

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for consulting with Ards Borough Council on the Health & Social Care Board and Public Health Agency's Alcohol and Drug Commissioning Framework for Northern Ireland 2013-2016 and for extending the consultation period to allow the Council to respond.

The consultation document was considered at last evening's meeting of the Council's Health & Social Services Sub-Committee where it was agreed to respond welcoming the document as it addresses all required levels of interventions, takes into account best practice and adopts a multi-sectoral approach. Members also commented that the current easy access to and affordability of alcohol was, in their view, to blame for the high levels of drinking amongst young people.

With reference to paragraph 7.6, headed the Wider Social Context, it was noted that Councils could (and did) play an important role in delivering prevention measures through their Public Health, Community Safety and Enforcement roles, particularly in relation to underage drinking, drinking in public places and anti-social behaviour. Members believed that families and schools were key to delivering the required health messages to young people but acknowledged that Northern Ireland society accepted drinking as the norm and that herefore encouraging behavioural change would be a challenge.

I hope that this of assistance to you.

Yours faithfully

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