



LOCAL ALCOHOL POLICY 2019

Whanganui District Council

Review: September 2025

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This policy outlines the licencing conditions Council's District Licensing Committee (DLC) and the Alcohol Regulatory Licensing Authority (ARLA) must have regard to when they make decisions on licence applications.

With the purpose of reducing alcohol-related harm in the Whanganui District, the policy sets a district-wide limit on off-licensed premises (with the exclusion of supermarkets and grocery stores); location of licensed premises to sensitive sites; a requirement for a one-way door restriction; discretionary conditions; and maximum trading hours for licensed premises.

INTRODUCTION

Why we need a policy

The Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012 (the Act) allows for councils to adopt a policy relating to the sale, supply, or consumption of alcohol within its district.

The objectives of the Act are stated as:

- a) the sale, supply, and consumption of alcohol should be undertaken safely and responsibly; and
- b) the harm caused by the excessive or inappropriate consumption of alcohol should be minimised.

Council considers a policy is necessary to further strengthen the objectives of the Act in reducing alcohol-related harm in the district. Having a policy delivers Council's commitment to support the welfare of the community, protect people from harm, and support the work of health agencies to secure a district that works for everyone.

The purpose of this policy is to minimise alcohol-related harm within the district through the regulation of matters relating to licensed premises.

Who it is prepared for

This policy applies to all current and prospective licensed premises in the Whanganui district and is prepared for Whanganui's District Licensing Committee and Council's Alcohol Licensing team.

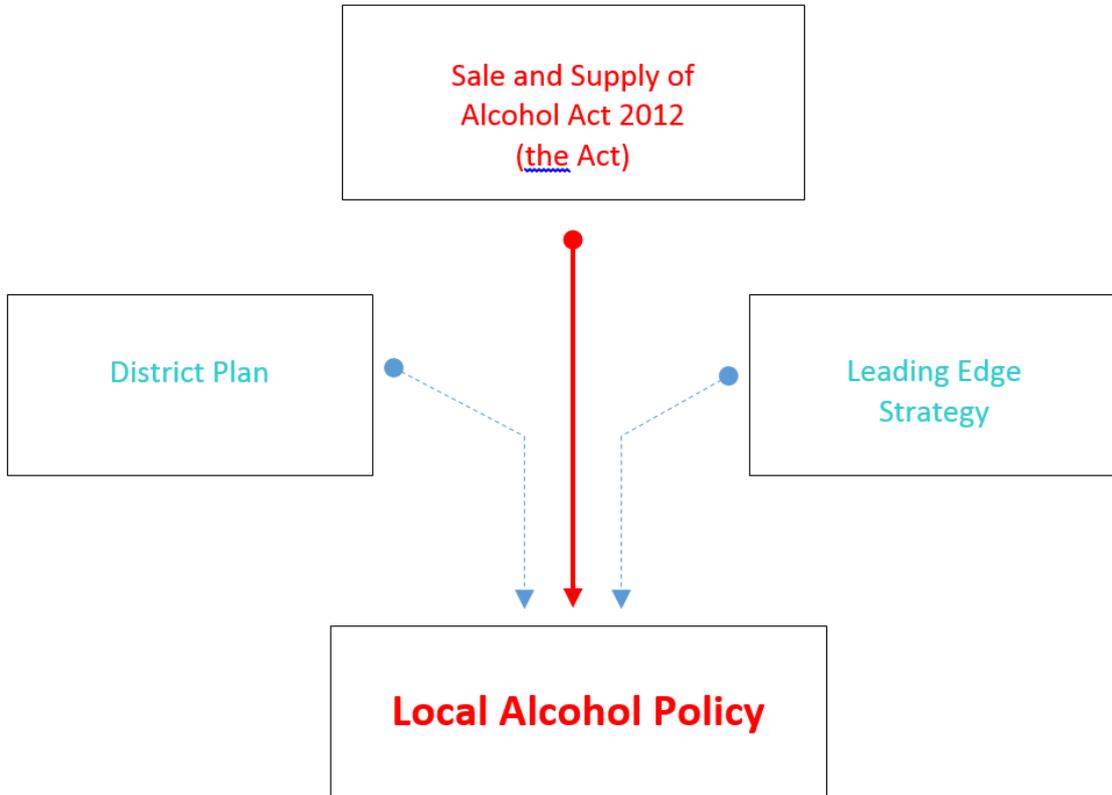
Scope of policy

Section 77(1) of the Act legislates the scope of this policy to the following matters (and no others):

- location of licensed premises by reference to broad areas;
- location of licensed premises by reference to proximity to premises of a particular kind or kinds;
- location of licensed premises by reference to proximity to facilities of a particular kind or kinds;
- whether further licences (or licences of a particular kind or kinds) should be issued for premises in the district concerned, or any stated part of the district;
- maximum trading hours;
- the issue of licences, or licences of a particular kind or kinds, subject to discretionary conditions;
- one-way door restrictions.

