

22 August 2022

Dear

ATISN 16514 – Minimum Unit Pricing for Alcohol

Thank you for your request to the Welsh Government for information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) (FOIA) received on 28 July 2022 in relation to the Minimum Unit Pricing for Alcohol. You requested the following:

- 1. How many deaths have been prevented following the introduction of the Public Health (Minimum Price for Alcohol) (Wales) Act*
- 2. The amount of tax gained following the introduction of the tax,*
- 3. Where that tax has been spent*
- 4. Whether there are any plans for a review.*

Our Response

- 1. How many deaths have been prevented following the introduction of the Public Health (Minimum Price for Alcohol) (Wales) Act*

The Public Health (Minimum Price for Alcohol) (Wales) Act 2018 is part of a package of measures intended to reduce alcohol related harm in Wales. Attributing precise numbers of prevented deaths to the legislation is difficult; there are a number of other factors that also impact on alcohol related harm, including the COVID 19 pandemic.

Welsh Government has commissioned an independent evaluation of the legislation. One component of the evaluation adopts a contribution analysis methodology. This is in recognition of the complexity of the issue. The evaluation will assess the contribution that the legislation has made to any changes in the outcomes of interest (including alcohol related deaths). Analysis for the evaluation is currently underway and an interim report on the progress on implementation of the legislation will be published in 2023.

- 2. The amount of tax gained following the introduction of the tax,*
- 3. Where that tax has been spent*

Minimum Unit Pricing (MUP) is not a tax with any additional revenue going to the drink's retailers. The aim of introducing an MUP is to change attitudes to alcohol and reduce consumption. The policy should ultimately reduce alcohol sales, which in turn would mean less revenue for retailers. Evidence suggests that higher taxation would not be as effective at targeting and reducing levels of hazardous and harmful drinking as introducing a minimum unit price for alcohol.

- 4. Whether there are any plans for a review.*

The Welsh Government has commissioned an evaluation of The Public Health (Minimum Price for Alcohol) (Wales) Act 2018. Four contracts have been awarded, looking at different

aspects of implementation. One of the studies is examining the impact on the wider population of drinkers, including moderate drinkers. The fieldwork for the first follow-up is currently taking place. Interim reports from those studies will be published towards the end of this year. These reports will allow us to review progress with the policy but will be too early to conclude on the effectiveness of the policy. A further follow-up will be undertaken, with final reports available approximately five years after implementation.

Next steps

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit,
Welsh Government,
Cathays Park,
Cardiff,
CF10 3NQ

or Email: Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office,
Wycliffe House,
Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire,
SK9 5AF.

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely,