

Minimum Unit Pricing: Evidence First

Proposed by the Policy Development Committee

Conference notes:

- A. In February 2026, plans to increase the Minimum Unit Pricing (MUP) level for alcohol in Wales was agreed.
- B. MUP was introduced as a targeted public health intervention intended to reduce harmful drinking rather than raise prices for all consumers.
- C. Wales continues to experience significant alcohol-related health harms alongside ongoing cost-of-living pressures.
- D. Evidence on long-term behavioural change, cross-border purchasing, and impacts on moderate drinkers remains mixed.
- E. Retailers, health professionals, and community organisations have expressed differing views on whether further price rises will deliver fair and effective outcomes.

Conference believes:

- I. Liberal policy must balance public health with proportionality, fairness, and individual freedom.
- II. Effective alcohol harm reduction requires treatment, prevention, education, and strong local services, not pricing measures alone.
- III. Public trust depends on transparent, independently verified evidence before further restrictions are introduced.
- IV. Policies perceived as unfair risk undermining confidence in wider public health action.

Conference calls for:

- 1. A full independent review of Minimum Unit Pricing outcomes in Wales before any further increase is implemented.
- 2. Greater investment in early intervention, mental health provision, and community-based recovery services across Welsh communities.

3. Publication of clear Welsh Government data on health, crime, cross-border trade, and economic impacts linked to MUP.
4. Exploration of targeted, evidence-led alternatives that focus support on harmful drinking while protecting responsible consumers and small local retailers and ensuring policy remains proportionate, transparent, and responsive to emerging independent public health evidence continually.