Finance Committee

Alcohol (Licensing, Public Health and Criminal Justice) (Scotland) Bill

Submission from Angus Council and Angus Alcohol & Drug Partnership

Response

Consultation

1. *Did you take part in any consultation exercise preceding the Bill and, if so, did you comment on the financial assumptions made?*

Neither Angus Council nor Angus Alcohol & Drug Partnership took part in any consultation exercise preceding the bill due to the short timescale provided for the previous consultation by the Health and Sports Committee.

2. *If applicable, do you believe your comments on the financial assumptions have been accurately reflected in the FM?*

N/A.

3. *Did you have sufficient time to contribute to the consultation exercise?*

As stated above, there was insufficient time to contribute to the preceding consultation.

Costs

4. *If the Bill has any financial implications for your organisation, do you believe that they have been accurately reflected in the FM? If not, please provide details.*

Drinking Banning Orders (p33 of FM)

There are potential financial implications of the implementation of Drinking Banning Orders for Angus Council and for the partners that constitute the Alcohol & Drug Partnership. The FM refers to these only in terms of the application for a Drinking Banning order and estimates these costs to be £60,000 per year nationally (P36).

There is a lack of detail regarding how this will be enforced and what the cost implications of enforcement are. Additionally, there is a lack of detail regarding the funding of an “approved course” as stated within the bill (16:3).

Fixed Penalty offences involving alcohol: alcohol awareness training as alternative to fixed penalty (P37 of FM)
In addition to the ambiguity noted above, the FM also notes estimated costs of the national roll out of the pilot scheme (previously undertaken in Fife for a 6-month period) for Alcohol Awareness Training as; “might be in the region of £570,000 operating costs with an additional one off cost of £87,000”. (P38)

The actual cost of the Fife pilot is noted as £39,000 per annum, with funding coming from the Fife Alcohol & Drugs Partnership. Without a detailed description as to how that funding was identified, it is difficult to say with confidence whether Angus Alcohol & Drugs Partnership could meet this cost. In addition to this, it would helpful to have some context regarding the attendance rate of 34% (P39) and whether this is reasonable in relation to an investment of approximately £39,000 and how this compares to other court disposals.

5. **Do you consider that the estimated costs and savings set out in the FM are reasonable and accurate?**

As above, the estimated costs do not appear to be accurate. There is a lack of clarity throughout the document regarding actual and potential costs for Local Authorities, Police Scotland, Alcohol & Drug Partnerships and others.

There are no costs attributed to the notification of an offender's GP with regard to offences involving alcohol, there are also no identified outcomes that would be expected from taking this course of action and therefore the purpose of this is unclear.

It is unclear as to what Savings will be made as a result of these proposals. Although the breakdown of costs is given within the FM (P42) most savings are noted as “unquantified”.

6. **If applicable, are you content that your organisation can meet any financial costs that it might incur as a result of the Bill? If not, how do you think these costs should be met?**

Without an estimate as to the full cost of implementation, it is not possible to say with confidence whether Angus Council or Angus Alcohol & Drug Partnership would be able to meet the costs of the bill or where these costs should be met.

7. **Does the FM accurately reflect the margins of uncertainty associated with the Bill's estimated costs and with the timescales over which they would be expected to arise?**

No.
Wider Issues

8. Do you believe that the FM reasonably captures any costs associated with the Bill? If not, which other costs might be incurred and by whom?

As stated above, this estimate does not appear to take account of the costs of commissioning a service provider or resource to deliver alcohol awareness training, nor does it provide any indication as to the costs of providing intervention and support for individuals subject to Drinking Banning Orders. The costs of ongoing management and delivery and the costs of programme evaluation have also been omitted. There is a lack of detail regarding how this will be enforced and what the cost implications are.

9. Do you believe that there may be future costs associated with the Bill, for example through subordinate legislation? If so, is it possible to quantify these costs?

There is insufficient information to enable a response from an Alcohol & Drug Partnership or Local Authority perspective.