Where this policy doesn't make reference to a matter concerning Alcohol licensing, Council's position defaults to the provisions of the Act.

POLICY CONTEXT



The content of this policy is provided for under Section 77(1) of the Act and has been written in accordance with the policies set out in Council’s District Plan. This policy supports the goal of Council’s Leading Edge Strategy in improving health targets, pursuing actions to support the welfare of the community, and in securing a district that works for everyone.

BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

Safer Whanganui’s Alcohol and Other Drugs reference group’s initial investigations found there was sufficient rationale and research for the development of a Local Alcohol Policy. Discussions amongst Council and key stakeholders including the WDHB’s Medical Officer of Health and Police then confirmed that a more restrictive stance to curb alcohol-related harm in the district was needed.

To inform the policy’s development, Council developed a Draft Local Alcohol Policy Research Report.

The following issues taken from the report are presented as concerns for address by a Local Alcohol Policy:

- In 2014, 18.7% of residents (compared to the New Zealand average of 15.5%) identify themselves as a hazardous drinker.
- Whanganui's population is more prone to alcohol-related harm (Māori make up 22% of the district's population and are twice as likely than non- Māori to consume large quantities of alcohol¹; 7.4% are aged 18 to 24; and 39% of the population experience high levels of deprivation).
- When contrasting on and off-licence closing hours to Emergency Department (ED) presentations, a higher frequency of alcohol-related ED presentations occurs in conjunction with the availability of alcohol and the closing times of on and off-licence outlets.
- Alcohol-related chronic disease admissions for the most part have been relatively steady across 2013 to 2015 for both discharge and patient counts.
- Deaths and injuries where alcohol was deemed a contributing factor are on the increase.
- In 2015, 45% of Alcohol and Other Drug referrals have a diagnosis of Alcohol Use Disorder.
- Over the last five years, Police actions undertaken where a person is found intoxicated in public (drunk custodies) peak between 1:00am to 1:59am, coinciding with the final hour of trade for on-licences.
- Police data indicates that alcohol was a factor in 19% of all family violence cases attended by Police during 2014/15 and 2015/16.
- Where there is a concentration of licenced premises, and the relatively higher availability of alcohol (Central Whanganui, Whanganui East, Aramoho, Gonville, and Castlecliff), there is also a higher frequency of violence events and drunk custodies than in areas where there is a lesser concentration of licenced premises and relatively less availability of alcohol.
- 15% of the total vehicle crashes recorded for the Whanganui district in 2014 were alcohol-related.

VISION AND PURPOSE

Vision statement

To support the objectives of the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012 and contribute to the safety and health of the Whanganui District.

Purpose

- To govern the sale, supply, and consumption of alcohol so that it is undertaken safely and responsibly.
- To minimise alcohol-related harm in the Whanganui District.

¹ 2013/14 New Zealand Health Survey, Ministry of Health

- To support the welfare of our community and protect our people from alcohol-related harm.
- To reflect our local communities' character, amenity, values, preferences and needs.

OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

1. Location of licensed premises to be considered in line with sensitive locations

Policy

- 1.1. With respect to any new licence applications, the District Licensing Committee shall have regard to the proximity to facilities identified as a sensitive site and the likely impact on that site amenity, and good order.
- 1.2. From the date this policy comes into force, no new off-licence applications (with the exception of supermarkets² and grocery stores³) will be granted for premises determined by the District Licensing Committee to be within 100 metres of the legal site boundary of a sensitive site as defined.
- 1.3. For the purposes of clauses 1.1 and 1.2 above 'sensitive site' means:
 - Early childhood centres⁴
 - Primary and secondary schools⁵
 - Marae
 - Places of worship⁶
 - Alcohol treatment centres
 - Children's parks/playgrounds
- 1.4. For the purposes of clauses 1.1 and 1.2 above, a new licence application, including a reference to a new off-licence application, means an application for a premises that has not traded pursuant to a licence of the same kind within the previous 6 months.
- 1.5. Where a sensitive site opens in proximity to an existing licensed premises that licensed premises is exempt from clauses 1.1 and 1.2 of this policy.
- 1.6. Where existing licensed premises are within 100 metres of the legal boundary of a sensitive site and the licensee of those premises re-locates its business to premises that remain within 100 metres of that same sensitive site, clause 1.2 of this policy will not apply.

