

EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION



REPORT OF: Executive Member for Public Health and Wellbeing

LEAD OFFICERS: Director of Public Health & Wellbeing

DATE: Thursday, 10 March 2022

PORTFOLIO(S) AFFECTED: Public Health and Wellbeing

WARD/S AFFECTED: (All Wards);

KEY DECISION: Y

SUBJECT:

EB Alcohol Strategy

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In order to progress the aims of our Borough to reduce Alcohol Harms we have updated and revised our Alcohol Strategy.

Alcohol Harms continue to have a significant impact on our population, across all age and social groups. All levels of alcohol consumption may cause harms and we want to expand on and clarify the advice given in our previous Alcohol Strategy, the National Alcohol Strategy and the Chief Medical Officer's Alcohol Guidelines.

The UK National Alcohol Strategy was last updated in 2012, our last local Alcohol Strategy ran up to 2017. Much in these National and Local strategies remains valid and our updated strategy aims to bring our local alcohol issues into sharper focus.

Our intention for our new Alcohol Strategy is to explain and simplify the facts around the risks attached to all levels of alcohol use. We have tried to use less formal language and to explain complex issues in plain language.

Alcohol harms affect all aspects of our communities and lives, not everybody who needs help with their alcohol use knows about or accesses our local, free, Alcohol Service. We know that when people access our local Alcohol Service treatment outcomes are very good. We want our residents to know that clear, non-judgemental, professional advice about their use of alcohol is available from our local Alcohol Service.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board:

Approves and supports the Blackburn with Darwen Alcohol Strategy. Alcohol harms and alcohol misuse costs impact significantly upon our Borough and we have a duty of care to help our residents understand how to reduce the risks of alcohol harms.

Executive Members also note that encouraging self-care among residents is important along with informed workforce development for the Council, partners and key stakeholders.

3. BACKGROUND

Since 1st April 2013 upper tier and or unitary Local Authorities (LA's) have had responsibility under the Health and Social Care Act (2012) for improving the health of their local population and for public health services including those aimed at promoting responsible drinking and reducing prevalence of alcohol harms. Local and National Alcohol Strategies have tended to be high level documents which in our view left them not as accessible as we feel a document such as this should be. We have tried to make our new Alcohol Strategy informative, understandable and relevant. We want the residents of Blackburn with Darwen to understand and make use of the information therein. We want our partners to be able to clearly identify which elements of the Strategy they can support us to achieve.

In Blackburn with Darwen only around 20% of the people who need help and/or treatment for their alcohol use come forward for support at our alcohol service. So, one out of every five people who need help actually present for support at our treatment service or other health professionals. This figure is broadly the same across England so we do not stand alone here.

We know that people do very well when they engage with our local Alcohol Service so we wanted to enable our residents to understand their relationship with alcohol and when and how to get help or advice.

Alcohol impacts upon the Borough and its residents in many ways, health harms, relationship difficulties, offending and societal – the impact of all these can cost our Borough vast amounts across multiple services. We have sadly a significant number of people who die from their misuse of alcohol, this has significant impact on families and children.

The aim of our Strategy says “Inform, Explain Clarify” and this is what we set out to do, give people the right information so they can identify when alcohol steps over the line from being a social activity to becoming a problem.

4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

The Borough's last Alcohol Strategy ran until 2017, a new National Alcohol Strategy was expected in 2018 together with a review of Minimum Unit Pricing for Alcohol. These have not as yet materialised and so our new Alcohol strategy has been drafted for the Borough to support our aims to continue to tackle alcohol related harms across all ages and social groups.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The Alcohol Strategy will be aligned to both local and national alcohol guidance and recommendations, the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, local Transforming Lives strategy, local Vulnerable People Strategy, the Early Help Strategy, and will also consider implications with regards to a number of other developing strategic agendas.

The NHS long-term plan and also local Pennine Lancashire prevention plans will also be considered.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising directly from the contents of this report.

However, implementation of the Strategy may have financial implications for the Council. Where this is the case, any such financial implications are expected to be contained within existing budgets and available funding. Where this is not the case, authority for additional expenditure will be dealt with in accordance with the normal decision making processes set out in the Council's Financial Procedure Rules.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

As a unitary authority, under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, we have statutory responsibility for improving the health of our local population and for public health services, including those aimed at promoting responsible drinking and reducing prevalence of alcohol harms. This strategy aims to assist the Council to fulfil that statutory responsibility.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no resource implications.

9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below.

Option 1 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision.

Option 3 In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision.

10. CONSULTATIONS

Consulted with Key Partners and their recommendations are now incorporated into the strategy.

11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

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DATE:	17.12.21
BACKGROUND PAPER:	