

**To:** SU/DoH Consultation

**From:** Councillor Heather Parker, Cabinet Member  
(Community Wellbeing)  
Coventry City Council

**Date:** 10<sup>th</sup> January 2003

**NATIONAL ALCOHOL HARM REDUCTION STRATEGY –  
CONSULTATION DOCUMENT**

**Please find below Coventry response to the consultation document:-**

Coventry City Council welcomes the proposal for a National Strategy to tackle the harmful effects of alcohol.

Local authorities play a key part in reducing harm associated with alcohol misuse and can make a significant contribution to supporting people who are vulnerable to the effects of alcohol misuse and also in raising awareness and providing information about the risks of drinking. This is very much a Public Health issue and links with other areas of health improvement such as mental health and work on healthy eating. Some groups within the community are more vulnerable and in delivering a National Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy, the City Council working with NHS partners has a positive role to play in giving clear information about the risks to health and wellbeing which alcohol misuse can pose.

We are fully supportive of the areas identified that will underpin the policy in particular crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour. Drugs and alcohol are a key cross-cutting theme in Coventry's Crime & Disorder Reduction Strategy 2002-2005. The joint work of the Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) and the Drug & Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) has predominantly been around drug misuse and a National Policy will encourage this work to expand to include more work around alcohol-related offending and the effects of alcohol misuse on the local environment.

Violent Crime, including domestic violence and racial harassment is also a priority in the Strategy and alcohol is recognised as an aggravating factor in these types of crimes. The Coventry Domestic Violence Partnership co-ordinates a range of initiatives to prevent/reduce domestic violence and the City Council has recently set up an Advisory Panel to support this work.

Offender Management is also an important initiative that we are involved in to try and break the circle of offending. Counselling in relation to alcohol and

substance misuse is one part of a package of measures available as well as assistance in relation to housing, training and employment, etc.

Coventry was the first City to establish an Alcohol Byelaw in the City Centre, prohibiting street drinking in designated areas. This has proved very successful and is currently being extended into some residential neighbourhoods.

Our policy is to focus specifically on young people, particularly through our Youth Offending Service. Currently, Coventry YOS have systems in place, based on ASSET assessment scores, to identify clients who may need targeted drug advice and education, structured one to one interventions and drug treatment. Further work is being undertaken presently with Social Services regarding the overall co-ordination of drug/ alcohol related services as they affect children looked after by the Local Authority in Coventry.

Coventry has a well established Community Alcohol Service which will benefit significantly from secure long term funding and a recognised commitment that alcohol issues are being thoroughly addressed nationally.

A multi-agency response is also being produced by the Coventry Drug & Alcohol Action Team and is scheduled for agreement at the DAAT Meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2003.

I trust these comments are useful.

Councillor Heather Parker