

**Alcohol in the Workplace**  
**Quantitative and Qualitative Report**  
**On behalf of NHS Hull**

**SMSR**

social and market strategic research

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

**November 2009**



## Contents Page

<b>1.0</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1	Background	3
1.2	NHS Hull	3
1.3	The Research	3
<b>2.0</b>	<b>METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1	Quantitative Research	4
2.2	Qualitative Research	4
<b>3.0</b>	<b>SUMMARY</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS</b>	<b>7</b>
4.1	Business and Alcohol	7
4.2	The Organisation	9
4.3	Campaigns and Awareness	11
4.4	Identification and Brief Advice	16
4.5	Occupational Health Provision	17
4.6	What Help/ Support is Needed?	18
<b>5.0</b>	<b>QUALITATIVE FINDINGS</b>	<b>21</b>
5.1	The Organisation	21
5.2	Communications	30
5.3	Screening and prevention	36
<b>6.0</b>	<b>APPENDIX</b>	<b>38</b>
6.1	Script	39
6.2	Alcohol Policies	41

## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Background

A government's strategy unit calculated that the cost of alcohol-related harms in England is up to 20 billion per annum. These harms include:

- harms to health;
- crime and anti-social behaviour;
- loss of productivity in the workplace; and
- social harms, such as family breakdown

It is estimated that up to 17 million working days are lost through alcohol-related absence resulting in a significant loss of productivity and profitability. The national alcohol harm reduction strategy for England calls for action for better education and communication through the provision of support and advice to employers.

Alcohol is involved in 20-25% of all industrial accidents and a member of staff under the influence of alcohol will only achieve up to 67% of their work potential. Alcohol can have a huge effect on a work force and business; and the NHS are working with businesses to reduce the consumption of alcohol during work time.

### 1.2 NHS Hull

NHS Hull, having recognised alcohol in the workplace as a problem, has decided to commission a range of supports/interventions to support local business in Hull. As a pre cursor to this, NHS Hull commissioned a programme of consultation with employers to help identify and understand both the problems currently being encountered as a result of alcohol and additionally to identify the type and form of support that NHS Hull could provide employers with to assist them in addressing this problem.

### 1.3 The Research

NHS Hull is currently reviewing its strategy and services for alcohol in the workplace. To assist it in this process, one of the aims of the commissioned research was to identify the level of need and support required by local business to address alcohol misuse in the work place.

## 2.0 Methodology

### 2.1 Quantitative Research

A survey designed by SMSR in conjunction with officers at NHS Hull, included the following topics:

- Business and alcohol
- The organisation
- Campaigns and awareness
- Identification and brief advice
- Occupational health provision
- What help/support is needed

256 telephone surveys were carried out across organisations in Hull. In order to ensure a representative sample of organisations were spoken to, quotas were set with regards to the size of organisation. The following sample was achieved:

Organisation size	Sample size achieved
1-10 employees	124
11-49 employees	79
50-199 employees	44
200+ employees	9

### 2.2 Qualitative Research

Following the quantitative piece of research, a series of face to face interviews were carried out with the relevant person from a selection of organisations of various sizes. A total of 12 interviews were undertaken and each interviewee was asked if they could provide a copy of the organisations alcohol policy.

The results of the quantitative research were built into the script, which was produced by SMSR in conjunction with officers at NHS Hull. A copy of the script and alcohol policies can be found in the appendix.

### 3.0 Summary

There is an overall perception that alcohol in the workplace is not a problem; with respondents of the survey rating alcohol as a problem in the public sector at 3.2 and in the private sector, 3.3 (Scale: 1=not a problem, 10=a very big problem).

This was reflected in the face to face interviews that were carried out, with many organisations not having a screening procedure in place, and in some cases not having a policy in place. It did tend to be however, smaller private sector organisations that did not have a policy or run any form of campaign in terms of alcohol awareness due to a 'family' mentality, and therefore the feeling that there is no need to have anything in place.

This complacency and more relaxed approach to alcohol related policy and procedure could be due to the lack of alcohol related incidents in these organisations, and therefore they feel that there is no need; just 18% of large, small, private and public sector organisations had experienced an incident in the last 12 months. While there had been very few incidents within the organisations, the effects on individuals and therefore the organisation were recognised, with absenteeism being the most recognised consequence of alcohol.

When dealing with absenteeism, more or less all organisations recorded this in some way and carried out back to work interviews. Unless employees specifically stated that their absence was alcohol related, employers were unable to record that absence was alcohol related – although some organisations did in fact note down suspicions. Absence was monitored and any patterns (i.e. Mondays) were recorded and addresses with employers.

Over half of organisations that took part in the survey had an alcohol policy and of those, 76% described the policy as 'zero tolerance'. Most organisations that were interviewed face to face did have an alcohol policy, however admitted that employers are not forced to read it but do have access to it (mostly via the intranet) if they wish to read it. Smaller private companies tended to be least likely to have a policy.

National campaign advertising was recognised, mostly as television adverts in both the telephone and face to face interviews, with the 'know your limits' campaign being most widely recognised.

Just 12% of those organisations that took part in the survey had ever ran an internal campaign and/or felt the need to. This was reflected in the face to face interviews, with just three of the twelve organisations running some form of internal campaign. Those that had not ran an internal campaign had felt there was no need to due to the ineffectiveness of a campaign and in smaller companies, because of the trust in employees and 'family' mentality.

More or less all organisations that took part in the fact to face interviews would welcome some form of help from the NHS to launch or support internal campaigns. Over a third of those that took part in the survey (36%) would welcome support from the NHS. Although there is the offer of additional support, it is perhaps surprising, that results from the survey show that the smallest organisations were least likely to feel that they need additional support – again, possibly because they feel that there are no alcohol related problems within their organisation.

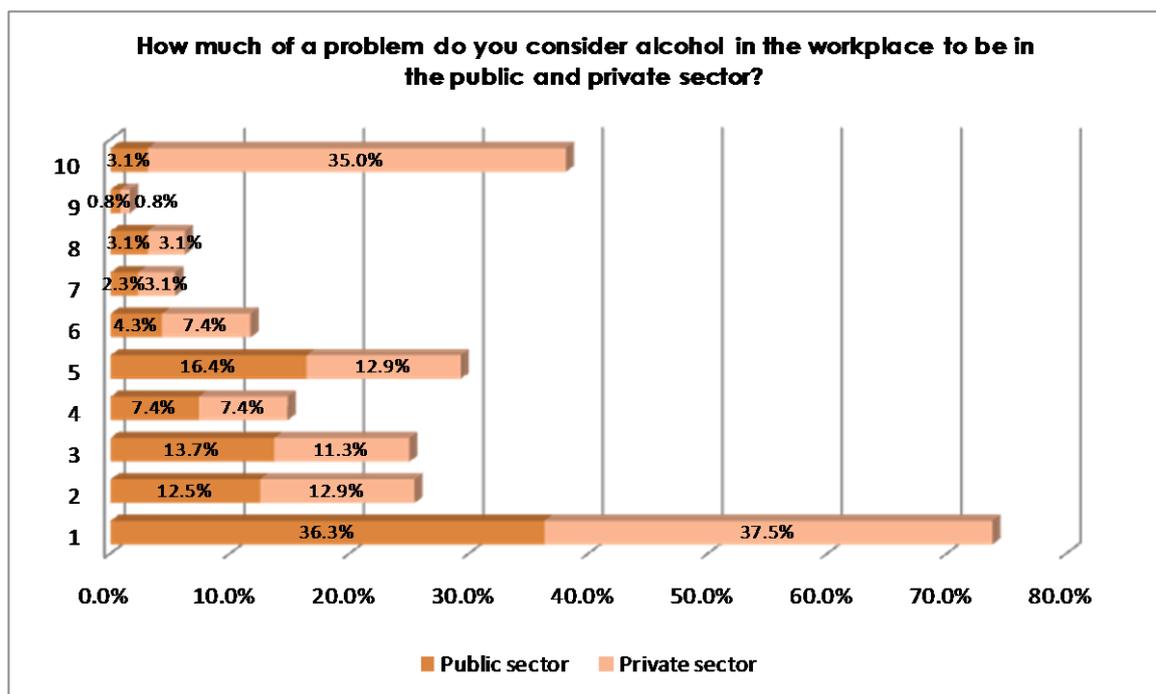
Although there is evidence to suggest that early identification of alcohol misuse and the delivery of simple advice can be effective in reducing peoples drinking to more sensible levels, just under a third (32%) of those that took part in the survey were aware of screenings and interventions related to alcohol in their organisation. No organisations interviewed face to face had a screening procedure in place (although three were looking to implement one), due to the 'obviousness' of employers under the influence of alcohol via smell and behaviour.

Just over a quarter (27%) of all respondents were aware of an occupational health model in place within their organisation and of those that were interviewed face to face, larger companies did refer employers suspected of alcohol consumption to occupational health. Of those that would not refer employers to occupation health (possibly due to a lack of this department), most would refer the employer to their GP.

## 4.0 Quantitative Findings

### 4.1 Business and Alcohol

Businesses were asked to consider how much of a problem they felt alcohol to be in the workplace in both the public and private sectors. Using a scale of one to ten, with one being 'not a problem at all' and ten being a 'very big problem', the mean score given with regards to the public sector was 3.2, while the mean score within the private sector was 3.3. Evidently, alcohol in the work place is not perceived to be a problem in neither the public nor private sectors.