Rationale

Young people's exposure to alcohol outlets and susceptibility to associated alcohol advertising provides the grounds for the inclusion of a buffer between licensed premises and sensitive sites. Supermarkets and grocery stores are exempt due to the display, promotion, and advertisements restrictions provided for by the Act.

² As defined by section 32(1)(e) of the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012.

³ As defined by section 33 of the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012.

⁴ As defined by section 310 of the Education Act 1989.

⁵ As defined by section 145(2) of the Education Act 1989.

⁶ Includes any church, mosque or other facility designed primarily for worship and related religious activities

2. District-wide limit on off-licensed premises

Policy

- 2.1. From the date this policy comes into force, no further new off-licences will be considered appropriate under this policy if the grant of that further new off-licence would bring the total number of off-licences in the region to 14 or more.
- 2.2. For the purposes of clause 2.1 above, a new off-licence does not include a new off-licence for a supermarket or grocery store.
- 2.3. For the purposes of clause 2.1 above, the total number of off-licences in the region excludes off-licences for supermarkets and grocery stores.
- 2.4. Clause 2.1 will be reviewed by the Whanganui District Council annually to ensure that this clause is not inconsistent with development objectives and potential in the Whanganui district.

Rationale

The application of this limit will only apply to off-licences, as on-licences and club licences provide a controlled drinking environment that is sufficiently regulated by the Act and corresponding regulations. Supermarkets and grocery stores are exempt due to the provisions of the Act regulating the kinds of alcohol sold, display and single-area conditions⁷.

CLAUSE 3 & 4 NOT IN FORCE UNTIL 2 DECEMBER 2019

3. A one-way door restriction will apply

Policy

- 3.1. All taverns, bars, pubs, and night-clubs whose licensed hours exceed midnight are required to have a one-way door restriction in effect from one hour prior to licensed closing hours.
- 3.2. Any patrons exiting any tavern, bar, pub, or night-club within the district are not to be admitted or re-admitted to any of these listed licence premises.
- 3.3. This policy does not apply, at the discretion of door staff, to allow for an intoxicated person to be taken to a place of safety on the licenced premises⁸.

Rationale

A one-way door restriction is designed to stagger patron migration and reduce alcohol-related disturbances and offences.

⁷ As defined by sections 58, 112, and 114 of the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012.

⁸ In accordance with section 252(3)(a) of the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act.

CLAUSE 3 & 4 NOT IN FORCE UNTIL 2 DECEMBER 2019

4. Maximum licensed hours

Policy

The following maximum licensed hours are:

4.1. On-licence hours

4.1.1. Tavern, Hotel, bar, pub, or night-club

- a) Opening hours: 8am
- b) Closing hours: 2am the following day.

4.1.2. Restaurants

- a) Opening hours: 8am
- b) Closing hours: Midnight.

4.2. Off-licence hours

4.2.1. Supermarkets, grocery stores and bottle stores

- a) Opening hours: 7am
- b) Closing hours: 10.00pm

4.2.2. Hotels, bars, taverns, and wineries

- a) Opening hours: 7am
- b) Closing hours: 9.30pm

4.3. Club licence hours

- a) Opening hours: 8am
- b) Closing hours: Midnight

4.4. Special licence hours

- 4.4.1. Special licence hours granted will not exceed the maximum hours allowed for under the Act.

Rationale

On-licences reflect current maximum licensed hours and are set below the maximum trading hours in the Act. Decreasing and limiting hours of sales from off-licences is designed to reduce alcohol-related harm including violence events, drunk custodies, and alcohol-related offences. Clubs' maximum licensed closing hours better reflect the nature of activities associated with this licence.

5. The District Licensing Committee may consider discretionary conditions

Policy

The District Licensing Committee *may* consider the following list of discretionary conditions when issuing a licence. The District Licensing Committee may apply any reasonable condition that it believes will minimise alcohol-related harm, and that it is not limited to the list provided in this policy.

5.1. On-licences

- 5.1.1. Pursuant to Section 110(1) and 117 of the Act, the following discretionary conditions *may* apply to on-licences:

- Application of a one-way door restriction after a specified trading hour.
- More restrictive hours taking into account neighbouring land use (section 110(3) of the Act).
- For licence holders of both an on-licence and an off-licence, require a separate point of sale for the off-licence if a totally separate area or premises is not practical.
- The licensee is required to maintain a register of significant alcohol-related incidents that is available for inspection by enforcement authorities at any time during trading hours.

