

Scrutiny Review Consultation  
Underage Drinking and Young People  
2009

On Behalf of Eastbourne Borough Council



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**Celebrating 18 years in Consultation 1991 - 2009**

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## 1.0 Introduction

The Scrutiny committee for the second consecutive year were granted a 'use' of the Citizen's Panel when conducting its Scrutiny Reviews.

The Committee opted to use the Panel for a consultation on alcohol and young people and the issue of underage drinking.

SMSR Ltd recruited a Citizen's Panel on behalf of the Council at the beginning of 2006 and has since managed the panel on their behalf.

In January 2009, Eastbourne Borough Council commissioned SMSR Ltd to consult with panel members and the general public on how their attitude to current underage drinking issues and how much they support a number of possible actions to address the issues.

## 2.0 Sample / Methodology

A questionnaire was sent out to all 1,049 panel members with a covering letter and a freepost return envelope. In addition a telephone surveys was conducted with a random sample of the Eastbourne general public. Quotas were set based on the return profile of the postal survey. This was set to match the census profile of the Eastbourne Borough based on age, gender and ward. The telephone questionnaire also gave respondents the chance to become members of the resident's panel.

The consultation was undertaken using a questionnaire that was designed by SMSR in conjunction with officers from Eastbourne Borough Council. The questionnaire was designed and administered as a postal survey and a telephone survey. The questionnaire was designed to ensure it met the aims and objectives mentioned in section 1.0.

A total of 413 questionnaires were returned from panel members, a response rate of 39%. A total of 540 telephone interviews were undertaken giving an overall sample of 953.

A copy of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix 1.

### 3.0 In Summary

81% agreed to some extent that there is a significant problem with underage drinking and alcohol related youth disorder in Eastbourne, with 40% strongly agreeing.

The Town Centre was thought to be the main area where under age drinking was most apparent (36%) and felt that underage drinkers were most likely to drink alcohol in the town's parks and gardens (68%).

Respondents thought that 'Peer Pressure' (84%) was the main reason that young people tended to drink alcohol and agreed that underage drinkers are most likely to get their alcohol from persons over the age of 18 buying it on their behalf (87%).

Agreement with how quickly and effectively partners and services deal with the issue of underage drinking and alcohol related incidents was low. Just 37% agreed that the Police quickly and effectively deal with the issue, while just 22% felt that the Council did. 22% agreed that there are adequate services to deal quickly and effectively with the issue.

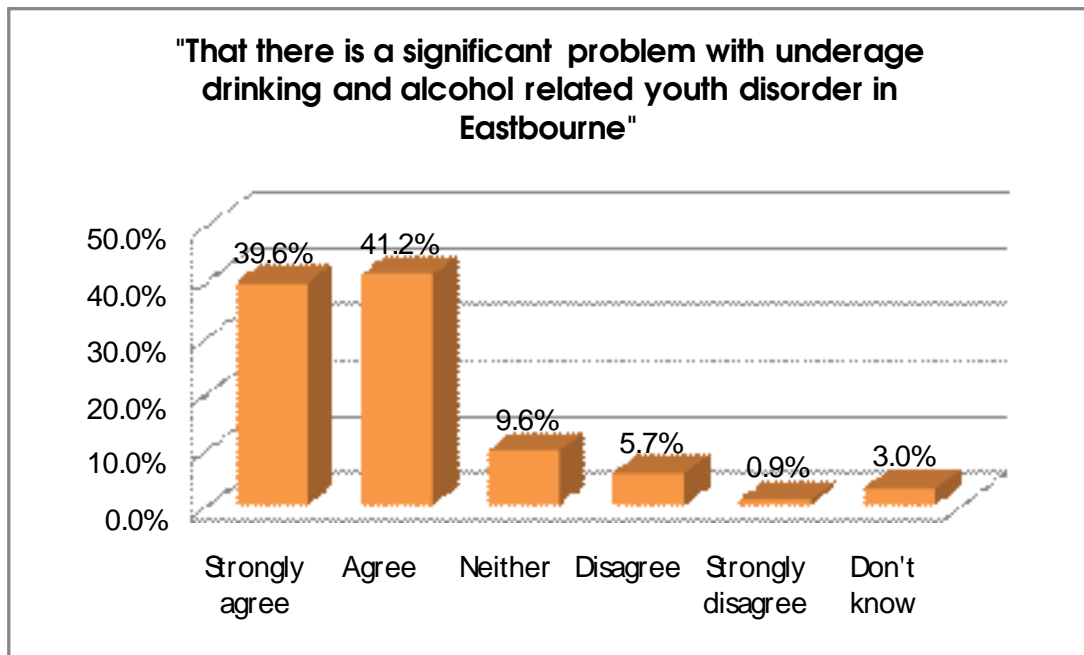
Overall agreement with all of the suggested steps to be taken to tackle the issue of underage drinking was extremely high, with over four fifths agreeing to some extent with all six steps. 'Better education of parents and guardians' (88%) was thought to be the most effective step.