To establish the kinds of issues and problems associated with alcohol in the workplace, businesses were asked to comment on ways in which they can think alcohol affects the workplace. The most frequently made comment was a reduction in productivity (48%), followed by 'a danger of breaking health and safety regulations' (36%). While in the previous question businesses felt that alcohol in the workplace was a not a problem, there is the fear that if there were a problem, it would affect the business directly in terms of productivity.

<b>In what ways do you think alcohol can affect the workplace? (Unprompted)</b>		
<b>Effect</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Reduced productivity	124	48.4
Danger of breaking health and safety regulations	92	35.9
Punctuality	42	16.4
Accidents	32	12.5
Arguments/aggressive behaviour	28	10.9

The same question was asked, however this time, prompted, with suggested problems that alcohol in the workplace can cause. When prompted, absenteeism (93%) was the problem most associated with alcohol in the workplace, violence (72%) was least likely to be.

<b>From the following list, in what ways do you think alcohol can affect the workplace?</b>		
<b>Effect</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Absenteeism	238	93.0
Disrupt team	224	87.5
Odour	214	83.6
Bad language	213	83.2
Violence	185	72.3
Other	31	12.1

Of those that mentioned an 'other' problem, 26% (8) mentioned a reduction in productivity. This mention of a reduction in productivity and absenteeism being the problem most likely to occur as a result of alcohol in the workplace indicates that the productivity and therefore turnover/profit of the business is placed above the health and safety of staff.

## 4.2 The Organisation

The vast majority (82%) of businesses had NOT had any alcohol related incidents in the last three years. These incidents could have included affecting an employees work or attendance, crime or affecting employee's families. Large organisations (200+ employees) tended to be most likely to have had an alcohol related incident (44% - 4 organisations) – reasons for this could include a stronger management of an alcohol policy or a more effective way of recording alcohol related incidents.

Of those organisations that had recorded alcohol related incidents in the last three years, the table below highlights the incident and the number of incidents recorded.

Which of the following incidents have occurred in your business in the last 3 years?		
Incident	Percentage of businesses that had experienced the incident	Most frequent number of incidents
Absenteeism	80%	10+ (24%)
Family Breakdown	15%	5 (14%)
Crime	17%	10+ (1 business)
Anti-Social Behaviour	44%	10+ (20%)

**Absenteeism** – 11% felt that absenteeism disrupts the team and a further 11% felt that it puts pressure on other members of staff to do their work.

**Family Breakdowns** - 43% felt that it makes the job harder and brings more issues to the workplace.

**Crime** – 38% felt that it costs the company money.

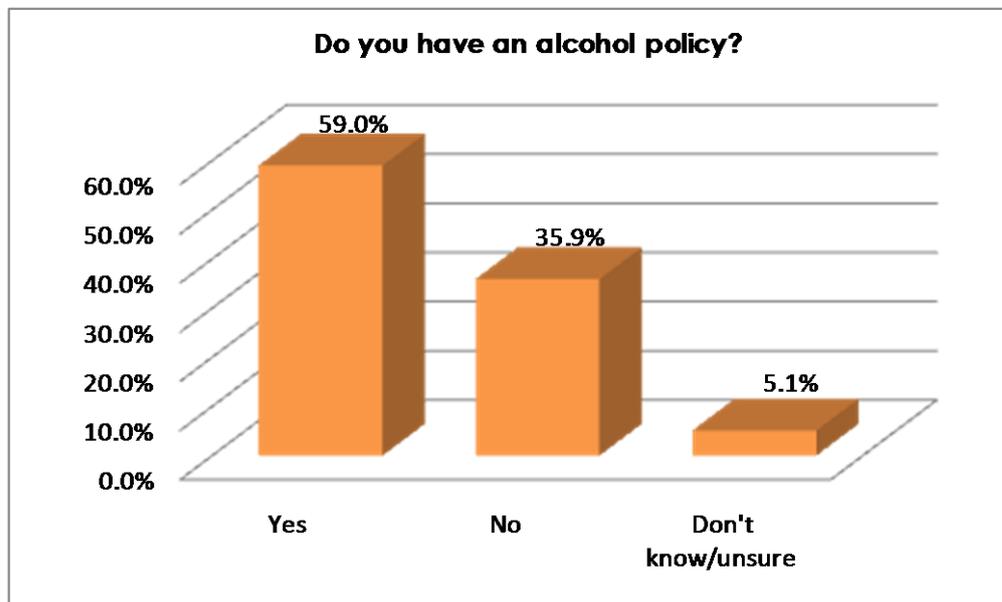
**ASB** – 15% stated that instances of ASB have been upsetting and frightening for team members and elderly/disabled residents.

When asked how they currently/ would manage alcohol related absence, almost half (48%) would perform a back to work interview and/or discuss the problem with the member of staff.

<b>How do you or how would you manage alcohol-related absence where it is known?</b>		
<b>Method</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Perform a back to work interview/discuss the problem with them	124	48.4
Disciplinary procedures	107	41.8
Offer counselling/support/help	48	18.8
Dismissal if persistent	25	9.8
I would send them home/suspend	22	8.6

Larger companies (200 or more employees) tended to be more likely to take disciplinary action than smaller companies.

Over half (59%) of all organisations had an alcohol policy; organisations with between 1 and 10 employees were least likely to have an alcohol policy in place. 5% of people we spoke to were unaware whether or not their organisation had an alcohol policy – with these being smaller organisations.



When asked to describe the alcohol policy, just over three quarters (76%) described their policy as a 'zero tolerance' policy, while 11% could not describe the policy.

Please describe your policy		
Policy	Number	Percentage (%)
Zero tolerance policy/no alcohol consumption while on duty	114	75.5
I would send them home/suspend	17	11.3
Don't know	16	10.6
Disciplinary procedures	9	6.0
Instant dismissal	8	5.3

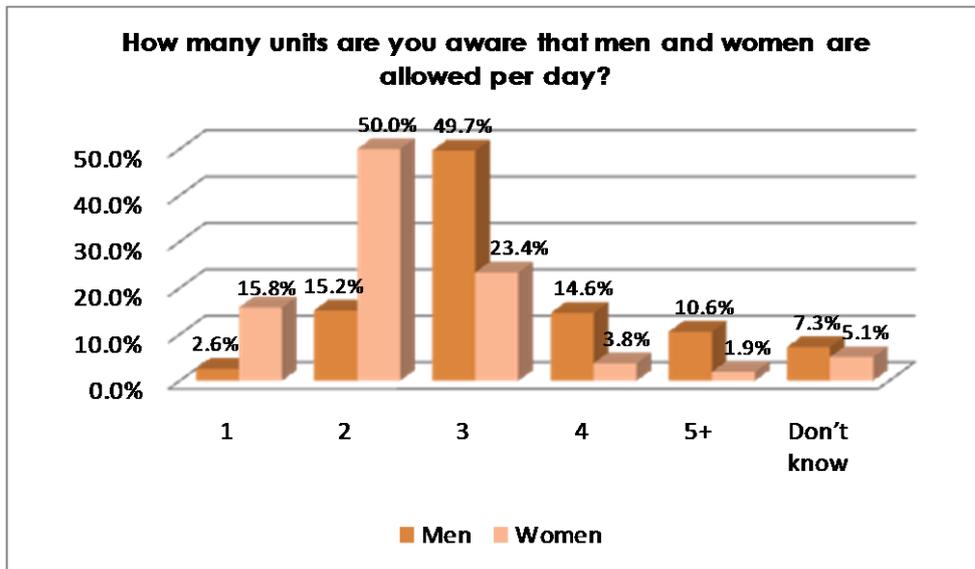
### 4.3 Campaigns and Awareness

Official guidelines from the 'Know Your Limits' Campaign recommends that men should not regularly drink more than 3-4 units of alcohol a day and women should not regularly drink more than 2-3 units of alcohol per day.

Respondents were slightly more likely to consider themselves to be aware of the recommended daily units of alcohol for females than males – this could possibly be because more women were spoken to for the survey. Almost six tenths (59%) felt that they were aware of the recommended daily units for men, while 62% felt that they were aware of the recommended daily units for women.

Of those that felt that they were aware of the recommended daily units of alcohol for men, half of all respondents felt that the allowed daily units was '3', while surprisingly, 11% thought that '5' units were allowed per day.

Half of all respondents thought that women were allowed '2' units per day, while almost a quarter (23%) thought that '3' units were allowed.



Over two thirds (65%) were aware of an alcohol health related advertising campaign, with organisations with between 1 and 10 employees being least likely to be aware of any campaign.

Of those that had seen some form of advertising related to alcohol health, almost three quarters (73%) recalled seeing a television advert.

Can you tell me what the advertising was?		
Type of advertising	Number	Percentage (%)
TV advertising	121	72.5
Advertising units on a glass	34	20.4
Leaflets/poster advert	16	9.6
Radio advert	14	8.4
Newspaper advert	4	2.4

Unsurprisingly, the advertisement was most likely to have been seen on television.

Can you tell me where the advertising was?		
Location	Number	Percentage (%)
Television	146	87.4
Radio	10	6.0
Billboard	7	4.2
Can't remember	6	3.6
Newspaper	2	1.2
GP surgery	2	1.2

Almost two thirds (61%) could recall the message from the advertising to be 'know your limits'/'drink sensibly', while 34% could recall the message being 'do not drink and drive'.

