region have high levels of drinking compared to other areas, with an average consumption of 13.6 units a week compared to

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\(^3\) Alcohol Concern *Selby Alcohol Impact Study 2005*
the national consumption of 11.9 units\textsuperscript{4}. Alcohol Concern estimate that approximately 7,000 women and 12,000 men in Selby District regularly drink more than the recommended daily limit of alcohol\textsuperscript{5} (2-3 units for women and 3-4 for men), approximately a quarter of the population.

The Don’t Die Young project was carried out in 2004 with about 1000 year 9 and 10 pupils in 6 secondary schools. It involved a theatre presentation and workshop on alcohol issues. Surveys indicated that 41% of these pupils drank alcohol at least once a week, and 25% had been given alcohol to take out by a parent or carer. 71% of drinking was reported to take place at home or at a friend’s home, with 23% in a street or park\textsuperscript{6}.

Local Views

The Alcohol Concern study reinforced the anecdotal view that there are serious concerns about young people’s drinking in Selby District, especially about the amount of alcohol that is consumed and the effect this has on young people’s health, behaviour, vulnerability to harm and their ability to learn\textsuperscript{7}. How families and parents in particular deal with underage drinking was widely discussed by participants in the study. There is no reason to believe that young people’s drinking is any more of a problem in Selby than in the country as a whole, but it is a clear priority for action locally.

Other concerns raised were violent crime and antisocial behaviour in town centres, domestic violence and drink driving. The study also highlighted the need to tackle less visible harms from alcohol misuse such as to people’s health and family wellbeing; and in different groups of people such as the elderly and vulnerable.

2. Current responses

A summary of the main current responses is outlined below under the four main headings of the strategy health, licensing, young people and crime.

Health

- The District Alcohol Service provides tier 1 and 2 support to individuals who are misusing alcohol.

- Social Services may work with people who have alcohol problems; these individuals are referred to the appropriate service for information and treatment if needed.

\textsuperscript{4} ONS 2000 General Household Survey 2001
\textsuperscript{5} Alcohol Concern Selby Alcohol Impact Study 2005 p16
\textsuperscript{6} Don’t Die Young evaluation report, available from Amanda Goodchild, Community Education
\textsuperscript{7} Alcohol Concern Selby Alcohol Impact Study 2005 p6
• Compass provides tier 3 services for drugs and for secondary alcohol use to adults and a tier 2-4 service to young people.

• Selby and York PCT provide a wide range of services including community hospitals, nursing and mental health services. Their Community Addictions Team provides a Tier 3 service for people using alcohol and/or illicit drugs. They offer advice, assessment, management, community detoxification and assessment for residential treatment and rehabilitation.

Crime

• High visibility policing in Selby Town to try to reduce alcohol related violence as well as the implementation of a project based action plan.

• An initiative was set up in the Gant Walk/Church Lane area to try to reduce crime and disorder following complaints about noise, rowdy and drunken behaviour, criminal damage and indecent behaviour.

• Ousegate had a high incidence of violence. Improvements were made to the street lighting, CCTV, communication between CCTV operators and the police, implementation of the pub watch and door safe schemes. Since the Project was carried out crime has reduced by 50%.

• A Flaxley road project was set up to tackle crime and antisocial behaviour in the area and to promote community pride, the group aimed to tackle Domestic Violence, youth nuisance behaviour and other types of anti-social behaviour.

• Various operations have been mounted by the Police to deal with night time violence.

Licensing

• A pub Watch scheme runs in Selby town and an informal scheme runs across the rest of the District. Through Pub Watch individuals can be banned from entering any pub in the area if they have been involved in a violent or antisocial incident.

• The Licensing Committee have the power to revoke a licence but only in circumstances where it is absolutely necessary.

• Under a National scheme run by the Security Industry authority all door staff have to have an SIA badge and training so door staff should be better equipped to deal with situations and take on a more professional role. Police are carrying out searches to ensure that all door staff are registered.
• No drinking zones have been established throughout the District

• Information is passed to Trading Standards regarding underage alcohol purchases in order to initiate a test purchase on premises suspected of selling to under 18’s. Approximately 60 Test purchases are conducted per year across North Yorkshire it is purely complaint reactive.

Young People

• Proof of age cards are promoted through schools, CONNEXIONS and the police. There are two types: The Portman group card and the Citizen card. Five breweries represent the Portman Group.

• The Police Youth Action Officer holds a one-hour presentation to years 10 and 11 in Carlton, Brayton, Barlby, Selby and Sherburn High Schools on alcohol and crime awareness.

