



PRESS NOTICE – 20 May 2010 - Immediate

Below cost: yes – new costs: no

The leading trade body for Britain's pubs and bars today welcomed the news that the new Coalition Government would ban the sale of alcohol below cost price and would review alcohol taxation. It warned against plans to increase the level of regulation for pubs and bars, however, arguing that increased costs ran the risk of undermining efforts to cut binge drinking by making the price of a pint in a pub more expensive.

ALMR Chief Executive, Nick Bish, said:

“We are delighted that the Coalition Government has made tackling pocket money prices a priority. Such prices give the alcohol industry as a whole a bad name and do responsible operators no favours. The *ALMR* has been campaigning on this issue for some time and made a ban on below cost selling top of our shopping list when we briefed the parties ahead of the General Election.

We are pleased that the new Government has not only listened but acted. We very much hope that they will also listen to the other points we made – the need to encourage individual responsibility not only for consumption but also behaviour rather than expecting pubs to act as policeman, the need to provide a supportive regulatory framework that recognises pubs as wealth and job creators rather than imposing new punitive burdens.”

He expressed concern at other elements of the Agreement which had the potential to impose additional costs on the industry and warned Ministers of the unintended consequences of measures to reform licensing and increase local accountability which had the potential to damage the trade. He went on:

“We have heard a lot of talk from the Coalition Government about partnership and compromise, about big society and civil liberties and above all about great repeal bills . Pubs are also part of that debate and we expect to play a full part in it – you cannot on the one hand talk about removing unnecessary regulation and offences and then go straight back to the old style controls on the licensed retail trade. Both parties pledged to save the pub during the Election campaign – now is the time to deliver on that not strangle it with more red tape”

ENDS

Notes to Editors

- *ALMR* is the only national trade body solely dedicated to representing the interests of pub and bar operators, and to providing them with business support and advice. It has 80 member companies with a reach out to around 10,000 outlets.
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