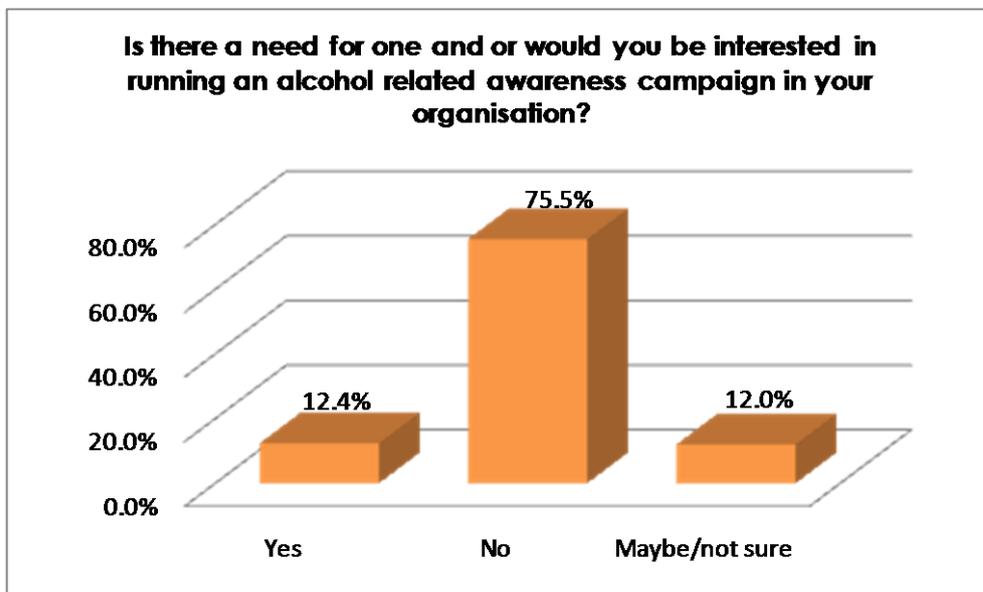
Can you tell me what the message was from the advertising?		
Message	Number	Percentage (%)
Know your limits/drink sensibly/safely	101	60.5
Do not drink and drive	57	34.1
How drinking can affect you/your health and others around you	32	19.2
Be aware of the amount of alcohol that one is consuming	8	4.8
Can't remember	1	0.6

Just 9% of all organisations had run some form of alcohol related awareness campaigns within the organisation, perhaps unsurprisingly, the largest organisations were most likely to have run some form of campaign, while the smallest organisations were least likely to have done so.

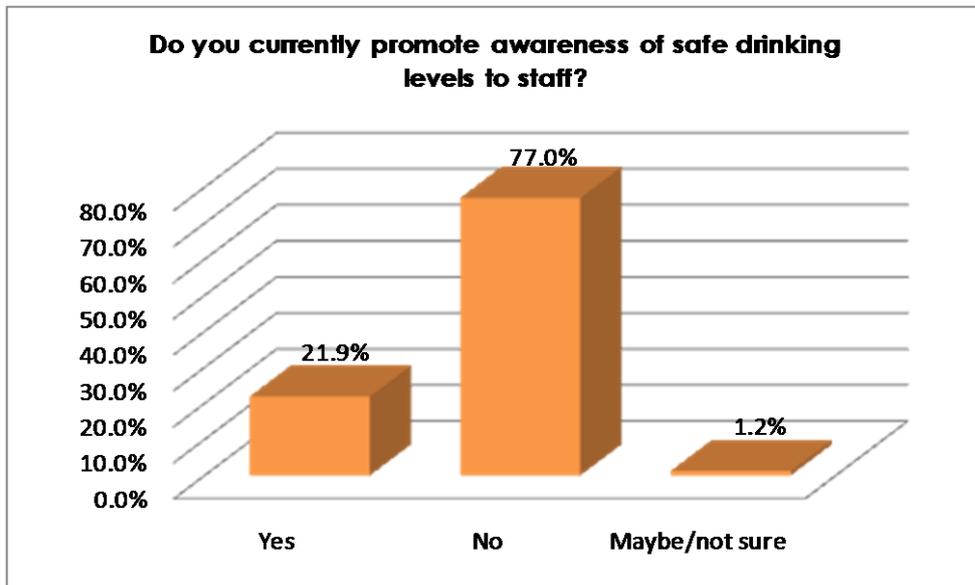
Of those that had run some form of campaign (23 organisations), 61% had given out leaflets, while 87% had put up posters.

Which of the following do you/have you done?		
Awareness campaign	Number	Percentage (%)
Posters	20	87.0
Give leaflets	14	60.9
Campaigns	12	52.2
Awareness days	8	34.8
Guest speakers	6	26.1
Other	3	13.0

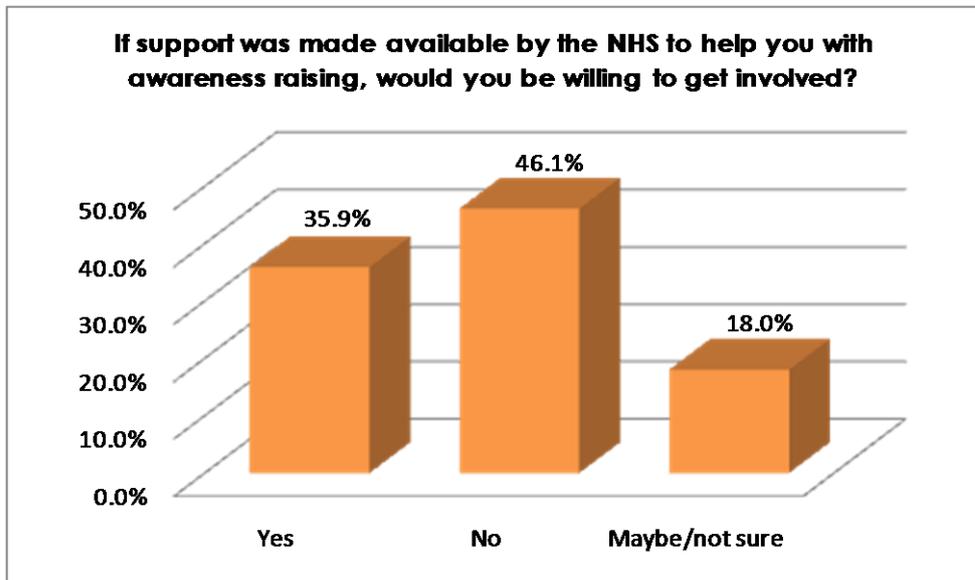
Of those organisations that had NOT run any form of campaign within their organisation, just 12% felt that there is a need for a campaign related to alcohol and would be interested in running one; a further 12% were interested but would not commit.



Just over a fifth (22%) of all organisations promoted awareness of safe drinking levels to staff.



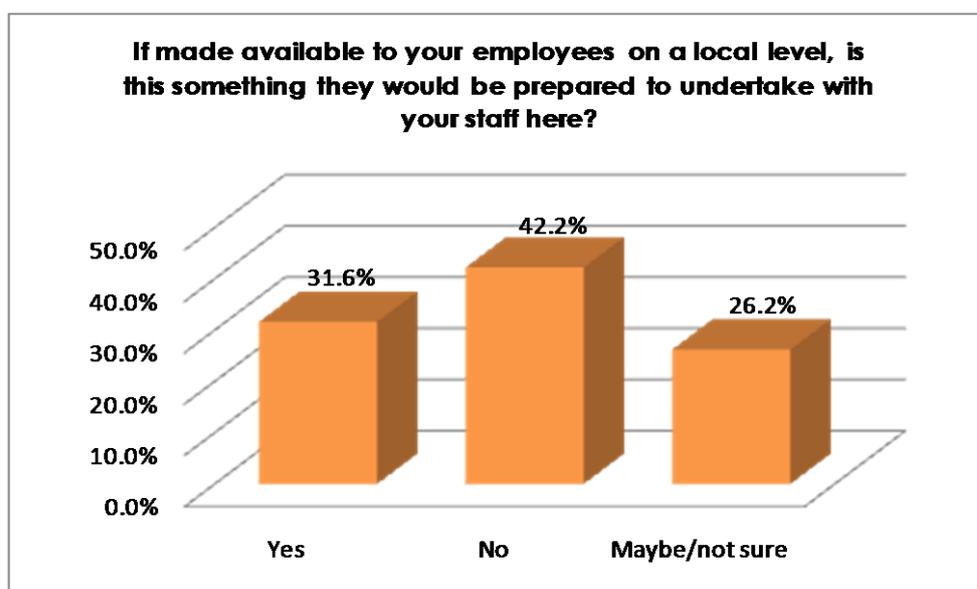
If support was made available by the NHS to help organisations raise awareness, 36% of organisations would get involved.



## 4.4 Identification and Brief Advice

There is a large amount of research that shows that early identification of alcohol misuse and the delivery of simple advice can be effective in reducing peoples drinking to more sensible levels.

Just under a third (32%) were aware of screenings and interventions related to alcohol. If help with screenings and interventions were made available to organisations at a local level, 32% would be prepared to undertake some form of screening or intervention with staff in their organisation.



