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12 June 2012

Dear Kevin

**LIQUOR LICENSING: PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSED
INTRODUCTION OF REGULATIONS TO BAN CERTAIN IRRESPONSIBLE DRINKS
PROMOTIONS**

The Committee has requested an update on the outcome of the recent consultation on regulations to ban certain irresponsible drinks promotions. Please find attached a summary of the outcome of the consultation exercise.

Officials are available to brief the Committee if required.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Liam Quinn".

LIAM QUINN

Social Policy Unit

**Cc: Margaret Sisk
Billy Crawford
Sheila Maguire
Stewart Kennedy
Alison Ferguson
Neil Sedgewick
Ashleigh Kelly**

SOCIAL POLICY UNIT

**Summary of the Consultation on the Proposed
Introduction of Regulations to Ban Certain
Irresponsible Drinks Promotions**

Department for Social Development

May 2012

SUMMARY OF THE OUTCOME OF THE CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSED INTRODUCTION OF REGULATIONS TO BAN CERTAIN IRRESPONSIBLE DRINKS PROMOTIONS

A total of 35 responses were submitted and 27 surveys were fully completed. As a result of this, sample sizes will vary from question to question but in this early results document, all results are expressed as percentages. Sample size will also be noted at each question. This document is a brief breakdown of the quantitative and qualitative information that can be extracted from the consultation survey.

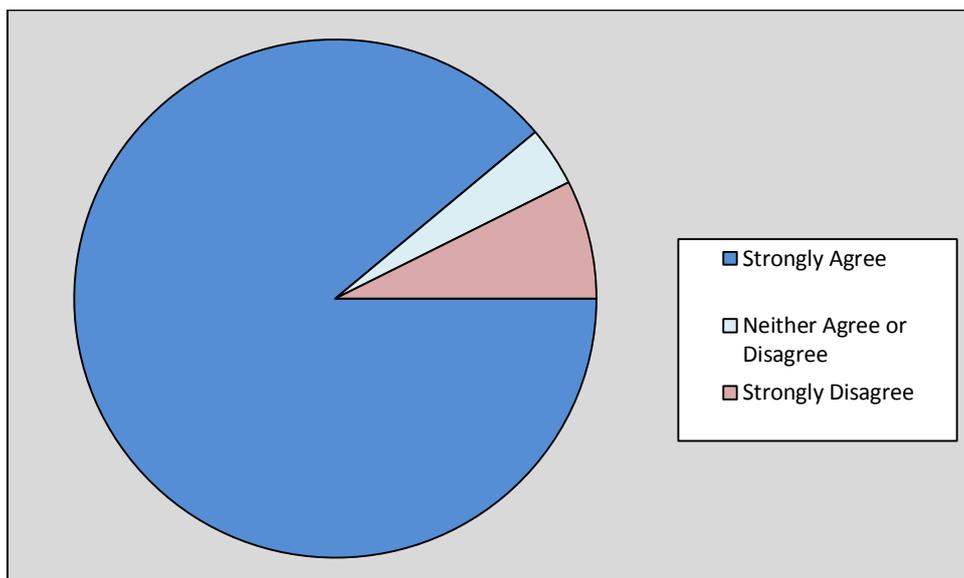
Breakdown of Responses

Promotions involving unlimited amounts of alcohol for a fixed charge

To what extent would you agree restricting promotions that involve the supply of unlimited amounts of intoxicating liquor for a fixed charge (including any charge for entry to the premises)?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree	88.8%	24
Agree	0%	0
Neither Agree or Disagree	3.7%	1
Disagree	0%	0
Strongly Disagree	7.4%	2

Sample size = 27



Respondents

Of those who answered the question (27), 11.1% were individuals and the remaining 88.9% were responding on behalf of an organisation. 88.8% of respondents indicated strong agreement with the proposed restrictions. 7.4% of respondents indicated strong disagreement.

Of those who were responding on behalf of organisations, these included district councils, drinks industry groups, health bodies, local alcohol advice services and community organisations.

The following is a list the organisations who returned responses sorted by whether they were in agreement with the above restriction or not in agreement.

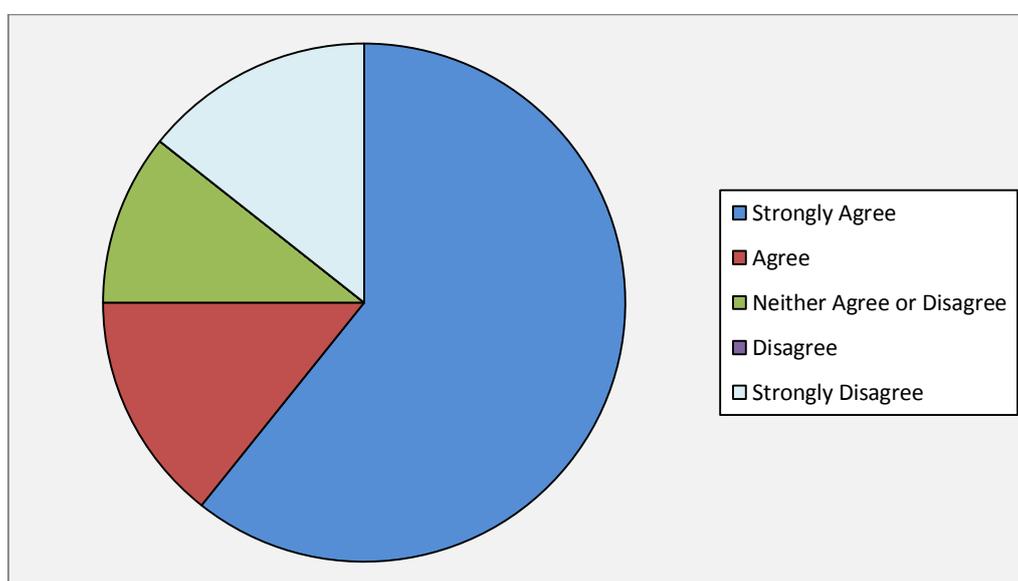
<i>In Agreement With</i>	<i>Not In Agreement With</i>
Minister for DHSSPS Pubs of Ulster British Society of Gastroenterology North Down BC Belfast City Council Carrickfergus YMCA Wine and Spirit Trade Association* British Liver Trust Cookstown District Council Institute of Public Health in Ireland Alcohol Action Ireland Addiction NI Voluntary and Community Sector Network (North) Alcohol Health Alliance Banbridge District Council Beaumont Inns Ltd British Medical Association (NI) Craigavon Borough Council Civic Alcohol Forum (Derry) Derry Healthy Cities NI Hotels Federation NIACRO Northern Ireland Drinks Industry Group Northern Ireland Local Government Association Royal College of Psychiatrists NI Royal College of Nursing Derry City Council National Heart Forum National Alcohol Forum Ireland (North West) Royal Colleges of Physicians (UK)	The responses not in agreement with the proposed restriction came from individuals/members of the public not attached to any organisation.

