The Ross, Skye and Lochaber Divisional Licensing Board welcome the opportunity to respond to the Health and Sport Committee’s call for evidence on the Alcohol Etc. (Scotland) Bill (SP Bill 34).

The Board considered the following measures contained in the Bill:

a) minimum pricing to protect and improve public health by reducing alcohol consumption;
b) further restrictions on off-sales promotions and promotional activity;
c) a requirement for an age verification policy;
d) provisions concerning the modification of licence conditions;
e) provisions in respect of assessing the impact of off-sales to people under 21;
f) provisions in respect of a social responsibility levy;

The Board was divided with regard to a) and was not able to reach a consensus. Some members would support such a measure but only as part of a wider range of measures aimed at reducing alcohol consumption while others were against irresponsible pricing, particularly by supermarkets, but opposed to minimum pricing.

The Board supported b), c), d) and e).

The Board were against a social responsibility levy which was seen as a form of taxation against the licensed trade which had already incurred considerable costs in converting to the 2005 Act.

Alaisdair Mackenzie
Depute Clerk
Ross, Skye and Lochaber Divisional Licensing Board
8 January 2010