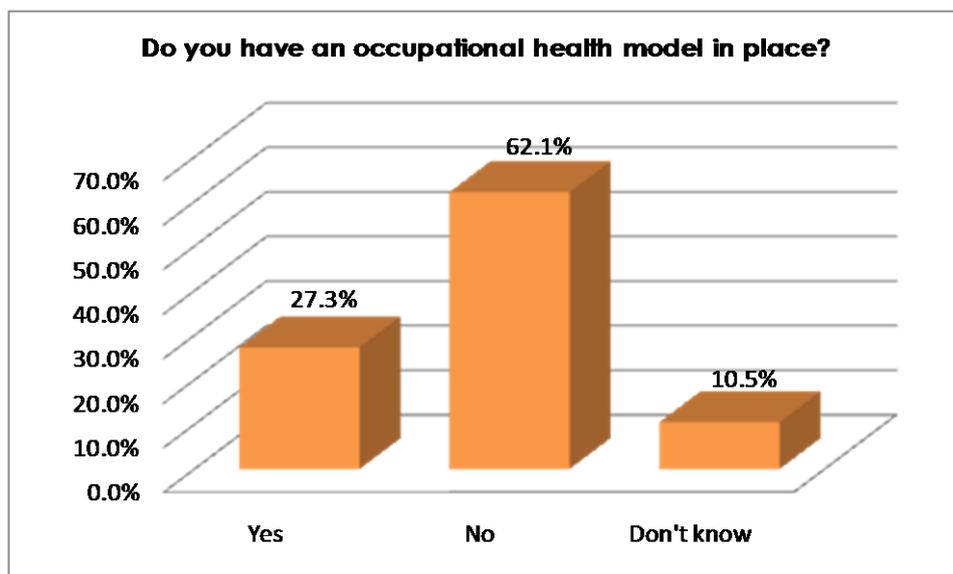
Of those that would not be prepared to undertake some for of screening or intervention with staff, 60% did not feel it was necessary.

If no, please explain why?		
Reason	Number	Percentage (%)
We do not feel we need it/not necessary	65	60.2
Because we do not have problems of this nature/not an issue	26	24.1
Don't know	9	8.3
No need because they already know how to identify and deal with it	8	7.4

Of those that would be prepared to undertake screening and intervention with staff, 84% would allow their staff to be trained to deliver screening and other simple interventions.

## 4.5 Occupational Health Provision

Just over a quarter (27%) of all respondents were aware of an occupational health model in place within their organisation; 11% did not know whether or not there is an occupational health model in place. Larger organisations were more likely than smaller ones to have an occupational health model in place.



Of those that did have an occupational health model in place, a third were unaware of the occupational services that the organisation has in place, while 26% were aware of a health and safety/first aid person.

If yes, what occupational services do you have in place?		
Service	Number	Percentage (%)
Don't know	23	32.9
Health and safety/first aid person	18	25.7
Confidential help-lines/counselling/support	14	20.0
Advisors	5	7.1
Assessors come and assess staff	4	5.7

Respondents were given a list of occupational services that could potentially be in place in their organisation. They were asked to choose from the list, which services they were aware of; 90% were aware of sickness monitoring, while 84% were aware of return to work meetings.

<b>From the following list, do you have any of these occupational services in place?</b>		
<b>Service</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Sickness monitoring	63	90.0
Return to work meetings	59	84.3
Health promotions	32	45.7
Immunisation/vaccine/blood pressure checks	18	25.7
Other	7	10.0

#### **4.6 What Help/ Support is Needed?**

Respondents were asked how they would respond and what action they would take if a member of staff were to approach them with an alcohol related issue. Over half (57%) would advise the member of staff to visit their GP or an alcohol service, while 36% would refer the member of staff to occupational health/ HR or other relevant member of staff/ department.

<b>If a member of staff or employee approached you with an alcohol issue what action would you take?</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Advise to attend GP/other alcohol service	146	57.0
Refer to occupational health/HR/other member of staff	92	35.9
Refer to alcohol policy for guidance	33	12.9
Other	33	12.9
Refer to disciplinary procedure	31	12.1

Of those that stated 'other', 52% (17) would give the member of staff advice and support in the best way possible and/or offer counselling.

If an employer was to suspect a member of staff had an alcohol issue, almost three quarters (72%) would discuss the issue with the employee, while 28% would advise the employee to visit their GP or another alcohol service.

<b>If you suspected a staff member had an alcohol issue would you:</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Discuss the issue with employee	185	72.3
Advise to attend GP/other alcohol service	72	28.1
Refer to occupational health/HR/other member of staff	69	27.0
Refer to disciplinary procedure	35	13.7
Refer to alcohol policy for guidance	19	7.4
Other	12	4.7
Ignore the issue	3	1.2

Under 10% (7%) of respondents felt that their organisation needs additional support and access to services to address any alcohol/ work related issues. Perhaps surprisingly, the smallest organisations were least likely to feel that they need additional support – possibly as they feel that there are no alcohol related problems within their organisation.

Of those that did feel the need for additional support (17 organisations), 35% felt that one particular issue that would need to be focussed on would be 'counselling and assistance for individuals'.

Respondents were asked whether or not they felt organisations would welcome support in three specific areas in order to address alcohol in the workplace; policy development/ implementation, support and awareness raising and where to go for help.

Respondents were most likely to think that organisations would welcome help with regards to 'where to go for help' (82%), with the largest organisations being least likely to welcome help with regards to this.

<b>Do you feel that organisations would welcome support in the following areas to address alcohol in the workplace:</b>		
<b>Type of support</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Policy development/implementation	186	72.7
Support and awareness raising	201	78.5
Where to go for help? (other alcohol providers)	211	82.4

When asked if there were any other areas in which organisations may welcome help with regards to raising awareness about alcohol in the workplace; 29 respondents offered other areas. Of the 29, 55% would welcome help with regards to alcohol and drug awareness (with the largest organisations welcoming this help) and 28% would welcome help with counselling (with smaller organisations most likely to welcome this help).

<b>Are there any other areas where you would welcome help in this area?</b>		
<b>Area</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Alcohol/drug awareness	16	55.2
Counselling	8	27.6
Drink and drug related leaflets/posters	6	20.7
Any health related information would be helpful/healthy living	3	10.3

70% of all organisations that took part in this survey were prepared to be contacted by the NHS regarding this topic as they finalise their alcohol support plans.

## 5.0 Qualitative Findings

### 5.1 The Organisation

**Generally the majority of organisations felt that alcohol in the work place was not a problem at all. Just 10% felt that alcohol in the workplace was an issue in the public sector while 18% felt that it was an issue in the private sector.**

There was a mix of reaction with regards to this statement, although almost all agreed that the stress and/or pressure associated with jobs within either sector did not differ and therefore could not be attributed to levels of drinking. Many – a mix of both public and private organisations, agreed that incidents related to alcohol are more apparent in the private sector than public sector. Reasons for this varied opinion, with some organisations believing that it was due to the fact that the public sector deal with alcohol related incidents 'differently' than the private sector, with cases being long and drawn out and in some cases 'covered up'; while others felt that it was simply a case of a more relaxed atmosphere and a leniency towards alcohol in the private sector, a kind of acceptance that it 'goes with the job' – which meant that it was dealt with much more quickly.

*“Possibly, my husband is a civil servant so I know things about the public sector. If the employees have more than 3 Mondays off in year it's investigated. They're a lot stricter. In the private sector things are more precarious”*

*“It's probably equal but the public sector cover it over and tackle it differently. In the private sector things are tackled more quickly rather than waiting because they like to nip things in the bud”*

*“Yes I think it probably is, in the public sector you're constantly dealing with members of the public whereas in a lot of private sectors companies staff spend all of their time with just their colleagues. I think there are different expectations from staff in public and private companies as well; people expect staff in the public sector to be more professional”*

*“In the public sector incidents of alcohol in the workplace being an issue would be quite low because of the work that we do. It would definitely be higher in the private sector”*

*“What I will say is that people in the private sector tend to drink all year round whereas those in the public sector tend to come out just around Christmas time for drinks”*

*“People having a crafty dinner time drink with their lunch, with being where we are we do see a few of them. Again it seems to be mainly people in the private sector, especially office workers, who come and do it rather than the public sector workers”*

Two of the smaller organisations felt that alcohol related incidents would tend to go unnoticed in large organisations, while smaller organisations are much more close-knit and any alcohol related incident would be easily identified. There was also the sense that alcohol related incidents in small businesses would be dealt with in a more informal manner due to a 'family' culture.

*"We are a small company of a 'certain age' and there's no chance of an alcohol related incident happening, however if it did, we would be more likely to have a private word on an informal basis than make it all formal"*

*"I think in larger companies even though they have the procedures it's more likely to go unnoticed because people are strangers. With us having such little staff here, on a normal day we only have 6 staff working including management, so we all get on and chat through the day. If someone did have a problem we'd notice something different about one of them"*

### **Just 18% could recall an alcohol related incident in the workplace.**

There was a split view when asked whether or not this figure of 18% was 'about right' – a small minority felt that this figure was about right, while slightly more felt the figure was too high.

Of those that felt it was about right, it was mainly due to a lack of awareness of incidents.

Of those that felt 18% was too low, there were perceptions that the figure should be around 25% and even as high as 80%. This perception of lots of cases of alcohol related incidents was more related to media attention and 'feelings' as opposed to fact. Many organisations that felt the figure should be higher was related more to people calling in sick the day after 'a heavy drinking session', rather than people being drunk at work.

*"I think if people were been truthful it would be closer to 80%. If you include people who phone in sick because they've been out the night before it would definitely be higher. I know for a fact a number of staff here have done it, been on a night out and then called in sick the next day"*

*"18% seems a bit low going from what you see on the media. I've got no experience of it but I think in some sectors it's quite high. I worked in the city of London and for a lot of people lunchtimes were a drinking session on a daily basis because a lot would get the tube home"*

*"I can't speak for other businesses but overall I think the figure is probably quite low because alcohol is obviously becoming more of a problem. If you'd have asked me it as a question I would have probably said 20-25% so it was what I would expect but maybe a bit low. I think some companies will experience more problems than others because there is a certain class structure whereby some people are more prone to take drink than others and certain companies and occupations employ more of that sort of person so it follows that they will then have more problem"*

One organisation also admitted that before changes to the area, due to a high amount of pubs, there was very much a drinking culture throughout the organisation, although it was noted that most drinking was done after working hours. This has now changed and fewer pubs across a larger geographical area has meant fewer employees drink alcohol after work.