378 (41%) would like to attend a meeting to discuss the issues and topics covered in this survey.

## 4.0 Findings

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement "There is a significant problem with underage drinking and alcohol related youth disorder in Eastbourne"?

The vast majority (81%) of respondents either agreed (41%) or strongly agreed (40%) that there is a significant problem with underage drinking and alcohol related youth disorder in Eastbourne. Less than 7% disagreed with this statement.



There was little difference across the different demographic groups as most agreed with this statement.

### Where do you feel the issue of underage drinking is most apparent?

Respondents were most likely to think that underage drinking tends to be most apparent in the town centre (36%). The five most common responses are shown below, a full list can be found in the appendix.

Where do you feel the issue of underage drinking is most apparent?	%
Town Centre	35.6%
Parks/recreation grounds	20.2%
On the street	16.8%
Pier/sea front	15.1%
Pubs/Clubs/Bars	8.8%

Respondents aged between 18 and 34 were more likely than those aged 35 and over, to think that underage drinking is more apparent in parks and recreation grounds than in town centres.

### Where do you think underage drinking takes place?

Over two thirds (68%) of respondents felt that underage drinking tends to take place in the towns parks and gardens, while 58% felt that underage drinking tends to take place in the street.

Where do you think underage drinking takes place?	%
In the towns parks and gardens	67.6%
In the street	58.3%
In the towns pubs and clubs	41.4%
In the individuals home	26.0%
Other	10.2%
Don't know	3.5%

Of those that felt underage drinking took place in 'other' places than those stated above, 65% (62 respondents) felt that underage drinking took place on the seafront. A full list of the 'other' comments can be found in the appendix.

Panel respondents were much more likely than the general public respondents to think that underage drinking tends to take place in the street (+19%) and in the towns parks and gardens (+11%).

To what extent do you agree or disagree that young people participate in underage drinking because of....

Respondents were given a list of possible reasons as to why young people drink alcohol and state whether or not they agreed to disagreed with the reasons. Respondents were most likely to agree to some extent that 'peer pressure' (84%) was the reason that young people drank alcohol. Respondents were least likely to agree that young people drank alcohol because of irresponsible marketing or lack of education (56%).

To what extent do you agree or disagree that young people participate in underage drinking because of....						
Reason	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	DK/NA
Boredom	30.6%	43.0%	9.7%	12.1%	3.7%	0.9%
Peer Pressure	39.8%	44.4%	4.3%	8.5%	1.1%	1.9%
Irresponsible marketing by pubs, clubs and off licenses	26.3%	30.0%	13.1%	23.4%	5.1%	2.1%
The low cost of alcohol makes it attractive and accessible for under eighteens	36.3%	34.4%	8.0%	15.5%	4.6%	1.1%
Lack of alternative activities for young people	33.5%	33.3%	7.5%	18.3%	6.0%	1.5%
Lack of education regarding responsible drinking and the dangers of alcohol	25.4%	30.8%	9.8%	24.3%	5.8%	3.9%
Poor parenting	44.8%	35.0%	9.0%	8.7%	1.6%	0.9%

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about how underage drinkers obtain alcohol?

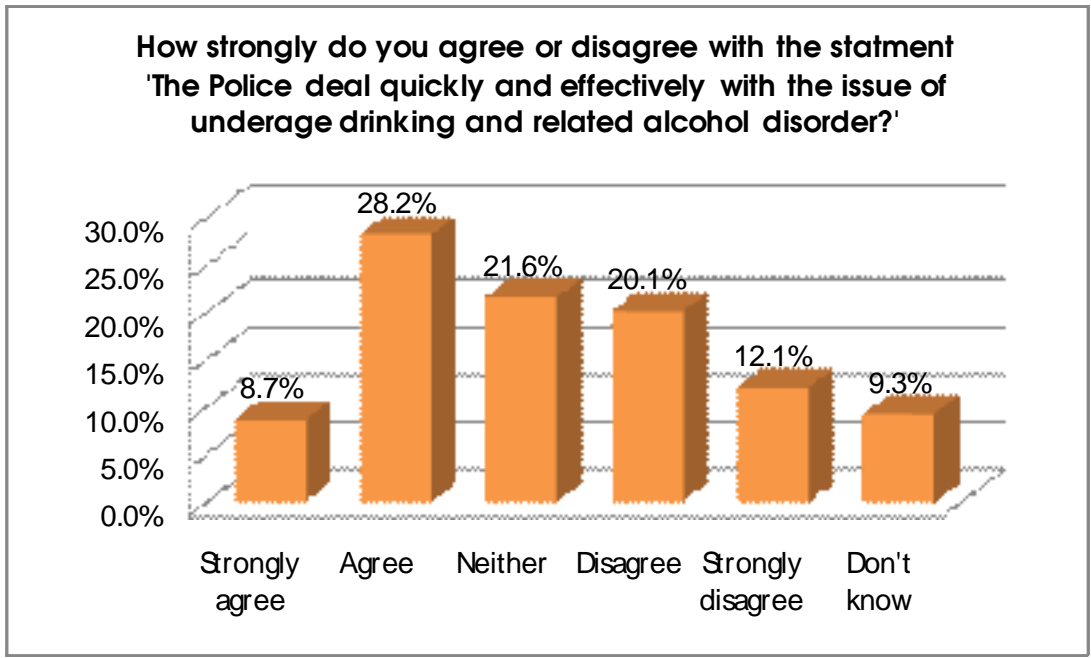
Respondents were most likely to agree to some extent that underage drinkers obtain alcohol by persons over the age of 18 buying it on their behalf (87%) and least likely to agree that alcohol is supplied by the young persons parent or guardian (48%).

