

Agenda Item 6

Alcohol Free Zones

Designated Public Place Orders:

Designated Public Place Orders (DPPO's) were introduced by the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 to criminalise drinking alcohol in a designated area after being requested to desist by Police Officers. DPPO's can be designated introduced by a local authority to help reduce alcohol induced nuisance.

Types of Nuisance:

The types of nuisance and harm caused are not only violent behaviour, drunken nuisance and mindless vandalism which lead to areas being perceived as not safe after dark and can lead to older or more vulnerable residents becoming prisoners within their own homes. The lesser nuisance is increased amounts of alcohol containers littering the road. The Police currently have adequate powers to deal with underage drinking which include the removal of alcohol from offenders but are powerless to do the same to young people who have attained the legal age limit to drink and may be either in the company of underage drinkers or moving from one licensed establishment to another taking their drink with them.

The first type have been prevalent in the Newbridge area in recent years whilst the second type have frequented Gisburn Road leaving a trail of empty alcopop bottles and empty beer glasses either smashed on the pavement, tossed in the river or left on some bodies window sill. This practice at best has littering implications and at worst in an inflamed situation put offensive weapons in their hands.

DPPO'S as a Policing Tool:

The local police do not ask for the introduction of these orders lightly but do see them as a useful aid to defusing alcohol related situations at night. The orders give the police the powers to help curtail underage drinking where the alcohol is being supplied by a young person old enough to purchase alcohol or when groups are moving from one licensed establishment to another with either open bottles or glasses of alcohol. The powers within the order are discretionary and are applied when the Police Officer feels there is sufficient justification and are not there to persecute the law abiding resident having a glass of wine with a neighbour outside their terraced houses.

Extent of the Proposed DPPO Zone in Barrowford:

Ideally the zone needs to extend from Newbridge along Gisburn Road as far as the last public house in the village the Bridge Inn. The zone to be effective will need to have depth away from Gisburn Road to prevent people challenged by the police under this power from moving a few metres up a side street and out of the designated zone. With this in mind the obvious solution is to increase the depth of the zone and also include areas which currently suffer from these types of nuisance. These areas should include the park, playing fields and cemetery, St. Thomas Church and the old graveyard to name but a few. The Clerk after consultation with PC M. Dibb has supplied a map with a proposed boundary highlighted in red this is only a starting point for discussion but reflects the minimum area needed for the DPPO to be effective.