

Modernising Scotland's Licensing Laws: Report on a conference consultation

Professor Paul Spicker

Sue Morris

Veronica Strachan

Ross Martin

Centre for Public Policy and Management, Robert Gordon University

These comments were written in response to a questionnaire administered during the conference on "Modernising Scotland's Licensing Laws" on 5th November 2001. The conference was organised by Capital Conferences Scotland and the Scottish Forum for Modern Government, in association with McGrigor Donald. The questionnaire was designed by members of the Centre for Public Policy and Management, Robert Gordon University.

51 people responded, of 58 people attending the conference. Those who did not respond were the members of the Centre for Public Policy and Management and the Scottish Forum for Modern Government responsible for the questionnaire, a solicitor from McGrigor Donald engaged in conference organisation, and two members of the Nicholson Commission.

The 51 respondents included:

- 9 members of licensing boards
- 6 Clerks and Depute Clerks to Licensing Boards
- 10 representatives of different kinds of licensees
- 4 officials concerned with administration of licences and inspection of licensed premises

- 6 police officers
- 7 lawyers with an interest in the field
- 3 people concerned with health and health promotion
- 3 persons working in alcohol advice
- 2 trainers to the licensed trade, and
- 1 community councillor.

The questionnaire consisted of six broadly framed, open-ended, qualitative questions, intended not to elicit precise responses but to draw out a range of views. The questions were:

1. What is your role and interest in this field?
2. Why do we need licensing laws?
3. What do you think are the main problems which stem from current law and practice on licensing?
4. What changes should be made to the licensing laws, and why?
5. How can the problems associated with alcohol best be addressed?
6. What sort of initiatives and responses to alcohol related problems do you think have not worked?

Most of the words used below are the words of the respondents; the categories have been introduced by the researchers. The

categories used below reflect the pattern of the answers rather than the structure of the questionnaire. The issues which are identified below, like concerns with consistency of board decision, the types of licence, training, were not prompted by the questionnaire, but were raised independently by the respondents.

General comments on the purposes of the licensing laws have not been associated with specific types of respondent. Responses relating to specific points have been attributed to classes of respondent, except where this might lead directly to identification of the respondent.

In the sections which follow, direct quotations have been presented in italics. The headings and any editorial material are in a normal font.

The purpose of the licensing laws

A clear statement is needed of why we have the licensing laws and what they should achieve (Licensee)

1. The control and supply of alcohol

*Control supply of alcohol
To control what is, if abused, a dangerous product, to ensure its enjoyment as far as possible
To reduce alcohol misuse and its effects
Regulation and control of addictive substance
to control the availability of alcohol
Regulation provides a safer and controlled environment for the consumption and sale of alcohol.
Essentially to control the distribution of alcohol to the public.
To regulate the sale of alcohol.
Regulate sale of supply of alcoholic liquor
Regulation of sale and consumption of alcohol, a potentially dangerous substance misuse of which has implications for health and public order
To control the supply and consumption of alcohol
Regulation of the sale of alcohol*

To control and regulate the effects of alcohol consumption on individual and the wider community

To regulate social problems which might arise from sale and supply of a drug

To ensure that its use is within the boundaries of what is considered as socially acceptable

To regulate consumption of alcohol through sales

Reduction in excessive consumption

To regulate (carefully) the availability of alcohol, which is a harmful drug if used inappropriately

To try to minimise consumption, consequences of consumption

To regulate a legal drug

To influence patterns of consumption

To regulate the sale, supply and consumption of alcohol

2. The protection of vulnerable users

The basic concept of the 1976 reforms needs to be reinforced, namely a more liberal approach to availability of drink together with qualitative awareness of dangers

To regulate the availability and standards of alcohol provision to the public

To prevent or control alcohol abuse

To regulate who buys and protect if possible some of the vulnerable members of the community

To promote health and a balanced lifestyle

If accepted alcohol is legal, to ensure product is safe and safely dispensed.