*"People work shifts and operatives can't go off site on their lunch and break times. There used to be a pub culture in the area because there were lots of pubs around and a social club at the front. People used to finish work and go out socially for a few drinks. People have moved to different areas now and the pubs have closed"*

Unlike those that felt the figure was too low as many cases were related to 'hangovers' and these should be recorded as alcohol related, of those that felt the figure of 18% was too high, the reasons were mainly due to an 'acceptance' that many of the instances recorded in the 18% were 'hangover incidents'.

*"I thought it would be under 10% but then if you include things like people coming in the day after a night out I think it's about right. In every work place people are going to go in after a night out hungover. I'd see alcohol related incidents more as people who go into work after they've had a drink"*

*"The weekend staff are the only problem because they like to go out sometimes on a Saturday or Sunday they come in either hungover or still drunk. It affects how they work because if they have to put stock out instead of doing it at the average pace they're sluggish and can't really be bothered to be honest. Sometimes we end up sending them home anyway because they're that bad. A lot have left so there's only really one who's a party animal and she still comes in the same. When you are young it is all about going out and getting drunk isn't it but I suppose it could be anyone you just don't know. Here it is just the young one"*

*"We've never had a problem which I suppose is a good thing, unless it's brought to your attention you don't really think about it do you. I think 18% is quite high. Would think that drinking on site and coming to work with a hangover would mean people weren't doing the job properly which would be the main problem. If people were taking time off because they'd been drinking heavily on a Saturday night. One off's are ok, I mean we've all done it when we've come to work feeling a bit ill after we've been to a do or whatever but on a regular basis then it became unacceptable"*

*"One off situations such as coming in with a hangover is frowned upon, but you just get a bit of a verbal warning – sort of unofficially saying 'don't let this happen again'"*

*"I think that seems really high, I didn't think many companies would be affected by it. We employ all of our events staff on a casual basis so they have to call during the week if they want to work on the weekend so we haven't really had any problems. There are always a few who call in sick because they've been out the night before but they have to call in 4 hours before their shift so most people who've been out don't get up in time to do that so they have to come in. There are a lot more staff calling in sick when there is a Sunday match on because a lot of them go out on a Saturday. In the office we're mostly senior staff members so it's not something that would happen in our building"*

*"I really can't imagine there being that many instances where alcohol has been a problem in the work place. Most problems would be once they're out of work. Really though I can't imagine anyone wanting to turn up to work after they've been drinking, it's something you look forward to after work"*

In terms of recording with alcohol related instances, a third of the organisations spoken to did not record alcohol related absence, and in some cases, absence at all. All organisations admitted that unless an employee admits that their absence has been alcohol related, which is not very often, 'hangover' absences are not recorded as there is no way to prove it. Organisations admitted that they usually know that absence is related to alcohol due to awareness of staff nights out and general staff 'chat'.

*"Because we're a small company all of our duties are blurred. It would depend on who was drinking on who would deal with it. The lady in accounts is the most senior female so she would speak to the women. The director is over 80 so he frowns upon drinking anyway. It would probably be the financial director who would speak to the men because he's seen as the boss. It would only be informal at first and if it only happened once not a lot would be said unless they were driving.*

*We all know each other so well we'd know immediately if some-one was drunk. I can't even imagine any of us smoking never mind anything else. We don't take time off sick. I broke my hand and only had 2 days off. No one rings up because they don't feel well, or what I call a trivial absence. Days off aren't recorded but if we really wanted to check we could look through the payroll"*

*"Everyone has a back to work interview after they've had time off but unless they say it was because they'd been drinking we don't record it. We're supposed to have a sheet for everyone with their days off marked but it isn't kept on top of. Even though we might suspect they've had a heavy night the night before you have to actually prove it which is where you hit the grey area. Its very hard to prove that someone's actually got a hangover or has been drinking. We normally find out because all of the staff are close so we'll hear that there's been a night out and that that staff member's been on the night out"*

*"Staff don't tend to tell you when they have a problem with alcohol or maybe hungover on a one off occasion. In the manufacturing side people look out for each other and when we've had an alcoholic in the firm in the past the workers have covered for him"*

Of those that did record absence, all absences were recorded and placed on personnel file, along with (in some cases) any suspicions the employer has about the absence and a back to work interview. Some organisations have also referred employees with absenteeism to occupational health if there has been a particular worry.

*"If a staff member turned up at any time of the day unfit for work then it would be classed as a disciplinary matter and if it was a continued problem it would be gross misconduct which can lead in instant dismissal. If it was a one off it would most probably be dealt with using a verbal warning. All problems like this are dealt with by occupational health, who keep a record of what has happened and following from that what they have discussed with the employee. All sickness is recorded and we have a small team who manage sickness within the council. They always look to establish a pattern so if it was every Monday morning they might start asking question about what was causing it. I don't think an employee would ring up and say I'm sick because I've had too much to drink but they'd probably say I don't feel very well this morning. If a pattern did emerge then something would be done about it. It would be difficult if it was only one day that they did call in sick because we just wouldn't know"*

*"There's nothing that says whether it was alcohol related or not but we have a return to work interview where it will usually get picked up. In the back to work interviews we look at previous absences and the nature of these and also how they are performing while at work. There have been a handful of alcohol related absences but its more suspected than actually reported from the person. Some individuals are absent a few times and I suspect it's because of alcohol. If a manager thinks it is a problem they will refer the individual to me and write a report on the issue"*

*"As an advisor I would be one of the first that dealt with them as well as them going to occupational health"*

*"We have an absence sheet and if it becomes a reoccurring problem then we would use one of them. One of the girls who've left now had one because she used to call in sick a lot. We're all friends here so when she'd told us she was going to a party on Friday and then suddenly on the Saturday she would ring in sick you can work out that alcohol is the reason why. If people don't admit that they've called in sick because of a hangover we can write on the absence sheet that we suspect it's because they have been out. In some cases you don't know if they really are sick or not so it would be unfair to make presumptions all of the time. All staff have a personnel folder and any incidents involving alcohol would be noted in the folder so all managers were aware of what has happened"*

*"If someone rings in sick and it is drink related, like if I know they've been out the night before, we do usually know because we are in the area where they would probably go drinking. If they try and call in sick I will make them come to work or tell them they have to get a sick note to prove that they are genuinely ill"*

*"The general policy in these cases is to get said staff away from the customers and stock as soon as possible to avoid any obvious issues, a call to personnel is then made and usually they will then suspend the employee until further notice"*

*"We have a policy that if someone gets 3 strikes then we don't give them any more shifts so if I did think that they're calling in sick when they aren't really ill I just wouldn't give them any hours. Obviously some of the staff are serving alcohol and if anyone was drinking while at work it would be dealt with. All problems are dealt with using the disciplinary procedure, so any problems with alcohol would follow these guidelines. If the problem was with a member of the office based they would be dealt with in the same way but it would be the general manager who would oversee the disciplinary process"*

#### **Just 59% of businesses had an alcohol policy.**

The general opinion was that larger companies tend to have alcohol policies while smaller ones do not, in particular smaller companies within the private sector with some interviewees admitting that they 'just get by without them'. One interviewee from a large private sector organisation felt that whether or not organisations had policies and the power to enforce them was dependant on resources, which large organisations tend to have. Although all sizes of organisation from both the public and private sectors feel equally as strongly about the issue of alcohol in the work place, the size of organisations is evidently key on how organisations deal with the situation and the mentality they have towards it.

*"Large organisations generally have someone there to do policies and a HR department. They can easily take policies and fit them into the organisation. Small companies tend to tackle issues as they arise. They are more cuddly and know each other's down falls so will make allowances for them, like "he's always rough on a Monday". They get emotional support from each other and look after each other. In large companies people are strangers and need to be managed differently"*

*"I'm sure that now most of the large companies do have policies and procedures in place and are aware of where to go but many companies like us are not because we don't have the manpower or the time to devote specifically to issues like this. In small companies people do cover for each other when there are problems"*

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### **Does your organisation have an alcohol policy?**

9 of the 12 organisations interviewed did have an alcohol policy in place within their organisation, which all employees were given a copy of when they joined the organisation. Although all organisations did have a policy, there was no real evidence that this policy was reviewed with staff or that employees were reminded of policies being in place. All organisations admitted that although the policies are given to staff, they are not forced to read it or sign to say they have done. Policies tended to be in place in the larger organisations rather than smaller ones who, as mentioned above, have adopted a more informal, 'family' approach to alcohol policy.