• Connexions provide education in schools relating to alcohol and the tier 1 and tier 2 services provided by Connexions relate to both drugs and alcohol.

• The National Society for Protection of Children from Cruelty (NSPCC) are funded by the children’s fund working with 5-14 year olds providing tier 1 and tier 2 services. A children’s service practitioner leads a peer support group once a week for children aged 8-13 years whose parents are misusing alcohol.

• Thirty-six Primary schools, years 5 and 6 have been visited in an ‘on the brink’ project with the NSPCC raising their awareness on the impact of alcohol during July 2002 and July 2003.

• A theatre initiative called Don’t Die Young was set up involving secondary schools across the District between February and March 2004. It involved a one-hour performance followed by a one-hour workshop. A local 12 year old who died after drinking cider inspired it and highlighted alcohol related issues as well as others such as teenage pregnancy, Sexually Transmitted Infections, crime and violence. Posters were also put up in all Off Licenses highlighting the dangers of binge drinking.

• Impact Training is done in connection with the Police, Fire Service and Youth Offending Team. This is a 2hour session offered once a year for year 10’s in High Schools involving a DVD based presentation mainly on auto crime and road collisions covering drink driving.

• Drive Alive done by the Police, Fire Service and YOT also covers alcohol and includes theatre tours such as Too Much Punch For Judy.
• Crucial Crew involves workshops for young people in schools aged 8 to 11. The young people are presented with a dangerous or challenging situation that they have to respond to via role-play. They offer a CD and an online game; the scenarios presented include a party where alcohol and drugs are available.
3. Health

Background

The government estimates the cost to the NHS of alcohol misuse at £1.7 billion a year. This includes 15,000-22,000 deaths and 150,000 hospital admissions each year associated with alcohol misuse mainly through stroke, certain cancers and liver disease. At peak times 70% of Accident and Emergency attendances are alcohol related. These figures cannot begin to reflect the pain and suffering of individuals and families.

Alcohol is also associated with unplanned pregnancy, mental health problems, accidental injury and suicide.

The majority of both binge and chronic drinkers are men, although women’s drinking is increasing. Alcohol related mortality is much more prevalent for men from manual occupations than in non-manual occupations. However, this does not apply to women, where older professional women suffer higher alcohol-related mortality rates than those in manual occupations. Those with mental health problems, drug use problems, and homeless people are all more likely to suffer alcohol-related problems than the general population. In general although those with higher incomes tend to drink more, those on lower incomes tend to suffer more alcohol-related problems.

Information

The NHS does not routinely collect information at a local level directly relating to alcohol; however it is possible to collect data on conditions that are related to alcohol misuse such as coronary heart disease and stroke. Local Accident and Emergency departments do not collect information on alcohol related attendance, and so we are reliant on national figures for this. The Alcohol Concern study has made recommendations on how to improve local data collection, and this is reflected in the action plan.

National policy

Nationally the AHRSE is the first overarching strategy to tackle alcohol misuse. The health elements of this work have been given prominence in the recent public health white paper, Choosing Health. Priority F in the Delivery Plan for Choosing Health is “reducing harm and encouraging sensible drinking”. The main actions it lists are to improve information about sensible drinking; raise awareness; better enforcement of age limits; increasing access to and effectiveness of treatment; screening and brief interventions; and

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10 Alcohol Concern Selby Alcohol Impact Study 2005, p19
11 Alcohol Concern Selby Alcohol Impact Study 2005, p20
12 London Drug and Alcohol Network, Local Alcohol Strategy Toolkit 2004
planning local responses\textsuperscript{13}. From 2006 funding will be made available by the government for developing alcohol services through the pooled budget for substance misuse.

**Treatment**

A national audit of treatment services has recently been carried out. This was followed in Spring 2005 by Models of Care guidance from the National Treatment Agency\textsuperscript{14} - the first clear national standard for provision and quality of alcohol treatment services.

An initial focus will be on improving training and guidance for health professionals on identifying alcohol problems at an early stage. Screening to pick up on signs of alcohol misuse is being developed across the country. Brief interventions where a health professional discusses alcohol use with the patient (often opportunistically when they are seeing the patient for a different reason) will be piloted in different ways in primary care and hospitals\textsuperscript{15}. One local GP practice is currently piloting a brief interventions approach locally.

Thirdly, we will also continue to develop campaigns and public health messages to encourage sensible drinking and part of a health lifestyle.

Once the national guidance is issued we will have a clearer picture of how treatment services will be developed in Selby District.

**Priorities for action**

For 2005-6 the priority area is to raise awareness of the harm that alcohol misuse can cause, both for the general population and for specific groups such as young people.