To protect juveniles and other vulnerable people

To regulate consumption, particularly among the young and vulnerable

Protection of young and vulnerable persons

We need to protect people from themselves when they've had a few to drink

To protect the underage and vulnerable

3. Protection of the public

To ensure public safety and public order on our streets

Public safety

public safety linked to social well-being and health issues

to ensure that the peace of an area is disturbed as little as possible in the interests of public order and public safety
The protection of the public and the maintenance of public order and safety.
Protection of the public from drunks
To control behaviour which may interfere with and damage the legitimate rights of others
Control consumption for health and public order
To help maintain public order
To protect society
To regulate, administer and set conditions of licence to ensure public safety, control public health and ensure a safe environment for the community
To promote a safe environment where members of the public may enjoy social interaction along with the consumption of alcohol
Public order, health issues
To look after the public who use our services and to show responsibility for our actions (Licensed trade)

4. The control of licensed premises and licensees

Set and monitor standards for licence holders and licensed premises
To regulate and control the sale of liquors from licensed premises and the operation of such premises
We must have standards and control as to achieve parity
Regulation of specific business area
Control supply and location of licensed premises for the benefit of society
To keep control of licence holders
To regulate the trade
To have some form of level playing field applying to those in the industry (licensee)
The pub is a key part of the community and should therefore observe standards which reflect this
To ensure people running public houses are properly trained and understand their responsibilities (Licensed trade)
To promote industry (Licensee)

5. The public interest

Regulation in the public interest
To ensure that social, medical and environmental problems relating to alcohol consumption are minimised
form of social control - address the balance of availability v. prohibition, punishment for wrong doing
to ensure a fair system that allows people to enjoy themselves and those who serve to make a comfortable living (licensed trade)
To have elements of consistency and control to protect the quality of life of citizens to balance the needs of the community against the needs of the trade (Board member)
To balance the needs of consumers, business and general public (licensee)
To act as arbiter between needs of business and the need for regulation (licensee)
Without them, anarchy would rule. Too relevant a subject to be left unregulated (Clerk)
To regulate and control a social function that has the potential to have drastic effects on society
The social welfare and health of the community
Control - safeguarding
To ensure social and environmental concerns are met
To protect the environment, the public interest and domain
Licensing laws are need to provide a reasonable framework ... otherwise there would be chaos
For the benefit of public health and safety

Problems with the current law

The law is out of date

Current law is out of date with modern social attitudes.
The 1976 Law is out of date and not longer copes with the demands of today's society.
Should be subject to a regular review to ensure it keeps pace with society
Insufficient focus on social attitudes in current society
Archaic rules reflecting on a continuously

changing market
Outdated approach at present
Existing law has become dated with progress in technology and public attitude towards drink
Adequacy of existing legislation to current lifestyles
Updated procedures to reflect changes in society
Restrictions where none required - why can I not buy a glass of wine in the Burrell Gallery at 3.30 on Sunday when I can at 2.30?
Cafe street extensions should be rewritten - the purchaser has to go inside to buy!

Views that the law does not meet its aims

Public disorder caused by binge drinking and closing times (Advice worker)
Binge drinking, happy hour culture (licensee)
Binge drinking especially among young people (licensee)
Overconsumption of alcohol; alcohol related crime and disorder (Police)
It does not reduce people's alcohol intake (Clerk)
Health and public disorder problem
Too much emphasis is placed on money, i.e. profits for retailers and manufacturers ... not related to rest of community (taxis, police time, etc.) (Trainer)
Little or no control of market/competition (Licensee)
Little regard given to public disorder or public safety (Licensee)
It permits large (and small) scale drunkenness with resultant disorder and nuisance
The current act concentrates on the technical legal framework and fails to foster an environment in which social and cultural attitudes to drink in Scotland can be more than marginally influenced (Clerk)

