

Vaughan Gething AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd a Gwasanaethau
Cymdeithasol
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf / Our ref: MA-L/VG/0717/18

Dr Dai Lloyd AM
Chair
Health, Social Care and Sport Committee

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7 December 2018

Dear Dai,

In May 2018, I wrote to you regarding Welsh Government plans for the evaluation of the Public Health (Minimum Price for Alcohol) (Wales) Bill. Over the summer, my officials have undertaken work to further develop these plans – recognising the critical role of the evaluation in relation to the sunset and review clauses included in the legislation and any future decision on whether to continue its provisions on minimum pricing for alcohol in Wales.

I would also like to take this opportunity to update you regarding recently commissioned Welsh Government research on the possibility of switching from alcohol to other substances. I am aware that this is of particular interest to members of the Committee and was a specific recommendation included in the stage 1 report by the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee.

Plans for the Evaluation:

The Theory of Change diagram, outlining the possible sources of data has been updated and is attached. The independent evaluation will be commissioned through an open tender process over the next few months. The work will be commissioned as one contract, but will be divided into four lots as follows:

Lot 1: Contribution analysis

Overview of requirement: It is anticipated that the contribution analysis will look at the wider context of alcohol policy as well as bringing together the relevant data sets and the findings from the individual studies and evaluation work (including that undertaken in Scotland) to inform the assessment of the contribution that the introduction of minimum pricing has made to the policy objectives. The contractor will be required to provide an interim report after two years (2021). This will be a report that makes an initial assessment of the contribution that minimum pricing makes to the policy objective and outlines the additional data sources

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

needed to improve the reliability of the contribution assessment. The 2021 interim report will inform the internal review of the level of the MUP which will be undertaken by Welsh Government officials, after two years of implementation. Draft final report intended to be provided by end November 2023.

Lot 2: Research into the impact on retailers

Overview of requirement: It is anticipated that this lot will utilise mixed methods to obtain feedback from retailers on implementation as well as the impact that the introduction of a minimum price has had on them. This will need to capture both the on and off trades, as well as small and large retailers. Baseline work will need to be completed before the end of August 2019. First follow-up will be undertaken around 18 months after implementation. It is anticipated that the final follow-up will take place after approximately three and a half years (around March 2023). The draft final report will be required to be submitted September 2023.

Lot 3: Qualitative work with services and service users

Overview of requirement: An initial piece of qualitative work has recently been commissioned and will work with service providers and users, looking at the potential for people switching substances as a consequence of the introduction of a minimum price for alcohol. This will also look at additional support required to help people prepare. That work has been commissioned as a standalone separate contract as the feedback on support needs is required during the implementation phase. This can, however, act as baseline work with this group. The requirement of this lot is to undertake further work with these groups post implementation. First follow-up will be undertaken around 18 months after implementation. It is anticipated that the final follow-up will take place after approximately three and a half years (around March 2023). The draft final report will be required to be submitted September 2023.

Lot 4: Assessment of impact of introducing minimum price for alcohol on wider population of drinkers

Overview of requirement: This lot will explore the impacts of the legislation on the wider population of drinkers. This will include work with moderate, hazardous and harmful drinkers. It will also include an analysis of household expenditure. Baseline work will need to be completed before the end of August 2019. First follow-up will be undertaken around 18 months after implementation. It is anticipated that the final follow-up will take place after approximately three and a half years (around March 2023). The draft final report will be required to be submitted September 2023.

A Prior Information Notice outlining the above was published a couple of weeks ago, informing the market of the intention to commission this work.

Additional research work:

Questions were commissioned in the Beaufort Wales Omnibus Survey carried out in September 2018. The questions assessed awareness of and attitudes towards minimum pricing for alcohol. The data have recently been received and officials will prepare a report for publication early in the New Year.

Finally, as highlighted above, in response to one of the recommendations from the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee in your Stage 1 scrutiny report and the recommendation from the Welsh Government's Advisory Panel on Substance Misuse, research has been commissioned looking at the perception of service providers and service users of the

likelihood of individuals switching to other substances and what services are doing to help people prepare. The contract has been awarded to Figure 8 Consultancy Services Ltd, in partnership with University of South Wales and Glyndwr University.

I hope you find this update useful and I look forward to ongoing engagement with the Committee as we implement the Act.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vaughan Gething". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'V' and a long, sweeping tail on the 'g'.

Vaughan Gething AC/AM

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Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services

Annex 1

Theory of Change - MUP Wales – showing existing studies elsewhere and possible additional studies to be commissioned.

NOTE: Text in red outlines work to consider commissioning. Text in blue is a Scottish study. Text in black signifies routine data.

