



Bristol Health and Wellbeing Board

Title of Paper:	Drug and Alcohol Update
Author (including organisation):	Ashley Ward and Tiffany Wood
Date of Board meeting:	23rd June
Purpose:	Information and discussion

1. Executive Summary

2021 saw the publication of Bristol's local drug and alcohol strategy, the new 10 year national drug strategy, and for the first time in many years national investment in drug and alcohol treatment services. Bristol is now planning and delivering a range of services to support people who use drugs and alcohol across the city.

2. Purpose of the Paper

- To inform the group of recent changes in the drug and alcohol landscape city wide and changes in local and national policy
- Discuss the formation of the new drug and alcohol strategic group for Bristol
- Case study: No and low alcohol (nolo) campaign
- Increased funding for substance use treatment services in Bristol

3. Background and evidence base

National and Local Policy

- 2021 saw the publication of the Bristol Drug and Alcohol Strategy, a multi-partnership effort involving stakeholders across the city, and signed off by the HWB and KBSP.
- From Harm to Hope, new national drug strategy released December 2021
- May 2022 – first meeting of Bristol's Drug and Alcohol Strategic Group, taking up the local strategy to deliver on its ambitions through action planning and review. An ambition in our local strategy and a requirement set out in the new national strategy. The group will meet bi-monthly.

Local strategy case study: No and Low Alcohol (nolo) Campaign

- The nolo campaign is as an opportunity to progress the ambition of the [Bristol's Drug and Alcohol Strategy 2021-25](#) that 'all licensed premises offer at least one alcohol-free drink on draught', to 'nudge' people towards healthier behaviours as per emerging evidence that increased availability of no and low alcohol drinks increases their selection (e.g. [Blackwell et al. 2020](#)).
- Nationally sales of no and low alcohol (or 'nolo') products have increased, [particularly among younger people](#), with consumers expecting to have a wider range of nolo options in pubs and bars. Many local businesses in Bristol produce no and low alcohol drinks, presenting an opportunity to connect and promote local businesses, working with the sector, not against it.
- With [nearly 200 people in Bristol dying each year](#) from an alcohol related condition, investing in a place-based campaign tailored to Bristol, building new and better relationships across the sector, will allow us to prioritise prevention, create healthy places, and make progress on redefining the relationship the city has with alcohol ([Bristol's Drug and Alcohol Strategy 2021-25](#)).

Increased Funding for Drug and Alcohol Services

- Since 2021 there has been an increase in government funding for Drug and Alcohol service nationally after many years of cuts to this sector.
- In Bristol this has included £3.4m over the last two years to support people involved in criminal justice services who use drugs, and £1.7m over two years to support people who are at risk of rough sleeping who have a drug or alcohol treatment need.
- Between 2023 and 2025, Bristol will receive a funding increase of £8.3million, to provide a range of services for people using drugs or alcohol.

4. Community/stakeholder engagement

The **BCC Drug and Alcohol Strategy** has been developed in partnership with a range of stakeholders from across the city, with service users part of the working group. This strategy's vision was developed through engagement events with a number of stakeholders and interested parties across the city. The strategy group is working with service users and community members and will include the voice of lived experience throughout.

The **nolo campaign** started with an insight piece across 100 venues to understand the views of publicans and customers around no and low alcohol in venues.

Increased funding into services will be disbursed to a range of community and clinical treatment providers, and we are currently undertaking a health needs assessment for substance use in Bristol to better understand where gaps in provision exist. We are speaking with a range of community members, service users, professionals, and other stakeholders to better understand the landscape in readiness for the new funding to come in, and for recommissioning of our services in 2025.

5. Recommendations

We would like to consider how we can better join up across the city, in particular considering a trauma informed approach that recognises drug and alcohol use as a symptom of trauma, and a strategy for managing trauma. Increasingly we are taking a cross-diagnostic view which considers not just substance use, but recognises deprivation, opportunity, community, physical and mental health. More joint commissioning and joined up working (including digitally) across sectors will allow us to deliver a truly trauma informed, efficient and person-centred response.

6. City Benefits

Substance misuse causes serious harm to individuals, families and communities¹. The proportion of Bristol residents using drugs is relatively small but the impact is extensive. Bristol has an estimated 4,940 opiate and/or crack users². Whilst the proportion of Bristol residents using drugs is relatively small the impact can be extensive. Bristol has the second largest estimated rate of opiate and/or crack users (per 1,000 population) of the English core cities³

7. Financial and Legal Implications

N/A

8. Appendices

See links throughout document and footnotes below.

¹ For Children and Young People, see [JSNA section: "Lifestyle behaviours of Young People"](#)

² [2016/17 Opiate & crack cocaine use: prevalence estimates](#)

³ [Core Cities](#): Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham, Sheffield.