Clarity of rules

Lack of clarity and inconsistency due to different interpretations of e.g. over-provision, suitable/unsuitable premises, fitness/unfitness of licensee, stringency of testing need for regular extensions, registered clubs outwith the licensing

procedure - why? (Licensing official)
If possible a less "legal" approach (Board Member)
Too much red tape (Licensed trade)
Law is too complicated. Should be written in an easy to understand way. There should be a clear underlying philosophy to help define any grey areas (trainer)
Overly complicated regulations (Clerk)
Lots of red tape involved (Licensed trade)
Procedures and categories of grant seem unduly complicated (Board member)
Far too complicated, and intimidating a system at present (Police officer)

Inconsistencies in licensing practice

Bureaucracy, inconsistency, lack of fairness and openness in system (lawyer)
Too much variability in operation from area to area (Clerk)
Inconsistencies (lawyer)
Inconsistency ... subjectivity of decisions by boards (Licensed Trade)
Each local council can make their own policies which may not coincide with neighbouring towns (Licensed Trade)
Inconsistent application of the law (Licensee)
Inconsistent licensing board decisions (Licensee)
Lack of consistency in legislation (Licensed trade)
They are over complicated and apply different standards to what are similar operations... There is a need for national standards for all licensees and boards. There is also a need for flexibility in the way in which the law is applied (licensee)
Variation of licenses (Board member)
Varying practice by boards within the existing framework - an attempt should be made to bring more uniformity of practice in dealing with entertainment licences (Board Member)
National guidelines on permitted hours, children's certificates etc,
Major differences in the way the law is applied ... too much protection for the trade (Police Officer)
There should be a national body which sets guidelines for all licensing boards (Trainer)
Not enough consistency between individual

boards and with our European counterparts
(Health promotion worker)
More standardisation (needed) across
Scotland (Lawyer)
Consistency of policy (lawyer)
Simplify the whole business so some degree
of certainty and consistency is applied
(lawyer)
Inconsistency in relation to decisions made
by Licensing Board ... Streamlining licensing
boards with more definitive guidelines to
ensure a more consistent approach (Police
officer)
The law at present does not set a consistent
high (or even reasonable) standard for those
that hold licences. Poor practice is not
punished, high standards are not required ...
licences are rarely taken away. In 2000 only
3 licences were refused on the grounds that
the applicant was not a fit person. (Trainer)
More consistency (lawyer)
Standard conditions of licence throughout
the country (Licensing official)
Greater advice notes from central
government (similar to planning) resulting in
greater consistency. (Licensing official)
Licensing Boards should become a
standardised, trained body of people,
capable of a degree of consistency (Police)

Overprovision of licences

Overprovision of licences in some areas
(Advice worker)
The perception among some is that there are
in places too many licences (lawyer)
Lack of clear definition over provision
(Board Member)
Licence overprovision (Advice worker)
Overprovision of licenses (Licensed trade)
Difficulty with overprovision of premises
(Police officer)
No clear definition of overprovision
(Licensed trade)
Possible overprovision of licensed premises
(Police officer)
Reduce number of licences (Licensing
official)
Better definition of overprovision (Board
Member)
Reduction in outlets leads to greater
competition, secret drinking behind closed

doors
Overprovision issues/number of licences
need clarification (lawyer)

Proposed reforms

Simplification

All general procedures to be simplified
(Clerk)
Less bureaucracy in administration (Board
Member)
Law is too complex - a lawyer's paradise
(Board Member)
Clarification of laws, simplification of
procedures (lawyer)
Overcomplicated and restrictive where
efforts to run a flexible business catering for
various needs (lawyer)
It is too bureaucratic, the Act is unwieldy. A
consolidating Act is required.
The licensing process is close to being
incomprehensible to anyone but licensing
lawyers - simplify the licensing laws (Clerk)
Over-complicated, over-regulated system
(lawyer)
System is cumbersome and complicated -
could be streamlined (Licensing official)
Simplification of licensing system (Police
officer)
Simplification required; too much red tape
(Police officer)

Types of licence

Removing various types of licences which
are by their nature restrictive (lawyer)
Reduce no of types of licence (Board
member)
Licence to be tailored through use of
conditions to activities applicant wishes to
carry one (Clerk)
Too many types of licence available
(Licensed trade)
Rigid/arbitrary types of licences (Clerk)
Too many types of licences (Board Member)
Types of grant need to be simplified (Board
member)
Categories of licences no longer reflect the
operation of the trade (Clerk)
Less "types" of licence (Clerk)
Laws in licensed clubs require amendment

(Police officer)

Why are clubs not licensed by the same board (Licensed trade)

The licensing laws should be simplified in terms of types of licence available, to reduce bureaucracy (Board Member)

Consolidation of groups of licences (Clerk)

Types of licenses to be reviewed e.g. restricted hotel licence - is it still necessary? (lawyer)

Clarification and perhaps easing of types of licence required in order to provide bars at functions outside of the premises actually licensed (licensing official)

Introduce two simple tests: (1) suitability of individual to hold a licence, (2) suitability of premises - health and safety considerations. (Lawyer)

Replace with system which permits sale of alcohol in line with permitted use (lawyer)

Confusion relating to planning law

*Proliferation of successful public house licence applications where planning consent is for cafe/restaurants/hotels/nightclubs
Planning and licensing can become confused (Licensed trade)*

Planning approvals link in argument for new licence grant, and are used in appeal (Board Member)

Problem with suitability of premises arguments (Clerk)

The operation of Licensing Boards

Boards should be able to meet more frequently and have increased powers of delegation to deal with business. (Clerk)

Boards have not moved with the times - applicants can be, and often are, much better supported than Boards on the day (Police Officer)

Our decisions should be more open (Board Member)

More professional approach from all participants (Licensing official)

Reduce no of Councillors on Boards (Licensing official)

should be local authority committee, not a Board (Licensing official)

Too restrictive a timetable - boards should

meet as and when required

Application for extensions is prolonged - why not use the web? (Licensee)

Fewer Councillors on Boards (Clerk)

More meetings of Boards (Clerk)

Unrealistic time limits (Clerk)

Coordination with other bodies

Lack of coordination; lack of "partnership forums" to address issues, e.g. police, health, business etc. (Health Promotion Worker)

Multi agency licensing Boards (Advice Worker)

Partnerships (a) between Boards, as a means of sharing best practice (b) between the trade and the police (c) between education/health authorities and the trade (Police officer)

Joint partnerships between all the bodies to address key issues (Licensed trade)

Links between alcohol policy and licensing, e.g. licensing boards to be represented on Alcohol Misuse Coordinating Committees.

Possibly health and alcohol experts should also be on licensing boards i.e. regain some community councillors but have a quota of elected "expert" representatives (Trainer)

Powers of Licensing Boards

Automatic right to suspend licence on grounds of public safety. All other types of suspensions can proceed on the present procedure. Essential to give immediate public protection. (Clerk)

Lack of control available to Boards to deal with problem premises - suspension, closure Boards are inhibited from acting due to powers of challenge/appeal. (Clerk)

Too difficult to close problem places in some instances (lawyer)

Improve suspensions (Clerk)

Licensing Boards should be able to attach conditions to ensure premises are safely run (Trainer)

Flexible practices between licensing boards to ensure local needs are catered for (Police)

Greater flexibility, along with standard conditions to ensure consistency (Licensee)

They should have powers of closure in emergency situations (Clerk).

