

17 June 2008

Dear Consultee

## **CHANGING SCOTLAND'S RELATIONSHIP WITH ALCOHOL – A DISCUSSION PAPER ON OUR STRATEGIC APPROACH**

This letter invites you to have your say in how we, the Scottish Government, propose to tackle alcohol misuse in Scotland. We have good experience of improving public health in Scotland and we want to enable people to make positive choices about their alcohol use and to challenge the acceptability of drunkenness.

The discussion paper outlines a comprehensive package of measures aimed at reducing alcohol-related harm in Scotland. The paper can be accessed at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/06/16084348/0>. Some of the measures we are already committed to but we also set out some new proposals on which we are inviting comments. The paper is intended to spark discussion and debate about how best to tackle alcohol misuse and, in particular, we are seeking views on the following measures;

- further action to end irresponsible promotion and below-cost selling of alcoholic drinks in licensed premises;
- the introduction of minimum retail pricing of alcohol;
- what particular information parents would find helpful in relation to alcohol;
- raising the minimum purchase age to 21 in off-sales;
- the introduction of a 'social responsibility fee' applied to some alcohol retailers to offset the costs of dealing with the consequences of alcohol misuse;
- further restrictions on promotional material in licensed premises; and
- the desirability of separate checkouts for alcohol sales.

The consultation process provides you with the opportunity to express your opinion on the measures proposed which will help us to develop a robust strategic framework for publication later in the year. Details on how to respond to the consultation are attached below.

I very much hope that you will take the time to participate in the consultation and would like to thank you in advance for your contribution to this important debate.



**PAM WHITTLE**

## Responding to this consultation paper

**We are inviting written responses to this consultation by Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2008.**

Please remember to include the **Respondent Information Form**. You can cut out the Respondent Information Form along the scissor lines provided or print off a copy from the Scottish website at [www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations) (look for the consultation title among the list of 'current' consultations).

Fill in an **on-line response form** on the Scottish Government website at [www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations) (look for the consultation title among the list of 'current' consultations. The on-line form is located at the top of the contents page).

**Or**

**Email your response** to [Alcohol.Consultation@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Alcohol.Consultation@scotland.gsi.gov.uk). If emailing, please also include the **Respondent Information Form**, which can be accessed on-line at [www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations). (look at the consultation title among the list of 'current' consultations. The Respondent Information Form to be used for e-mail responses is located at the top of the contents page).

**Or**

**Post your response to:**

Consultation on Alcohol Misuse (CRE 1021),  
CSU, Spur U5b Saughton House,  
Broomhouse Drive,  
Edinburgh  
EH11 3XD

We would be grateful if you could clearly indicate in your response which questions or parts of the consultation paper you are responding to as this will aid analysis of the responses received. If you have any queries contact David Hamilton on 0131 244 4024.

This consultation, and all other Scottish Government consultation exercises, can be viewed on-line on the consultation web pages of the Scottish Government website at [www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations). You can telephone Freephone 0800 77 1234 to find out where your nearest public internet access point is.

The Scottish Government now has an email alert system for consultations (SEconsult: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations/seconsult.aspx>). This system allows stakeholder individuals and organisations to register and receive a weekly email containing details of all new consultations (including web links). SG Consultant complements, but in no way replaces SG distribution lists, and is designed to allow stakeholders to keep up to date with all SG consultation activity, and therefore be alerted at the earliest opportunity to those of most interest. We would encourage you to register.

## Handling your response

We need to know how you wish your response to be handled and, in particular, whether you are happy for your response to be made public. As mentioned above, please complete and return the **Respondent Information Form** with your response as this will ensure that we treat your response appropriately. If you ask for your response not to be published we will regard it as confidential, and we will treat it accordingly.

All respondents should be aware that the Scottish Government are subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and would therefore have to consider any request made to it under the Act for information relating to responses made to this consultation exercise.

### **Next steps in the process**

Where respondents have given permission for their response to be made public (see the **Respondent Information Form**), these will be made available to the public in the Scottish Government Library 29 September 2008 and on the Scottish Government consultation web pages by 30 September 2008. We will check all responses where agreement to publish has been given for any potentially defamatory material before logging them in the library or placing them on the website. You can make arrangements to view responses by contacting the Scottish Government Library on 0131 244 4565. Responses can be copied and sent to you, but a charge may apply for this service.

### **What happens next?**

Following the close of the consultation we will examine all the views submitted carefully. We will then produce a report on the views expressed in the consultation, our responses to them, and any changes to our proposals following the consultation.

### **Comments and Complaints**

If you have any comments about how this consultation exercise has been conducted, please send them to:

David Hamilton  
Alcohol Misuse Team  
The Scottish Government  
3EN St Andrews House  
Regent Road  
Edinburgh  
EH1 3DG

Or e-mail them, marked for David Hamilton's attention, to:

[Alcohol.Consultation@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Alcohol.Consultation@scotland.gsi.gov.uk)