

Police commissioner says minimum pricing for alcohol could make Plymouth safer



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By PATRICK DALY Herald Reporter

POLICE and Crime Commissioner Tony Hogg says minimum pricing for alcohol could help change night time behaviour in Plymouth and make it more welcoming.

Mr Hogg, who was elected as the Devon and Cornwall PCC last November, told The Herald he felt "balance" had to be restored so that



everyone feels safe to use the city in the evening.

His comments came as speculation mounted that a plan to introduce minimum pricing is about to be scrapped by the Government.

Mr Hogg said: "Society needs to make up its mind in deciding whether a minimum unit price will have a positive effect and whether they are then happy to pay more for their alcohol because of that.

"I want to create a family friendly feel for the city where people are free from antisocial behaviour - something alcohol often plays its part in."

Mr Hogg added: "Plymouth has a vibrant night time economy with great ambitions of growth.

"But there are issues with all night drinking and the cost of the misuse of alcohol.

"That cost is not just financial - I'm talking about the connection it has with violence, especially domestic violence, and its effect on children.

"I'm also talking about the number of police officers it takes to keep people safe in the evenings."

He says when he has been out with police he has seen it require eight officers to control a man who was drunk.

Mr Hogg continued: "What is the vision that Plymouth has for its night time economy?"

"Is it there for only masses of young people to enjoy, or also for families enjoying late nights with responsible drinking in an atmosphere that attracts visitors?"

"There is a balance that needs to be set."

Mr Hogg, who was in the Navy for over 30 years, said he believed that a higher price for alcohol and the introduction of an late night levy - currently being considered by Plymouth City Council - could be ways of restoring that balance.

Read more: <http://www.thisisplymouth.co.uk/Police-commissioner-says-minimum-pricing-alcohol/story-18409355-detail/story.html#ixzz2NtEfwKe>

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