*"You get a copy of policies and then you more or less forget that they are there"*

*"We do have a policy but I aren't aware of it been used yet, it hasn't got to that stage. I don't think it's followed that strictly to be honest. How incidents are dealt with would depend on the person and how bad they were when they came in"*

*"Yes policies are given to most of the work force and apply to all except for the teaching staff. Teachers are technically employed by the individual schools so the schools have their own policies. We currently have a policy on substance misuse which broadly includes drugs and alcohol but if there are any problems it tends to go down the welfare route. If we think someone does have a problem with alcohol we would try to help them but it doesn't go far enough as far as some of the managers are concerned as they aren't sure of what sanctions they can take against them. It is more aimed at people who have a serious alcohol problem rather than people who have a one off drink. We don't have any policy that doesn't allow people to have a drink we say that people cannot have enough so that they are seen as unfit to work. We don't have anything that says you mustn't go to the pub on a lunchtime, but we say if you go to the pub at lunchtime you must come back fit for duty."*

## **Organisations with a Policy**

*"We have an alcohol policy in place and people who are suspected to have issues with alcohol are referred to occupational health by their manager. The manager will write a statement which is read to the employee at an appointment with occupational health. We then go through what was said by the manager and see if the employee agrees with it. We can then tackle issues and see what needs doing. If they do have a problem with alcohol we help them to contact outside services who can help them through it"*

*"Company policy generally is no drinking before duty but generally if staff want to have 1 drink on their break or before shift they would be allowed and not have to ask. In general most of the staff choose not to though, they stay onsite and maybe have a meal during their break"*

*"The policies and guidelines on tackling alcohol in the workplace forms part of an employee's contract, there is no stand alone policy, it is just mentioned that it will not be tolerated in the contract and is subject to disciplinary action. Staff are informed categorically that they can't be drunk or drink at work full stop. It is mentioned in the company handbook and all staff have to sign a form to say they have read it which all links into their contracts"*

*"All casual staff are given a copy of the house rules when they start which tells them what they can and can't do whilst at work. Regarding alcohol it says that they can't consume any whilst on the premises, if some one did come in after they'd had a drink then they would be spoken to and sent home. It isn't on the house rules because its common sense that if you've had a drink you won't be fit for work. If there were serious alcohol issues or something happened within the offices it would be dealt with using the disciplinary procedure"*

*"All policies are on the intranet and hard copies are kept in the occupational health office and all managers have a book with all of the policies in. Also union and health and safety representatives are aware of what the policy is. If it's needed it can be fished out. HR policies are given to all managers who go through them and have training on them. Even if staff were aware of the policy I still think that drinking would go ahead. The policy helps the manager rather than the individual. In all of the years that I've been doing this it has been to the advantage of the manager. Without a policy they won't tackle it because it's socially accepted"*

*"Our company policy states that staff are allowed to drink to the legal limit of alcohol for driving as long as the general manager is aware. I'd say if staff members went out for their lunch they'd be fine to have a glass of wine or a beer but it does follow the driving rules, I'd say if you're capable to drive you're capable to work. As long as it doesn't affect your work it's ok. We have had staff who've come in after their break completely drunk and that's when they've taken it too far. In terms of guidance for managers that's all that we have in place. When every member of staff starts with the company they are given all of the policies to read and they are all given a copy of the staff handbook which they keep"*

*"People aren't given a copy of the policies but they know where they can get them if they do ever need them and they're all on the intranet. Where they are is mentioned in their induction programme and they are told the type of policies that we have. I think there is a good awareness of policies among staff but it tends to be particularly the ones that give people time off everybody knows exactly what annual leave they're entitled to"*

### **Organisations without a policy**

*"There is no standard laid down policy but we do have some on other issues. When all staff start they are given a book of health and safety policies and procedures so it could be incorporated into that but it's more important to us that staff get all of the necessary training that they need in order to do the job. I've never thought that it was something that was missing, yes it would be handy but it isn't critical"*

*"The centre does have certain policies but each of the individual user groups should have their own. There isn't a specific alcohol policy for the centre. For the kids club I'm not sure, but I don't think that we have. As there is a kids club it could maybe be something that we could look at but because the kids club is there people don't drink on site anyhow"*

*"We haven't had to think about an alcohol policy. No one would go to the pub on a lunch time so we don't have a set policy on it. Some of the guys go for business lunches and maybe have a glass of wine to be sociable but it's very rare that they'll have one because they all drive. A glass of wine is acceptable but any more would be frowned upon because they drive around in company cars"*

Some organisations tended to agree that it would be certain types of employees that were most likely to be involved in a drink related incident, although there were mixed opinions as to who this type of employee may be. While most felt that it would be the younger employee who would 'binge drink' over the weekend, one organisations felt that the most problematic employee would be older.

*"All of our employees are over 35 and most of us are nearly 60. It does tend to be a younger person's problem. We all spend our weekends at home rather than going out and drinking"*

*"I think serious alcohol abuse will tend to be amongst older staff members so companies who tend to employ older people may find that they have incidents which relate to this"*

## **5.2 Communications**

### **Do you think national campaigns around units and awareness of units have been successful?**

There was a general lack of awareness of advertising around drinking alcohol, with a public house being most aware of advertising. Due to this lack of awareness there was an inability to comment on whether or not the organisations felt the advertisements had been successful. A handful of interviewees did recall a television advert that made people aware of how many units men and women were advised to consume and a television advert which portrayed a drunk man who thinks he has powers and climbs to get a balloon, only to fall.

*"I've seen the campaigns but it's hard to gage whether they have been successful. Some people will think about what they are drinking for about 20 minutes after seeing the advert but if you want to go out and have a good time your going to go out and have a good time whether you've seen a drunk man climb to get a balloon or not"*

*"I don't think I've seen any adverts about alcohol in the workplace apart from the ones that are always on at Christmas. I don't see it as affecting me so I don't take much notice. If I had children that were 18 or 19 it might be different. I notice the figures that are on the news and on the radio and when they talk about stopping offers and things I either think that it's a good or bad idea"*

*"I don't tend to watch adverts because I'm very selective in terms of what I watch on the television. I usually end up taping a lot of the stuff and when you're watching things that are taped or on Sky+ you can zip through the adverts. I don't know that they're effective, everything like that will be effective to a small percentage of people but I don't think it makes the slightest difference to the vast majority of young people. I have a 22 year old son and I doubt very much that seeing an advert will stop them going out and having a drink. It's a bit like ASBO's some young people see them as a badge of honour, they're not a deterrent. A lot of people watching the adverts like the boy and girl getting ready drunk will just laugh at it. I think the NHS have to keep doing it, the message has to be given to people in the hope that it will hit home. How successful it is I don't know but if you stop one person killing or hurting themselves then it's worked in a way hasn't it"*

*"I think the advert that tells you how many units are in all of the drinks is the one that I pay the most attention to. I don't think that it stops people who are social drinkers but I think when you're sat at home and you realise that a bottle of wine is 10 units you do think about how many you're drinking when you're sat having a few glasses. Most of the staff here are young so I don't think they'd think about the advert on a night out. They probably know how many units they're drinking but carry on anyway"*

*"Bars are obviously at the forefront when it comes to alcohol abuse and people are really, really quick to give us the blame but I think you'll find that in most bars they're really strict because it's been promoted that well how easily you can get the license removed. All of our staff know that if you get caught serving someone underage on 2 occasions in a row you lose your license it's as easy as that to close a bar down now"*

*"I think the supermarket adverts that promote cheap beer are always going to be more effective than the ones discouraging alcohol. If you can buy a case of 24 cans for £10 you're not going to think of the adverts about what can happen if you drink too much. I think the problem is that as you get older you learn about what levels of alcohol you can drink whereas when you're young you just go mental. Older people know what the day after feeling is like and they eventually get to the stage where they don't want to have to wake up like it any more. I don't think any type of campaign is going to stop that, it's something they have to grow out of themselves. The culture we live in people work really hard during the week and work loads of hours so your weekend is your blow out time. Unless working practises change I don't think the NHS can ever change that, it's the reason why we're a binge drinking culture. We always have had the problem it's just we have the media now to show it. People go out because of personal choice, you plan a night out with your friends and plan to have drinks I don't think an advert on TV is going to stop you doing it"*

*"Whatever TV campaign that's put out there the most is always going to be the most effective"*

*"I don't think that any adverts particularly stick in my mind, I have seen them though. I think they are quite effective in getting the message across, people do consider the effects that it has on their health"*

*"The advert I remember most is the batman one and that seems to be the one that people talk about the most. I can remember the one with the boy and girl getting ready and the barman doing all of the different voices but that's about it. The advert with the girl being sick isn't successful because to me it's more funny and the barman one is quite boring. In my opinion people don't watch the advert and think I don't want to end up like that, teenagers will just think that it's a laugh. The batman advert where he climbs on the scaffolding stands out the most because you think; "yeah I do do stupid things when I'm drunk""*

### **35% of organisations were not aware of any national campaigns**

One interviewee agreed that this figure would seem correct as they felt that 'it is hard to reach all of the population with campaigns'. Other interviewees felt that advertisements have been missed due to the target audience not engaging with the advert, while size of organisation also came into factor – with larger organisations stating that smaller organisations are too busy to take notice and act on advertising campaigns.

*"It's probably right that 35% of people haven't seen any campaigns because it's hard to hit all of the population with media campaigns. You're always going to miss a percentage of the population aren't you"*

*"They probably missed them because they are the target audience and are probably out partying. A lot of young people don't watch TV so they won't see the same adverts that I do. I aren't aware of any posters and things being in city centre pubs but that's because I don't go there. The best thing that they can do is to go to the route of the problem. The younger drinkers are probably the problem drinkers and it isn't effective to target the older ones to help the younger ones doesn't work"*

*"I'm surprised a third of people hadn't seen or heard of any advertising campaigns, they're everywhere. They can't watch much TV"*

*"They can't watch any TV or if they do they must skip the adverts because adverts like that are on all of the time. I think if they're on people will notice them even if they don't think that they apply to them"*

*"In small companies they're too busy getting on with their jobs so don't look at other things that could help the business. They don't have occupational health or HR to do it for them so in small companies someone has to take onus. People in the HR departments in small companies are usually too busy doing personnel work. It would only take half an hour to set up the policies but you need to know where to look. They need to know they can go on web pages and pull of policies or send for information packs. Nowadays small companies are realising that they need to do something to keep their workforce but they don't know the things that they can have. It would be best if the NHS went through groups like business in the community and Humber Commerce to get the message through"*

### **Internal campaigning and involvement from the NHS**

Just three of the 12 organisations had ran some form of internal campaign within their organisations – with materials ranging from posters and leaflets to visits and healthy life promotions within canteens. Two of the organisations that had ran campaigns were public sector that had mainly used posters to advertise alcohol related campaigns, while the remaining organisation was a large private company who campaigned rather heavily on a frequent basis to raise awareness – it should be noted that of all organisations spoken to, this organisation was also most likely to have their alcohol policy made available to employees.