More powers for Licensing Boards e.g. immediate suspension (Board member)
Decision to suspend licences to be immediately effective (Board member)
Greater police/licensing board powers (lawyer)
Boards and police to be given stronger powers in controlling licence holders who abuse system (Licensing official)
Power to make qualifications mandatory (at present Boards often act outwith the law) (Lawyer)
Making small changes to local circumstances

Enforcement

Stronger enforcement when law is broken - loss of licence!! (Board Member)
Ineffective suspensions (Clerk)
The licensing laws themselves appear to be unenforceable from the police and licensing board perspective (Licensee)
Lack of significant control on problematic premises and operators (Lawyer)
Cumbersome procedures for obtaining and renewing licences etc. (Lawyer)
Lack of control over excessive drinking, noise, disturbance, violence (lawyer)
Better implementation and policing of current legislation (Advice worker)
Far too slow to react and deal with problem operations by police and licence boards. (Licensee)
(The laws) should be simplified, but more importantly, should be applied and enforced stringently (Advice Worker)
There are no effective sanctions (Clerk)
Stricter enforcement of legislation (Licensee)
Police to fine public disorder offenders, like litter fines just introduced (Licensee)
Licences should be easier to lose (Trainer)
Better procedures for dealing with rogue operators (licensed trade)
Stiffer penalties for breaches of Act (Clerk)
There is too little enforcement of the law (Trainer)
Tougher penalties for those who breach law (lawyer)
Combat bootlegging (Licensed trade)
Amendment to legislation re dance events - totally ignored, so far as I can see. (Clerk)
Much less restriction but with far greater

power to penalise infringements (Clerk)
Penalties imposed by Boards should be made more immediately effective (Board member)
(Problem:) Tariff of penalties applied to transgressing licensees (Police)
Improved suspension system; improved police powers in relation to overconsumption (Police)
Stiffer penalties for not conforming to conditions of licence (Clerk)
Stiffer penalties should be administered through the courts for acts of violence and for being drunk in a public place (Licensing official)
More resources and powers for police (lawyer)
Stricter penalties for sale to those who have consumed too much (Licensing official)
Stricter control on dubious practices (Police officer)

Appeals

Lack of appeal in regular extension applications (Clerk)
Delay in appeals (Clerk)
Appeals procedure speeded up (licensed trade)
Fast track appeal system (Clerk)
An expedited appeal process to protect applicants (Clerk)
(Problem:) decision being overturned by Sheriff (Board member)
Appeal process favours applicant (Board Member)
Remove planning approval as a legitimate argument at Board on appeal (Board Member)
Appeals system renders Board actions against offenders ineffective (Board member)
Not supported by justice system (Board Member)
Prolonged legal processes do not address and resolve current problems ... Appeals processes dealt with quicker so that suspension are immediate but will a realistic period for an outcome to any appeal (Police)

Objections

Abolish technical requirements of valid objection (Clerk)

Overly technical objections (Clerk)
Lack of public participation due to legalistic structure - objectors are not able to present their views (Clerk)
Make public participation easier - too hard to object (Clerk)
Simplify procedures for objectors - minimum objections to be sent to Board to notify to applicant (Clerk)
System at present does not assist in any way credible objectors (Police)
Improve objection system (Clerk)
Objections once lodged should be intimated to the Applicant by the Clerk (Clerk)
Objectors see the process as being somewhat daunting (Board member)
Not always clear to the public what they can do and where to go if they wish to object to some licences being issued - make assistance (Board member)
Easier to object - same as Civic licensing (Licensing official)

Access for the public

Too legalistic for the majority of the public (Clerk)
More consultation with those agencies who deal with the consequences of misuse (Advice worker)
A lot of public involvement in the process of building up to grant (Board Member)
Access to Boards / meetings must be made easier (Police officer)
Lack of public involvement in deciding issues (Health promotion worker)

Need for training

Lack of training of licensees and board members (Clerk)
Lack of training for board members and for staff (Advice worker)
Make training for Board Members, Licence Holders and Staff mandatory to improve standards and educate on alcohol misuse (Clerk)
(We need) less involvement by poorly trained/equipped people (lawyer)
Compulsory training that has integrity both for the trade and relevant bodies, e.g. a qualification ... make the trade a profession