Promotions involving the sale of alcohol containing two or more intoxicating liquor products

To what extent would you agree with restricting the price at which the holder of a licence or the licence holder's servant or agent may sell on licensed premises a package containing two or more intoxicating liquor products?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree	60.7%	17
Agree	14.3%	4
Neither Agree or Disagree	10.7%	3
Disagree	0%	0
Strongly Disagree	14.3%	4

Sample size = 28



Respondents

Of those who answered the question (28), 10.7% were individuals and the remaining 89.3% were responding on behalf of an organisation. 75% indicated agreement or strong agreement with the proposed restrictions, and 14.3% of respondents indicated strong disagreement. 10.7% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed.

Of those who were responding on behalf of organisations, these included district councils, drinks industry groups, health bodies, local alcohol advice services and community organisations.

The following is a list the organisations who returned responses sorted by whether they were in agreement with the above restriction or not in agreement.

<i>In Agreement With</i>	<i>Not In Agreement With</i>
<p>Minister for DHSSPS Pubs of Ulster British Society of Gastroenterology North Down BC Carrickfergus YMCA Wine and Spirit Trade Association British Liver Trust Cookstown District Council Institute of Public Health in Ireland Alcohol Action Ireland Addiction NI Belfast City Council Voluntary and Community Sector Network (North) Alcohol Health Alliance Banbridge District Council British Medical Association (NI) Craigavon Borough Council Civic Alcohol Forum (Derry) Derry Healthy Cities NI Hotels Federation NIACRO Northern Ireland Local Government Association Royal College of Psychiatrists NI Royal College of Nursing Derry City Council National Heart Forum National Alcohol Forum Ireland (North West) Royal Colleges of Physicians (UK)</p>	<p>NI Hotels Federation Wine and Spirits Trading Association</p> <p>Other responses not in agreement with the proposed restriction came from individuals/members of the public not attached to any organisation.</p>

Notable Responses/Themes Within Responses

A number of responses made specific reference to supermarket promotions, and cited a need for more stringent regulation. The impact of supermarket sales on the on-trade was also highlighted.

From the responses “In Agreement With”, various health organisations, District Councils and organisations specialising in addiction services made reference to the importance of a multi-directional strategy. The responses cited minimum pricing, alcohol advertising, accessibility and the financial burden in terms of alcohol-related health issues as important factors. A number of organisations highlighted a need for legislation to be backed up by adequate enforcement, or sought clarification on the methodology associated with enforcement.

Limiting access to alcohol for young people was also a common theme. Several respondents were of the view that drinking habits were culturally engrained, and advocated an all-Ireland strategy in order to address this.

Several organisations expressed concern that alcohol retailers may reduce the price of individual products in order to circumvent the proposed legislation.

The affordability of alcohol was also a prominent theme, with several responses highlighting a need for stronger regulation in light of the relatively low cost of alcohol in comparison to previous generations.

From the responses “Not In Agreement With”, the general theme was one of the removal of freedom of choice and the over-policing or punishing of responsible drinkers. Two respondents expressed concern about the potential impact of the proposals on competition in the industry, with one expressing concern regarding the compatibility of the proposals with human rights legislation.

Derry Healthy Cities questioned potential ambiguity in the definition of irresponsible promotions. The organisation suggested amending the proposals to specify the restriction of the supply of alcohol for a “fixed or incremental charge”.

Derry City Council drew attention to an established Code of Practice on Promotional Activities, which must be adhered to by any premise in the area with an entertainment licence. The Council reiterated the cultural aspect to drinking patterns and suggested that key local stakeholders work together to tackle this issue.

The Northern Ireland Hotels Federation, while in agreement in principle with the proposals, expressed concern with regard to the potential enforcement of legislation, due to a perceived difficulty in defining irresponsible promotions. The organisation advocated an industry-led Code of Practice to self-police promotions as an alternative to the proposals, the formulation of which is in progress within the sector.

The Wine and Spirit Trade Association focussed exclusively on the issue of packages containing two or more alcohol products. The organisation expressed opposition to the proposed legislation, citing considerable costs to retailers and licensing authorities with regard to enforcement as key factors, as well as the restriction of competition and penalising low earners.

The Northern Ireland Drinks Industry Group raised concerns over how any new legislation would be policed and suggested self-regulation amongst pubs would be more effective. Pubs of Ulster highlighted a need for collaboration between the industry and Government to provide effective control on irresponsible promotions.

No submission has provided any comment which could be considered a ‘show-stopper’.