*“Campaigns are usually run through environmental health and we use whatever’s topical in the community. Like at Christmas you see a lot of adverts about drink driving and counting your units. We do what’s happening so that it’s a double whammy, they get it at home and when they’re at work. We use posters, leaflets, notice boards and posters sent from other companies are distributed around the site. We do a healthy lifestyle promotion where we go into the canteen and ask how many units are in this, how much fat is in this etc but because of resources we can only do it about once a year. We go to our other sites to give them information as well. More visual things work better and have a better uptake. It encourages people to come and have a chat and ask questions, it seems to make them more open. We have a lot of things on cholesterol and blood pressure but there doesn’t seem to be much to show what alcohol does. I used to get them to try non-alcoholic wine and beer in other places that I worked but here there’s too many people to put it into place because I’d have to buy it all myself”*

*“We’ve put some posters around about alcohol awareness but it’s usually around Christmas. At the moment there might be some more things done internally because we’ve just employed somebody who is on secondment from the NHS whose job is health awareness. He’s done articles for us before about blood pressure and reducing the risk of heart attacks. He’s now going to be doing awareness full time for the next two years. We’ve done personal lifestyle initiatives where people record what they are eating and how much exercise they are getting over a week and from that they get an evaluation and personal plan and programme for improvement, they could maybe do something like that for alcohol to make people more aware of their habits. Occupational health actually came to work places and did one day events when they did this, it was a very effective way to communicate the messages to people they even used tools such as the Wii fit”*

*“We’ve had posters up in the past. I don’t think there’s any up at the moment because when they start to get tatty or torn we take them down. They’re ones that we get sent through the post”*

Of those that did not run internal campaigns, smaller organisations felt there was no need due to the 'family environment' and trust and communication between them. Larger organisations did not specify as to why they had not launched any internal campaigns, other than movement of staff around the organisation and therefore scepticism as to whether or not the campaign would be seen.

*"We haven't done anything internally just because even if staff do have break times they stay within their own area and they ask to leave and go somewhere else it is up to the manager to decide. At matches the staff see people who have maybe had too much and have to leave and I think that that's a better deterrent for them. I don't think that anything will stop them drinking on nights out though. If the NHS were to do a campaign within work places we would take part"*

*"We haven't done any internal campaigns really. We have a bar so all staff who work in that area are told limits on how much we can serve customers but we haven't done anything targeted at staff to my knowledge. In the bar we have promotions to encourage staff to up sell and competitions on who can sell most of particular drinks so I think in a way we do encourage drinking"*

*"We've never had anything up but we'd absolutely put them up. I'm the health and safety officer for the company so it would probably be up to me but I wouldn't contact the NHS to become involved"*

*"We haven't done any but we probably would in the future because it would be useful to have up. The staff during the week have all being here for years so there's no reason to put posters up targeted at them. If a poster was put up I know that none of the staff would actually read it but there isn't really any way that all of the staff could be targeted. The only person who is a problem at the minute is leaving soon so really I don't know if we would benefit from help from the NHS"*

*"Nothing has been done internally to raise awareness. It wouldn't help if the NHS gave information because it's not relevant to the business. It might be if there was a bigger age range because most of us are pushing 60 and we're all fairly sensible"*

With regards to involvement from the NHS, all organisations welcomed this and would request for information in the form of leaflets and posters to help build on, and in most cases start an internal campaign. There was some indication that help required would be more than 'just a poster'.

*"If the NHS has booklets and leaflets that have policies on that are quick and easy to read, we don't want war and peace because frankly we don't have the manpower or the time to read through mountains and mountains of paperwork. A laminated broadsheet to go up in the canteen wall so that we are aware of what we need to look for in a glance and of course the staff are aware that we are aware. Something like the health and safety posters that are in all business would possibly be a help and a deterrent. The greater the awareness, the greater the likelihood of solving the problem. It's something that's never going to go away but it can affect fewer people"*

*"If there was a national campaign and we were invited to take part I'm sure that the company would look at taking part by putting up posters and things within the cinema. If there was a number or information it's nice to know that there's somewhere to go to if you do have a problem but at the end of the day what can a poster do?"*

*"If the NHS were to do a campaign within work places we would take part"*

*"It would be nice if the NHS could send more posters or leaflets to give out, many, many people come through the door and we have a desk full of leaflets. I would like a contact number so if there ever was a problem we could ring the NHS and ask for their advice because sometimes it's hard to know how to tackle it"*

*"We'd definitely take the help and materials. Occupational health always does everything at the minute but if outside groups come in they are received better because people are used to us. When we try and do group things I've done one to one sessions with most of them anyway. It has a lot more credence coming from somebody else. The NHS came in about smoking and a lot of people were interested and are trying to stop but we've done similar things internally and no ones been interested. The sat giving out information which had always been available here but because it was the NHS giving it out a lot of people got it. There's a perception of what occupational health does. It would be best if the help was just before a campaign was due to be launched. If we had the information occupational health can organise things to run alongside it. Even if the NHS aren't available to come in we can get something organised"*

### 5.3 Screening and prevention

#### Checks on staff

No organisations that were interviewed had a screening procedure in place or screened staff. Bag searches did take place in two of the organisations, however this was not purely for searches for alcohol, and it was simply company procedure for theft of stock. There was the general opinion that screening was not needed as it would be evident from the behaviour and/or smell. One or two organisations did state that screening has been proposed and will possibly be introduced in the future.

*“For us it's pretty easy to spot when someone has been drinking, it's our job. You can tell by people's character and their mannerisms, when people are under the influence of alcohol they're a lot more open and although our staff are pretty out there anyway if on a Sunday afternoon someone's really up and loud we'd suspect that they'd had a drink before they came to work. We know our staff really well because we're around each other a lot”*

*“We only do bag searches if we suspect an employee of theft then that would obviously be about them stealing the alcohol not to do with drinking. Their bags are all secured in their lockers while they're on shift. On the bar they can't have cash or mobile phones, for them as well as us. If some money does go missing then they know they're covered. If someone did turn up with a bottle of vodka in their bag I'd want to know why. If someone was sneaking off to have a sneaky bit of vodka from their bag all of the time it would be obvious”*

*“We don't screen staff because I don't see any reason why we would do it. We do bag searches but it's normally when they leave the store not when they start their shift. When the staff come they lock their bags in their lockers straight away and there's no reason why they should need to go back to them during their shift without managers knowledge. If we did hear bottles in their bag and thought that they might plan to drink it at work we would take the bottles and lock them in the cash office. It would be given back to them at the end of their shift because obviously it's their choice if they want to drink when they finish work”*

*“We don't currently have an issue with drinking so it's not something that we take into account. If I suspected that somebody was not performing as well as they could due to alcohol it would be thought about. I don't think things like a breathalyser are needed because you can tell by their demeanour, their breath, their eyes as to whether they've had a drink and then if I suspected I would question them. I also like to think that I'm experienced enough to know and the people currently working here are conscientious enough not to get into that state”*

*"No, surely it would be classed as an invasion of privacy and as a company I don't think it's something we would do in the future. If we saw a member of staff bringing alcohol into work with them we would take it off them and keep it in the manager's office until the end of their shift"*

*"No its not something we've ever thought about. We might do it in the future but it would be difficult knowing how to go about it. We don't do any bag searches because staff come straight into work and go onto their allocated department. They don't have a break so even if they did bring alcohol in with them they wouldn't have the opportunity to drink it. If we suspected a member of the office staff had brought alcohol in and they hadn't told us the reason why or there was no good reason why the stadium manager would consider taking it until the end of their shift. At the minute I think the only time that it would happen is at Christmas"*

*"It would be down to them admitting it or you smell it don't you. You can smell when people have had a drink"*

*"At the moment we are considering introducing random testing but at the moment it is only a possibility. It would probably happen 'with cause' which means if we suspect that someone has turned up unfit for duty due to drugs and alcohol then we would employ a specialist contractor to come and do whatever test was appropriate. If it was alcohol the staff member would be asked to do a breath test. Rather than being across the entire council it would be in place in what are deemed to be safety critical areas of work; for example drivers and people working with machinery. We haven't really got as far as to consider whether it will apply to people who work in the offices but we would probably include front line staff who deal with the public such as people who work in libraries and customer service centres as they are a critical part in our organisation. East Riding Council do have a policy of testing staff but I think that policies on work place testing occur more in the private sector because of organisations such as British Rail and Airways who have very strict policies. It's slowly starting to creep in in the public sector but it is a slow process. The NHS are quite strict, especially with doctors"*

*"If someone is suspected of drinking the manager of the individual asks them to leave and tells them why. On their next shift they are then told they have to report to their manager who would then deal with accordingly. Because we work with machinery employees have to be capable to do the job and fit enough. If they are not fit in any way they are sent home. We've thought about testing but nothing is in place. We have to be careful because of safety etc it's the same with drugs"*

## **6.0 Appendix**

**6.1 Script (face to face interviews)**

**6.2 Alcohol Policies**

## 6.1 Script

### Their Company

Generally the majority of organisations felt that alcohol in the work place was not a problem at all. Just 10% felt that alcohol in the workplace was an issue in the public sector while 18% felt that it was an issue in the private sector. Do they agree with this and why do you think:

- a) the score is so low?
- b) Why alcohol is perceived to be more of a problem in the private sector
- c) What issues do you feel these organisations could be referring to?  
Criminal? Family?
- d) How do you think companies would become aware of these issues?
- e) How do organisations tend to know about alcohol related incidents/absenteeism (people won't call in sick and admit that their sickness is alcohol related)? How are they recorded?

Or alternatively if the score is high – explore the problems and what drives the problems.

Just 18% could recall an alcohol related incident in the workplace – Do you agree with this figure? Too high/low? Can they recall any incidents where alcohol has been a problem – if so ask them to give an example/s – how did they deal with it, what were the drivers in their opinion?

How was it managed? What would you have done differently or do if this happened again?

Just 59% of businesses we spoke to had an alcohol policy, do you agree that 41% do not? Awareness issue?

Does your company have a policy on this issue?

Is it encouraged to be read?

If yes – can we take a copy or could you describe it in general?

If no policy – why not? (Is it not deemed relevant enough, serious enough etc)

What would they do if a member of staff came to them with alcohol issues?

Or reported a fellow member of staff for having a drink problem?

Do they think it is actually more prevalent than people think? If yes, why?

## **Communications**

Do they think the national campaigns around units and awareness of units have been successful? – Why?

35% were not aware of any national campaigns – why do you think this is? Have they done anything internally?

If yes, what was it and what was the main objectives, who/what drove it?

Why haven't they/wouldn't they?

What information/help would you like from the NHS, if any, to help with internal communications surrounding alcohol?

## **Screening and Prevention**

Do they run any checks on staff? If yes – ask them to elaborate

- Are the checks Physical surveys/physical checks/searches?

If no, why not – are they simply not worried or has it not crossed their minds etc

Would they be willing to explore this further?

If no – why not?

Is there any help or guidance you think you would need now or in the future?

## 6.2 Alcohol Policies

### **POLICY 1**

#### **1 Substance abuse and smoking at work**

##### **SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

In addition to the Company's duties to its staff, all employees are personally responsible for their own health and safety and the safety of others who may be affected by their acts and omissions. Consumption of alcohol or drugs may affect an employee's ability to properly perform his/her job and may also endanger the health and safety of others.

Employees are therefore required to advise their Line Manager or HR Manager if they are taking prescribed drugs which may impact or effect their performance or behaviour in the workplace.

The Company reserves the right to conduct or require a drug or alcohol screen on any employee whilst at work or on Company property. Such screening will only be carried out with the employee's consent. However, refusal to provide appropriate samples will entitle the Company to draw its own inferences against the employee and is likely to result in dismissal for gross misconduct.

The use, possession, distribution, purchase, sale or being under the influence of any controlled drugs or being under the influence of alcohol (except on authorised occasions) or whilst at work or on Company property, is prohibited and is likely to constitute gross misconduct.

Breach of this policy by an employee will be fully investigated and normally be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure. Depending on the nature of the conduct, the employee may be dismissed without notice.

##### **Procedures**

##### **Misconduct Offences**

*If an employee is found using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, selling or being under the influence of alcohol (except on authorised occasions) or any controlled drugs:*

- *whilst at work;*
- *during hours when they should have been at work (e.g. unauthorised absence or absence falsely notified as sickness absence); or*
- *on Company property*

*then the Company will take disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.*

*It is not a defence to a disciplinary charge that the employee suffers or claims to suffer from an addiction.*

**Prevention and rehabilitation**

Provided that the employee has not committed a misconduct offence outlined above then this policy applies to employees who suffer from addiction to alcohol or drugs:

- (a) The primary objectives of this policy are the prevention of the adverse affects of drugs and alcohol in the workplace and the early diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of employees who have related problems. The Company's Occupational Doctor is the prime resource for providing support and rehabilitation for employees who have a drug or alcohol problem. The Company also has access to support from other outside agencies including Alcoholics Anonymous, Alcohol Concern and can liaise with the employee's GP.
- (b) Employees should recognise that it is their responsibility and in their best interests to seek help at the earliest possible stage when treatment may be easier and before the problem affects work sufficiently to become a disciplinary matter.
- (c) Employees enrolled on a rehabilitation programme will usually be subject to normal sickness/absence rules. The Company reserves the right to depart from the sickness/absence rules in any circumstances which it considers appropriate (for example where an employee abandons a rehabilitation programme prior to its completion or undertakes acts which are inconsistent with them trying to overcome their addiction).

**Other Issues**

If the employee does not consent to medical screening or any search then the Company is entitled to draw such inferences from that refusal as it sees fit. This may include an inference that the employee was in possession or under the influence of alcohol and/or controlled drugs and accordingly that the employee should be dismissed for gross misconduct.

Employees should be aware that the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 makes it a criminal offence for the Company to knowingly allow the production or supply on its premises of any controlled drugs, and for any individual who allows such activities by his neglect or connivance. The Company will press for the prosecution of any employee found breaking these laws on its premises.

The Company will not get involved in an employee's use of drugs or alcohol in his/her private life unless and until that use has an actual or potential adverse effect upon the employee's performance of his/her duties or upon the best interests (principally name and reputation) of the Company. In these circumstances the fact that the drug/alcohol abuse may be outside the working hours or off Company premises shall not prevent the Company from taking action in response.

**2 SMOKING AT WORK**

Smoking constitutes a hazard to the health of all Company employees, both smokers and non-smokers (as a result of "passive smoking") and is a potential fire risk. The law also makes it a criminal offence to smoke in certain buildings and spaces. It is therefore against Company policy for anybody to smoke on Company premises, with the exception of the following:

- Designated smoking shelters and designated areas

Any employee smoking in any Company premises (or Company cars) other than a designated smoking shelter and/or designated area (if applicable) is committing a serious disciplinary offence and is liable to be dismissed for gross misconduct without notice or notice pay.

Employees who meet visitors and contractors from outside the Company on the Company premises are (if necessary) required to explain this policy politely but firmly and to ensure that such visitors comply.

Employees who are currently smokers are encouraged to talk to Occupational Health for advice on courses and self-help groups to enable them to give up smoking. The Occupational Health Manager will also provide such employees with suitable literature on the hazards of smoking and of the benefits of not smoking.

Employees are encouraged not to cover up for colleagues who smoke in non-designated areas and/or times and to recognise that collusion represents a false sense of loyalty and may be of detriment to the health and safety of all employees.

Lighters or matches must not be taken into production or distribution areas. The areas in which smoking is permitted are clearly marked and those smoking are not permitted to wander from them.

## Policy 2

1. You must show your identity badge to the security guards upon arrival to work, You must keep your i.d. badge with you **AT ALL TIMES**, it doesn't need to be on display but if you are asked to you must be able to produce it.

2. If you have damaged or lost your badge we will replace it but you must bring in another photograph as soon as possible.

You should arrive at work at least 15 minutes before your shift is due to start, so that it gives you time to change and deposit your belongings in the check in cupboard.

**Your shift time starts when you are in your area of work.**

**WHEN CANCELLING A BOOKED SHIFT – GIVE AS MUCH NOTICE AS POSSIBLE (24 HOURS AT LEAST) WE HAVE TO FIND SOMEONE ELSE TO WORK IN YOUR PLACE.**

1. You will be asked to hand in mobile phones, jewellery, cigarettes and any amount of cash before commencing work. These will be bagged and kept in a secure place until your shift is over.

2. You are not allowed to smoke (**THIS IS A NO SMOKING BUILDING**) or drink alcohol, also you are not allowed to gamble whilst in your uniform.

3. You are given 15 minutes unpaid break times by your supervisor for every 6 hours worked. **During this break you must stay in your allocated work area unless given permission to leave.**

### Uniform & Appearance

The uniform requirements are:

1. Plain, full length black trousers (**Not Denim**)

2. Black sensible shoes, low heel, slip resistant soles and enclosed toe and heel.

3. Black socks. **We provide the top half of the uniform.**

4. **NO** Jewellery. The exception to the rule is a plain gold wedding band. (Please do not wear engagement rings).

5. **NO** Nail Varnish, **NO** Chewing Gum, Long haired must be tied back at all times, **NO** visible non-uniform clothing to be worn under uniform i.e. hooded tops.

### Rights of Search

It is recognised, for reasons of security, that you must be prepared to be searched by an authorised person at any time, or on leaving the establishment. This also applies to your belongings and any other accommodation provided by the company. If you are found to be in possession of goods without authorisation from your Manager you may be liable to prosecution.

### Other Information

**The staffing office is manned 9am – 12noon daily – 01482 304704. Please leave a message if not available.**

**Wages – Paid monthly**, please see separate hand out for more information.

**Wage Slips** – Are put into the check-in cupboard monthly. To be collected by staff when working. Wage slips are kept for 1 month and then they are shredded.

**Hours: YOU RING US WHEN YOU WANT TO WORK!!!**

Phone in session: **Wednesday 5pm – 8pm.**

**Signing in:** On matchdays you will receive a card and your manager will sign you in/out.

On a function you will be signed in/out on a timesheet.

If working a day shift you will receive a job card from the catering office and your manager will sign you in/out.

**Parking:** Matchdays: Walton Street car park **ONLY (with i.d. badge free of charge)**

Functions/Day Shifts: Parking spaces around the stadium perimeter.

**Training:** Supervisor training is available; speak with your manager.

**Your Way Into The Stadium**

**On a Matchday** the only entrance into the building is through Exit 23 – Metal Gates.  
**On a Non-Matchday** you enter through the Security Office.