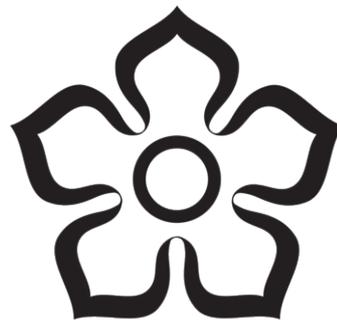


Leicester Health and Wellbeing Board

12 July 2018

Title: Minimum Unit pricing for alcohol
Presenter: Cllr Adam Clarke



Leicester
City Council

1.0 Purpose of the paper or presentation

The presentation and paper introduces minimum unit pricing to the board and asks the board to agree a collective position on the issues. The board is also asked to support a letter to the home secretary recommending that minimum unit pricing of 50p for alcoholic drinks.

2.0 Recommendations for the board to consider

The board is asked to support a letter from Cllr Clarke to the home secretary, Sajid Javid to recommend implementation of minimum unit pricing.

2.0 Content

Minimum Unit Pricing is suggested as being an effective way of increasing the price of alcoholic drinks by implementing a minimum cost per unit of alcohol. MUP would mean that alcohol could not legally be sold for less than the set level per unit so the more alcohol a drink contains the greater the cost to the consumer.

Public Health England are proposing that the MUP is set at 50p. Although there is potential for all alcoholic beverages to be affected, most impact would be on 'cheap' drinks that have a high alcohol content (such as cider/spirits). This is because other alcohol and drinks sold in pubs are likely to have a higher price per alcoholic unit than the proposed 50p which means the cost will be unaffected.

Overconsumption of alcohol is a problem in the UK and alcohol is the most common cause of liver disease in England, which has increased by 400% since 1970. There is an established relationship between cost of alcohol, consumption and harms. The lower the cost of alcohol, the greater the levels of consumption and the greater the number of alcohol related harms.

Introducing MUP would invariably raise the cost of low price alcohol such as cider and strong spirits, the drinks favoured by people with severe alcohol problems. Modelling suggests that MUP will lead to less overconsumption of alcohol and less alcohol related harm. It also shows that MUP would impact would be felt most strongly by heavy drinkers and that a 50p MUP would reduce harmful consumption by 5.4% within this group. This is compared with a 1% reduction amongst moderate drinkers.

Introducing MUP will support the actions that are currently undertaken and further reduce harmful drinking levels. Introducing MUP will have a direct impact 'problem drinkers' who tend to purchase inexpensive drinks with a high alcoholic content. Moderate drinkers are unlikely to be affected by MUP as the drinks they favour will already be priced above the 50p MUP suggested. Likewise drinks purchased in bars and restaurants are likely to be unaffected as they will already have a unit price that exceeds the proposed 50p increase.

4.0 Next Steps

To write to the home secretary recommending introduction of MUP.