which has standards and career structure (Licensed trade)
All licence holders should hold a recognised qualification (Licensed trade)
Compulsory training on law, management, alcohol, education (Clerk)
Educate licensees and drinkers (Clerk)
Mandatory qualification (not just training) (Licensed trade)
Qualifications needed and training required (Police officer)
Training for licensees and drinkers (Clerk)
Train licence holders; emphasise need for Boards to be educated, too (Clerk)
There should be mandatory training for Board Members and Licensees (Clerk)
Training of licence holders and their staff
Compulsory training for licence holders (Board Member)
Compulsory training for all involved in licensed trade (Police officer)
Mandatory training for licence-holders and those administering system (lawyer)
Training required (Licensing official)
Training, including legal and social responsibilities, should be mandatory for all servers of alcohol (Trainer)
Compulsory training for licensees at regular intervals to ensure ongoing fitness to hold the licence and to keep up to date with changes and new initiatives (Health promotion worker)
Training for licensees (Health promotion worker)
Training of staff and management in proper safe working practices (Licensing official)
Lack of awareness/training for licence holders (certification would be of benefit) (Police)

Need for family based premises

Greater emphasis on family-based premises (lawyer)
Children's certificates have not been a great success and have not helped tourist trade. (Licensed trade)
Access to premises by children (Clerk)
Odd results re children in licensed premises (lawyer)
The rigidity of the children's certificate requirements should be relaxed to encourage

a more family use of more pubs (Board Members)
Lack of family provision (Police)
Families are excluded too often (licensed trade)
Access for children should be reviewed (Licensed trade)

Responsibilities of licence holders

Accountability through and with licence holders on some external issues associated with their positions - their actions outwith premises (Police)
Separation of premises/ person licences (Clerk)
If the licence is fit then they are fit (Licensee)
Greater emphasis on fitness to hold licences (lawyer)
Breach of licensing as a crime to be strengthened (lawyer)
Certification condition of grant of licence (Advice worker)
Stricter entry controls, and service should stop if a client is drunk (Board member)
Licence should be split into a premises licence and a personal licence ... Personal licence could then be endorsed or removed if breaches occur, like a driving licence (Licensed trade)
More incentive to operate premises in a way which benefits people (lawyer)
How do you determine whether someone is drunk before serving? (Advice worker)
Stronger legal emphasis on social responsibilities of licensees (Clerk)
The responsibility of licence holders to extend beyond their premises (Licensing official)
Tightening of law required dealing quickly and effectively with licence holders whose premises cause trouble for society (Licensing official)
Too easy to become a licence holder (Clerk)
There is no account of the measures used by businesses to ensure well run premises (licensee)
Night clubs should be much tougher on drunkenness, and evict/call police on offenders. Clubs mostly to blame for excessive drinking abuse (Licensee)

Opening hours

Opening hours, binge drinking (Board Member)
Short drinking up time (Health promotion worker)
Cuts in opening hours (Board member)
A general and phased relaxation of licensing laws should be explored but with careful attention paid to the effects of almost 24 hour provision on communities (Police officer)
Dispense with permitted hours and allow trading hours to be set by licensees - as for most other activities (Lawyer)
Closing all nightclubs at same time - far more people on the street (lawyer)
If permitted hours are to continue, national guidance will be needed (Police Officer)
More flexibility of opening and closing hours (Clerk)
Liberalisation in conjunction with other initiatives - e.g. provision of transport home (health promotion worker)
Extended hours to clubs up to 3 a.m. ... should either be less i.e. 1 a.m. or much longer perhaps 6.a.m. - 3 am is the worst possible time for society and enforcement agencies/emergency services (Police officer)
Large numbers of people exit premises at same time (Licensed trade)
Should hours be reduced, I feel this will have little effect (Licensee)
Drinking up time increased to ? hour (Licensed trade)
Remove regular extensions (to become permitted hours) (Licensing officials)
A review of the categories of licences and permitted hours (lawyer)
Reduction in permitted hours (leads to) larger consumption within reduced hours, public disorder problems increase (Clerk)
Standard policy on regular extensions (Licensee)
Limiting hours lead to people discounting heavily to boost sales (Licensed trade)
Terminal hour causes disturbance when everyone is forced onto the street at the same time (licensed trade)

Problems associated with alcohol

Culture

*Culture - e.g. binge drinking, buying rounds
Excessive drinking is endemic in our culture
and not a product of system (lawyer)
Relaxation in availability of alcohol but
education of society required with aim to
eradicate drinking culture
Relax the prohibitory nature and make it less
appealing (Police officer)
Foster/ encourage environment in which
alcohol is seen as recreational activity rather
than end in itself
Social attitudes would need to be changed
(as in drinking and driving). Stop making
alcohol an add on to trendy drugs awareness
- drink is a much bigger problem.
don't glorify/glamorise alcohol and getting
drunk (lawyer)
Smoking issues to be considered - not
looking at health issues in isolation (Health
promotion worker)
Promotion of more responsible consumption
(Licensee)
Tackle cultural attitudes to alcohol (health
promotion worker)
Need to address the underlying attitudes to
alcohol (Trainer)
A cultural change to drinking and in
particular acceptance and availability to
children (Police officer)
Cultural change law as in drink driving can
help (Licensee)*

Responses to alcohol-related problems

Health promotion

*Re education - removal of the idea that it is
clever/manly to get falling down drunk at
night and be useless next day (Licensing
official)
Better education (lawyer)
More emphasis and resources on prevention
and education work (Health promotion
worker)
Social education - just as with smoking,
alcohol related problems to be more widely
addressed and "drink till drunk" attitude*

tackled.

*Education at school - this is where it starts
Better education relating to alcohol
Education and awareness training
Nipping in bud of problem - educating
children in school of the dangers associated
with drinking to excess
Enhanced educational resource deployment
(Board Member)
Education on the proper use of alcohol - the
trade should contribute financially (Board
member)
Education of public and licensed trade;
greater resourcing of education (Police)
Devoting time and money to education on
alcohol misuse
Good education and example preferably at
home and in the school (lawyer)
educate young people and people in the
industry (lawyer)
teach tolerance for the rights of others
(lawyer)
education - all involved in system and target
groups such as young people (lawyer)
local programmes to deal with local issues
(lawyer)
individuals being made to take responsibility
for their own actions lawyer)
Education, especially re personal health and
behaviour
Education (has not worked) because it has
not been given a high enough priority (Board
member)
Need to consider education in conjunction
with other initiatives (Health promotion
worker)
Government advertising on the dangers of
alcohol abuse (Licensing official)*

Reservations were expressed about several
health promotion initiatives:

*Initiatives that are treated in
isolation (Police officer)
Lack of coherence of public health
message
Education about "units"
Government "safe drinking
messages"
TV ads for teenagers
Preaching
"No" campaigns e.g. "Don't drink
and drive"*

Talking schemes and practice - Alcohol Liaison Officers etc.)
"Drink" is always lost in the "drugs" scenario in these projects.
Unaware of any that have worked
Critical attitude taken by some (i.e. GPs)
HEBS
Serवेश
I cannot think of one that has worked
They have had little or no effect; there is an increase in alcohol-related problems throughout Scotland.

Advertising

Restrictions on Advertising (Board member)
Reduce alcopops advertising (Board Member)
Restrict the amount of advertising (board member)
Restrictions on style of advertising (lawyer)
Control on marketing - what on earth is the justification for alcopops?
Make it less appealing to juveniles and adults alike by limiting advertising - learn the lessons of a similar ban on cigarette advertising (Police officer)
No advertising - treat the same as smoking (Licensee)

Limits on sale

Health warnings on bottles
Reduced alcohol content in drinks
Targeting manufacturers to reduce the strength of drinks (Trainer)
Smaller measures
Reduced drink promotions
Health warning on alcohol containers (Board member)
Restrictions on discounting (Health promotion worker)
Making cheap drinking / binge drinking encouraging practices illegal (Board member)
Prohibit heavy discounting (Licensed trade)
Reduced availability by less outlets (Board member)
Restrictions of off-sales provisions of alcohol (Police officer)