From 2006 the Models of Care guidance will be implemented with an initial focus on developing care pathways for alcohol treatment and the provision of brief interventions in Primary Care

\textsuperscript{14} details of forthcoming guidance at www.nta.nhs.uk/programme/guidance/models.htm  
\textsuperscript{15} for further info see Health Development Agency (2003) *Evidence Briefing on the Prevention and Reduction of Alcohol Misuse*
3.0) Alcohol Related Crime and Disorder

Background

The Government estimates the cost of alcohol related crime to be £7.3 billion per year, far greater than any other harm identified. Nationally there are problems with violence in the night time economy, underage drinking, drink driving, domestic violence and repeat offenders. The greatest areas of concern in Selby District are violence in the night time economy and underage drinking.

Alcohol offences can be directly related to alcohol such as licensing offences and drunk and disorderly, others have a less obvious link such as criminal damage, public order offences and assault. There are also the antisocial behaviour aspects associated with alcohol misuse including litter, noise and vandalism.

Domestic Violence

There is a link between alcohol and Domestic Violence; alcohol misuse in perpetrators of Domestic Violence can be up to seven times higher than the general population. It has also been stated that over one third of the total Domestic Violence incidents nationally are alcohol related.

Drink Driving

Drink driving has been reduced over the years by hard hitting national publicity campaigns, however in 1993-2001 the number of road traffic accidents caused by driving whilst over the limit rose by one fifth and there are still approximately five hundred alcohol related accidents nationally per year. Convictions for drink driving offences rose by 30% from 2003 to 2004 in Selby District and 12% of all probation orders in 2003/2004 related to drink driving.

Repeat Offenders

Approximately 20% of individuals arrested for alcohol related offences have had previous convictions. Young people that are not alcohol dependant but drink often and heavily are more likely to be responsible for violent crime than Young People who do not drink heavily and in this case brief interventions are

17 London Drug and Alcohol Network, Local Alcohol Strategy Toolkit 2004
19 London Drug and Alcohol Network, Local Alcohol Strategy Toolkit 2004
20 Alcohol Concern Selby Alcohol Impact Study 2005, p23
needed to help the offender recognise and tackle their alcohol misuse. If the offender is alcohol dependant more structured treatment may be necessary \(^{21}\).

**Information**

A crime audit is compiled every three years including annual crime figures relating to alcohol offences and the fear of crime in Selby District. In addition the Police collects information on alcohol related antisocial behaviour and offending for both young people and adults, The Community Safety Partnership Executive board monitors community safety performance figures monthly.

**Priorities**

To reduce alcohol related crime by:

**Raising awareness of Domestic Violence through:**
- An awareness campaign targeted at alcohol consumers in pubs in Selby District

**Reducing violence in the night-time economy through:**
- Range of intelligence-led targeted interventions in Selby Town
- Range of awareness campaigns for retailers and the general public in Selby District
- Gathering information to respond to issues as they arise in Selby District

**Tackling Antisocial Behaviour issues related to alcohol through:**
- Raising awareness on the hazards of drink driving
- Range of interventions to tackle antisocial behaviour caused by underage drinking
- Mapping of alcohol related antisocial behaviour to identify emerging patterns

4.0) Licensing

The Licensing Act 2003 has four key objectives

- The prevention of crime and disorder
- Public safety
- The prevention of public nuisance
- The protection of children from harm.

This Act effectively makes local authorities responsible for licensing. In addition Pubs can apply to have longer opening hours up to 24 hours per day, the Police will have the power to close down a premises temporarily for the prevention of crime and disorder and each licensee will have to produce a plan on how they intend to operate. The changes to the closing times of pubs and clubs is intended to reduce the amount of people leaving premises at a set time in order to prevent violence and disorder. The local situation in Selby is that premises need to apply to Selby District Council for a new style license by 6th August 2005 no applications are expected for twenty-four hour opening in Selby District.

Licensing has links to other areas such as planning and regeneration, these other issues need to be considered when making licensing decisions. The long-term vision for an area should be considered when making decisions and plans should be made to reduce violence and disorder related to binge drinking.

Other factors such as the increased strain on street cleaning services and on transport provision needs to be considered when making licensing changes in the area. Licensing and enforcement has to be co-ordinated via partnership working in order to be successful.

A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) was done on how the new Licensing Act will impact locally in Selby District. The HIA looked at the likely health impacts of the new licensing act, and how to minimise negative outcomes whilst making the most of positive new opportunities.

