

Written response from NHS Orkney

A consultation was carried out by the licensing board in 2012 and despite what was felt to be a convincing argument that the health of people was being impacted by overprovision in Kirkwall the outcome that was reached was that there was no overprovision in Orkney.

A change in the relationship between the Health Board and Licensing Board has occurred following a meeting in October 2014 that was held to launch our Community Action plan on Alcohol. At that meeting detailed health data on the effects of alcohol on the health of local people was shared and this had a great impact on members of Licensing who attended. They are now acknowledging that there is a significant problem with alcohol locally. This is a substantial step-change as up until then there had appeared to be a reluctance by the Licensing Board to consider that there was an issue with alcohol in Orkney.

In Orkney there is interaction between the Health Board and Licensing via the Public Health department and also the ADP. The Director of Public Health is invited to Licensing Board meetings.

The Public Health Manger and Substance Misuse Development Officer for the ADP attend the Licensing Forum meetings.

Objections to licensing requests are submitted to the Licensing Board if it is felt that there are public health issues.

Currently the law on overprovision is not clear and Licensing Boards as a result are hesitant to refuse licences on the grounds of overprovision for fear of legal action being taken. Tightening of the definition of overprovision would clarify matters and give Licensing Boards more confidence in their decision making.