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about how underage drinkers obtain alcohol?						
Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	DK/NA
Young people under the age of 18 obtain alcohol using fake identification	14.7%	41.1%	18.7%	11.7%	2.0%	11.8%
By persons over the age of 18 purchasing alcohol on behalf of young people under the age of 18	38.8%	48.4%	4.2%	2.6%	1.9%	4.1%
Off licenses, pubs and clubs do not check or verify the age of customers prior to selling or supplying alcohol	19.2%	35.8%	16.0%	17.1%	4.6%	7.3%
Alcohol is supplied by the young persons parent or guardian	8.1%	40.0%	23.3%	18.3%	3.1%	7.2%
Alcohol is stolen by young people from alcohol retail outlets	13.2%	39.3%	20.0%	14.3%	2.0%	11.1%
Alcohol is taken without consent of parents or guardians	21.3%	56.7%	12.4%	5.0%	0.8%	3.9%



How strongly do you agree or disagree with the statement 'The Police deal quickly and effectively with the issue of underage drinking and related alcohol disorder'?

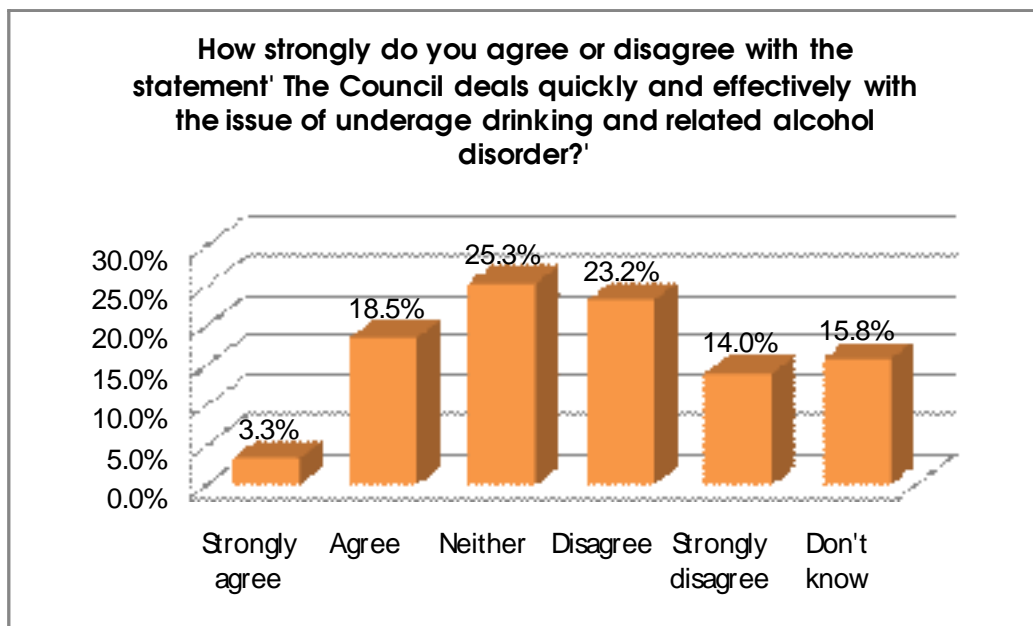
Overall, 37% agreed to some extent that the police deal quickly and effectively with underage drinkers; however 32% disagreed to some extent. Over a fifth (22%) neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement.



Respondents aged 16-24 (52%) were most likely to agree that the Police deal quickly and effectively with the issue of underage drinking and related alcohol disorder; while those aged 35-44 (28%) were least likely to agree.

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the statement 'The Council deals quickly and effectively with the issue of underage drinking and related alcohol disorder'?

Overall, just 22% agreed to some extent that the Council deals quickly and effectively with the issue of underage drinking; while 37% disagreed to some extent. A quarter neither agreed nor disagreed.

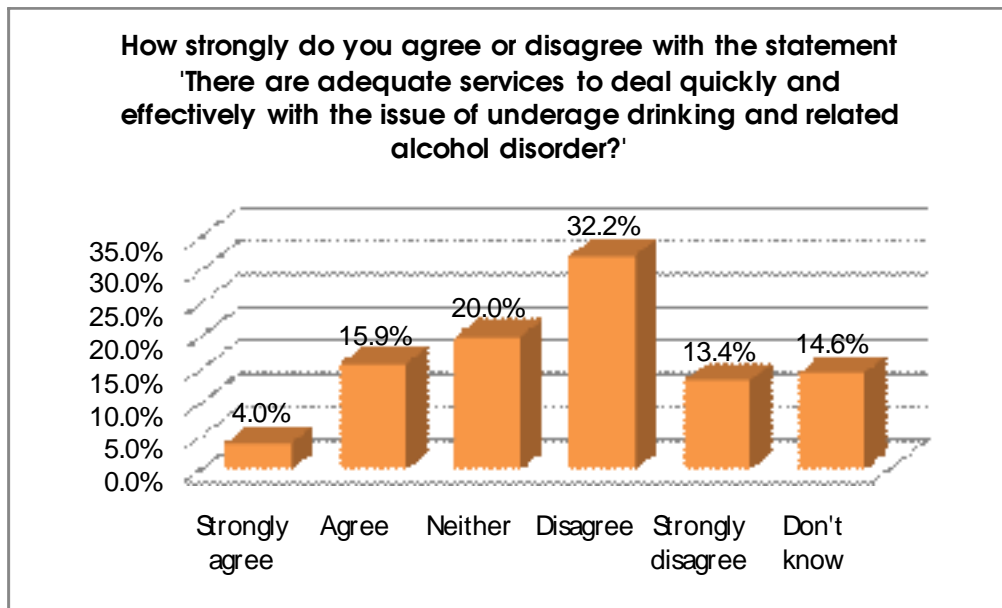


Male respondents (25%) were slightly more likely than female respondents (20%) to agree to some extent with the statement. Respondents with a disability (26%) were slightly more likely than those without (20%) to agree to some extent that the Council deals quickly and effectively with the issue of underage drinking.

Respondents aged 75 and over (27%) were most likely to agree to some extent with the statement, while those aged 25-34 (9%) were least likely to.

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the statement 'There are adequate services to deal quickly and effectively with the issue of underage drinking and related alcohol disorder?'

Just a fifth of all respondents agreed to some extent that there are adequate services to deal quickly and effectively with the issue of underage drinking and related alcohol disorder; 46% however disagreed.



Again, male respondents (22%) were more likely than female respondents (18%) to agree to some extent with this statement. Respondents aged between 65 and 74 (25%) were most likely to agree to some extent with this statement, while those aged 35-44 (13%) were least likely to agree.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the following steps should be undertaken to address the issues of underage drinking?

Respondents were given a list of steps that the Council feel could be undertaken to address the issue of underage drinking and asked how much they agreed to disagreed with each step. Overall, the vast majority of respondents agreed with all of the below steps to help address the issue of underage drinking. Respondents were most likely to agree to some extent with the preventative step of: 'better education of parents and guardians' (88%).

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the following steps should be undertaken to address the issues of underage drinking?						
Steps	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree	DK/NA
Better enforcement of Licensing law by the Police	44.5%	39.8%	6.3%	6.6%	1.4%	1.3%
Better enforcement of Licensing law by the Council	40.5%	41.3%	7.9%	5.6%	1.3%	3.4%
Better diversionary activities and leisure facilities for children and young people	49.2%	33.1%	7.8%	8.0%	1.4%	0.6%
Prosecution of persons selling alcohol or purchasing alcohol for under 18's	56.4%	33.4%	4.6%	3.3%	1.5%	0.9%
Better education of children and young people in relation to safer socialising and responsible drinking	44.6%	39.3%	7.5%	5.2%	2.1%	1.3%
Better education of parents and guardians in dealing with youth related alcohol misuse and related alcohol disorder	50.7%	36.8%	6.0%	3.4%	1.7%	1.3%

Respondents were finally asked whether or not they would be willing to go to a meeting in the future with the Council to discuss the issues and topics covered in this survey, a total of 378 respondents (41%) said 'yes' to attending a meeting. Male respondents (44%) were more likely than female respondents (38%) to want to attend a meeting. Those aged 35-44 (50%) were most likely to want to attend a meeting, those aged 75 and over (29%) were least likely to.