Health impacts in Selby were identified such as the Impact on A&E, Increased likelihood of becoming a victim of crime, Involvement of alcohol in perpetrating

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22 London Drug and Alcohol Network, *Local Alcohol Strategy Toolkit 2004*
crimes, families of drinkers being affected, more victims and perpetrators of alcohol related crime, Impact on police resources, wider community involvement, stress, increase in accidents and drink driving.

Possible suggestions were made to maximise health benefits from the policy, these were:

1. Approach relevant NHS trusts to see if more information about the location of alcohol-related injuries can be collected and shared – this might preset a wider opportunity to look at information sharing on a wider level
2. Investigate possibilities for training / induction for bar staff
3. Set up a licensing forum (including licensees) to guide the development and implementation of the policy and issues surrounding licensing
4. Establish a best practice guide or charter

Priorities for action

- To implement and understand the Licensing Act 2003 through multi-agency and partnership working
- Set up a Licensing Forum
- Develop best practice guide/charter
5.0) Children and Young People

Young people under the age of 16 are drinking more now than they did ten years ago and start drinking earlier than other young people in Europe\textsuperscript{23}.

The harms that can be caused by young people drinking include alcohol poisoning, accidents, unsafe sex and longer-term illnesses such as cancer. Alcohol misuse in Young People is also linked to anxiety, depression, suicide and self-harm\textsuperscript{23}.

It is becoming of increasing concern nationally that young people are binge drinking, mixing drugs and alcohol, drinking unsupervised and that young girls are drinking more\textsuperscript{23}.

A parent misusing alcohol can also affect children; this can lead to physical or sexual harm and also other factors such as mental illness and isolation. The child of a parent who misuses alcohol may become misusers themselves and have a 2.2 to 3.9 higher rate of developing a psychiatric disorder\textsuperscript{23}.

There is some evidence that drugs education can reduce the likelihood that young people will take drugs, therefore alcohol education may reduce the likelihood that young people will start to misuse alcohol. It has also been suggested that a harm reduction approach is the most effective for getting the sensible drinking message across\textsuperscript{23}.

Vulnerable young people are particularly at risk of developing serious alcohol problems. These individuals include looked after children, young offenders, truants and runaways\textsuperscript{23}.

Priorities for action

Raising awareness of alcohol related harm through:
- A range of awareness campaigns targeted at young people and their parents/carers
- Awareness campaigns targeted at off licenses on not to sell alcohol to underage individuals

Reviewing the alcohol education in Schools through:
- Monitoring who is going into Schools and what they are doing
- Researching evidence of best practice of alcohol education
- Targeted interventions for at risk groups
- Work with Schools to find new ways of getting messages across

\textsuperscript{23} London Drug and Alcohol Network, \textit{Local Alcohol Strategy Toolkit 2004}
Glossary of terms

Alcohol related offences

Alcohol offences include licensing offences, drunk and disorderly, breach of the peace, criminal damage and assault (including sexual assault and domestic violence).

Anti-social behaviour

Anti-social behaviour is any behaviour that negatively affects the quality of life of other people such as noise and vandalism.

Binge drinking

Drinking twice the recommended alcohol limits or more in one day. The phrase is also sometimes used to refer to drinking with the aim of getting drunk.

Chronic drinking

Drinking more than the recommended daily alcohol limits regularly.

Drink driving legal limit

The legal limit for drink driving is 35 micrograms of alcohol per 100 millilitres of breath (or 80 milligrams of alcohol per 100 millilitres of blood).

Drink driving safe limit

There is no safe limit as any amount of alcohol affects reactions, the amount of alcohol in the system is affected by weight, sex, age, metabolism, stress levels, amount of food eaten and amount and type of alcohol consumed.

Domestic Violence

Domestic Violence is any form of abuse or threat including physical, mental, psychological, financial or sexual in a current or past intimate relationship.

Excessive drinking

Drinking more than the recommended daily alcohol limits.

Recommended daily limits for sensible drinking

- A maximum intake of 2-3 units per day for women and 3-4 units for men, with two alcohol free days after a heavy drinking session; continued drinking at the upper limit is not advised
- Intake of up to 2 units a day can have a moderate protective effect against heart disease for men over 40 and post-menopausal women
Some groups such as pregnant women or those engaging in potentially dangerous activities (such as operating heavy machinery) should drink less or nothing at all.

Units

Units refer to the amount of alcohol in a drink. A rough guide is:
One 25 ml pub measure of spirits (40%) = 1 unit
One 175ml (medium) glass of normal strength wine (12%) = 2 units
One 275ml bottle of alcopop (5.5%) = 1.5 units
One pint of normal strength lager (3.5%) = 2 units