

REPORT TO: LICENSING COMMITTEE

DATE: 5 JULY 2022

TITLE: LETTER ON DRINK SPIKING - HOME OFFICE

LEAD OFFICERS: MICHAEL PITT, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
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RECOMMENDED that:

- A** Members note the letter from the Minister of State for Crime, Policing and Probation addressed to Licensing Committees.

BACKGROUND

1. Drink spiking has existed for many years. Drink spiking is when someone puts drugs or alcohol into a person's drink without their knowledge or consent. It can include putting alcohol into a non-alcoholic drink, adding extra alcohol to an alcoholic drink or slipping prescription or illegal drugs into an alcoholic or non-alcoholic drink. It can be difficult to tell whether a drink has been spiked, as substances used for spiking usually have no taste, odour or colour.
2. Needle spiking (sometimes referred to as injection spiking) is where someone surreptitiously injects, with a hypodermic needle, (or other form of administration e.g. combi-pen) a victim with a substance.
3. Needle spiking appears to be a new phenomenon which started to attract widespread press coverage in late October 2021.
4. From 13 April 2022, many drugs used to spike another person were moved from Class C to a Class B drug under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. Perpetrators are often convicted under Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 or the Sexual Offences Act 2003
5. There are current calls for spiking of any kind, to be made a standalone criminal offence.

ISSUES/PROPOSALS

6. The Licensing Team has supported the police when concerns have been raised of spiking at licensed premises in Harlow, however, this is not a common occurrence. Whilst visiting premises officers have discussed appropriate management techniques to assist dealing with this particular problem, including searching on entry, retraining staff, Ask for Angela, and use of CCTV.

7. Ask for Angela is the name of a campaign in England that started in 2016 that is used by bars and other venues to keep people safe from sexual assault by using the code-word to identify when they are in danger or are in an uncomfortable situation.

IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Growth and Regeneration

None specific.

Author: Andrew Bramidge, Director of Strategic Growth and Regeneration

Finance

None specific.

Author: Simon Freeman, Deputy to the Chief Executive and Director of Finance

Housing

As outlined in the report.

Author: Andrew Murray, Director of Housing

Communities and Environment

None specific.

Author: Jane Greer, Director of Communities and Environment

Governance and Corporate Services

None specific.

Author: Simon Hill, Director of Governance and Corporate Services

Appendices

Appendix A - Letter to Licensing Committees on Drink Spiking

Background Papers

[Harsher sentences introduced for 'spiking' drugs - GOV.UK](#)

Glossary of terms/abbreviations used

None