

## **RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ALCOHOL ETC (SCOTLAND) BILL**

### **Introduction**

The Scottish Parliament's Health and Sport committee called for written evidence from interested parties on the general principles of the above Bill. The evidence was to be submitted by 20 January 2010.

Unfortunately, due to a number of factors, Aberdeen City Licensing Board was unable to submit a response within the time allowed. A response was however sent timeously by the Licensing Board Officials.

The Licensing Board Members, however, whilst approving the terms of that response, also wished to supplement the response with the following,

### **Q1: The advantages and disadvantages of establishing a minimum alcohol sales price based on a unit of alcohol**

#### **Advantages –**

(a) If minimum prices were applied to both on and off sales it may reduce the practice of “frontloading” where customers consume cheaper alcohol from off sales premises, consume this at home, then go to on sale premises to finish consuming alcohol at the higher prices at these premises.

(b) Cheaper alcohol leads to the destruction of communities but minimum pricing may be seen as an insufficient measure if applied alone. It would have more of an impact as part of a package of other measures such as a properly constructed national education programme about the effects of alcohol on society with special emphasis on the dangers of irresponsible alcohol consumption.

(c) Cheaper alcohol may provide a better business platform for everyone connected to the licensed trade with licensees profits being better protected. It will also assist public services with the expected aim of reducing alcohol fuelled antisocial behaviour and have a less detrimental impact on the NHS.

#### **Disadvantages –**

(a) Lower wage earners who consume alcohol responsibly may be unfairly penalised.

(b) Unless applied to all alcohol irrespective of the type of premises supplying it, this measure will lead to more people consuming alcohol at home rather than in controlled licensed premises.

### **Q2: The level at which such a proposed minimum price should be set and the justification for that level**

No change from previous response.

### **Q3 The rationale behind the use of minimum pricing as an effective tool to address all types of problem drinking**

See answer to Q1.

**Q4 Possible alternatives to the introduction of minimum alcohol sales price as an effective means of addressing the public health issues surrounding levels of alcohol consumption in Scotland**

No change from previous response.

**Q5 The advantages and disadvantages of introducing a social responsibility levy on pubs and clubs in Scotland**

No change from previous response.

**Q6 The justification for empowering licensing Boards to raise the legal alcohol purchase age in their area to 21**

No change from previous response.

**Q7 The roll of promotional offers and promotional material in encouraging people to purchase more alcohol than they intended.** No change from previous response.

**Q8 Any other aspects of the Bill.** No change from previous response.

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