Under-age drinking

The age limit should be increased to 21 (Licensing official)
An understanding that people under 18 consume alcohol and that rather than lecture them there should be education on responsible drinking (lawyer)
Curb on under age drinking (Board Member)
Identification schemes - there is a definite potential here but with no obvious political backing (Police)
Underage drinking is not just about availability - it relates to that, advertising, peer groups and the culture of alcohol consumption (Licensee)
Parents to be involved when underaged drinkers are caught (Board Member)
change purchase age (lawyer)
make it more difficult for under 21s to drink unsupervised (lawyer)
Misuse by all age groups but particularly young people
Proof of age schemes (clerk; Board Member)
Portman group ID initiative to show proof of age needs to be legitimised. (Licensed trade)
Should regulate to prove age before purchase (Licensing official)
Under age consumption of alcohol
Identity cards for everyone under 18 (Board member)
Make it an offence for people under 18 to drink; 1997 Act only allows confiscation of alcohol (Board member)
Enforcement issues particularly related to under age drinking and associated problems (Police)
Ease of availability of alcohol to children and teenagers - tighten up and harden laws on underage drinking; provide children and teenagers with other things to do (sport etc - diversion) (health promotion worker)
Underage drinking (Licensing official)
Stricter penalties for sale to under age (Licensing official)

Reservations were raised:
Local proof of age schemes (trade)
Voluntary schemes for ID cards
(Lawyer)
I'm afraid that the young drunk will
always be with us! (Board member)

Strategic responses

A combination of prevention (health education, promotion, changing attitudes), treatment (services for those with alcohol related problems) and control (tax harmonisation, enforcement of licensing laws, price, control of discounting, reduction of licences per capita) (Advice worker)
Open and honest debate which should look outside UK to lessons learned elsewhere (Police officer)
Initiatives which relate solely to the availability of alcohol i.e. through Board legislation do not work in isolation
Needs a conjoined approach (lawyer)
More research needs to be done into the causes of this problem (Board member)
National alcohol strategy with committed resources (Advice worker)
For alcohol policy to be effective we need a combination of education, prevention, care and treatment and control (Advice worker)

Reservations were expressed about some strategic approaches:
Unsustainable projects - e.g. one year funding - we need to secure ongoing funding based on evidence of positive outcomes (health promotion worker)
Too many initiatives get limited funding and only run for a short period of time (Trainer)
Previous campaigns which may have lacked appropriate sanctions (Police)
Discretionary participation in schemes by those in the trade - regulation of things like training and use of door stewards must be compulsory (Police officer).

The Centre for Public Policy and Management

This report was prepared by the Centre for Public Policy and Management (CPPM) at the Robert Gordon University. The CPPM is one of Scotland's leading multi-disciplinary research centres, conducting applied policy research. The work of the CPPM is based on the application of a range of academic knowledge and professional expertise to the practical problems of public sector, voluntary and independent agencies. The staff attached to the centre have backgrounds in policy analysis, social administration, management, planning, law, economics and social research.

The Centre has close working contacts with local authorities throughout Scotland, the Scottish Parliament, MSPs, the Scottish Executive, voluntary organisations, government departments, agencies, professional and employee bodies and foundations. Recent and current research work has been undertaken for the Rowntree Foundation, the Great Northern Partnership, Scottish Enterprise Grampian, Aberdeen City Council, Dundee City Council and the European Social Fund. The work includes research, consultancy and evaluation. The CPPM's website can be consulted on <http://www.rgu.ac.uk/publicpolicy/cppm/>.

Centre for Public Policy and Management
Robert Gordon University
Kepplestone Mansion
Viewfield Road
Aberdeen AB15 7AW

Tel: 01224-263111

RGU Edinburgh Office
Dolphin House
4 Hunter Square
Edinburgh EH1 1QW

e-mail: cppm@rgu.ac.uk