5.1.2. The following discretionary conditions *may* apply to the outdoor areas of Tavern and Hotel licences:

- Require a management plan for the management of patrons in outdoor areas, to minimise impacts on the amenity of nearby properties.
- The licensee must ensure litter (this includes, but is not limited to, vomit and alcohol-related rubbish) is removed from outside the premises.
- The licensee must ensure that at all times when a queue is formed; a dedicated staff member is required to manage the queue and ensure it does not impede the general public or use of the pavement.
- Require a noise management plan and compliance at all times with that plan.

5.2. Off-licences

5.2.1. Pursuant to Sections 109, 117, and 133(2) of the Act, the following discretionary conditions *may* apply to bottle stores⁹, general stores¹⁰, and complimentary sales¹¹:

- At least 50% of any store front glazing shall be transparent.
- Alcohol-related advertisements, signage and display of alcohol is to be consistent with Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) guidelines.
- The licensee is required to maintain a register of significant alcohol-related incidents that is available for inspection by enforcement authorities at any time during trading hours.
- Impose a supervised designation for bottle stores¹² only.
- The licensee must not break down the retail packaging of packages containing less than 445ml units of beer, cider or RTDs for sale from the licensed premises, except where the retail packaging of those alcohol products has been accidentally damaged and in which case the licensee may re-package those alcohol products for sale in packages containing no less than 4 units. .

⁹ As issued under section 32(1)(b), of the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012.

¹⁰ As issued under section 34 of the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012.

¹¹ As issued under section 35 of the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012.

¹² As issued under section 32(1)(b).

5.3. Club licences

5.3.1. Pursuant to Section 110(1) and 117 of the Act, the following discretionary conditions *may* apply to club licences:

- Where patronage exceeds 100 people at any one time, a certificated manager must be on duty.
- More restrictive hours taking into account neighbouring land use (section 110(3) of the Act).
- Define the specific maximum number of patrons to be permitted on the premises.
- Require a management plan for the management of patrons in outdoor areas, to minimise impacts on the amenity of nearby properties.
- The licensee is required to maintain a register of significant alcohol-related incidents that is available for inspection by enforcement authorities at any time during trading hours.
- Require a noise management plan and compliance at all times with that plan.

5.4. Special Licences

5.4.1. Pursuant to Section 117 of the Act, the following discretionary conditions *may* apply to special licences:

- Events over 1,000 attendees, or as otherwise considered appropriate, require an Event Alcohol Risk Management Plan in a form acceptable to the Council.
- Restrictions of the number of drinks sold to one patron and setting of final drinks.
- Restricting or prohibiting certain types of drinking vessels.
- Require a management plan for the management of patrons in outdoor areas, to minimise impacts on the amenity of nearby properties.
- Require a noise management plan and compliance at all times with that plan.
- The licensed area designated for the sale, supply and consumption of alcohol to be clearly defined and cordoned off, especially with respect to outside events.

Rationale

The outlined discretionary conditions are aimed at minimising risks and pre-empting problems. The listed discretionary conditions are to be considered, but are voluntary in application and *may* not necessarily be applied by the District Licensing Committee.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The following indicators provide measures for evaluating the policy's success in achieving its stated objectives.

Objective	Outcome	Indicator	Method
A one-way door restriction will apply Maximum licensed hours	Reduce risks to public safety and health.	Number of drunk custodies.	Drunk custodies statistics provided by Police trend analysis.
A one-way door restriction will apply Maximum licensed hours	Reduce risks to public safety and health.	The number of violence events reduce for each hour between 9pm and 6am the next day. 98% of off-licences apply one-way door policy.	Trend analysis of violence events. Data provided by Police. Police to conduct random audits of one-way door policy.
All objectives	Consumption of alcohol safely undertaken.	Average number of alcohol-related presentations to Emergency Department. Drink driving offences. Feedback from inspectors and Medical officer of Health.	Emergency Department alcohol-related presentations provided by WDHB and trend analysis performed. Drink driving offences as provided by Police. Feedback provided by Council inspectors and Medical officer of health.
Maximum licensed hours District-wide cap on off-licensed premises	District's health improves	Alcohol-related problems in the district, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • alcohol-related chronic diseases • alcohol use disorders • injuries where alcohol was a 	Alcohol-related chronic diseases provided by WRPFO, monitored and examined. Alcohol use disorders monitored,

		contributing factor	provided by WDHB. ACC provides injury data based on search of claim form's free text field.
Maximum licensed hours District-wide cap on off-licensed premises	Sale, supply, and consumption of alcohol should be undertaken safely and responsibly.	Infringements issued under Council's Alcohol Control Bylaw decrease.	Trend analysis of all three offence types provided by Police.

REFERENCES

- *Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012*
- *Resource Management Act 1991*
- *Education Act 1989*