Sarah Wollaston (Totnes, Conservative)

What legislative proposals she plans to make for further restrictions on the sale of alcohol to children.

Theresa May (Home Secretary)

The Government do not tolerate the sale of alcohol to children. The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill will double the maximum fine from £10,000 to £20,000, delivering on a coalition agreement commitment, and will extend the minimum period of voluntary closure that can be given for persistent under-age sales. We are also committed to working with the Sentencing Council and the Crown Prosecution Service to prosecute those found guilty of persistent under-age selling and to use the full range of sentences available.

Sarah Wollaston (Totnes, Conservative)

In England alone, about 36 children every day are admitted to hospital as a result of alcohol-related harm. Will the Home Secretary consider making the reduction of alcohol-related harm an objective, and prioritise it in respect of licensing decisions?

Theresa May (Home Secretary)

I am grateful to my hon. Friend for raising this issue, particularly given her experience as a general practitioner. I recognise the picture she paints, and I would add that half of all violent assaults are believed to be alcohol related, so there is a real issue with alcohol that we need to consider. We think there is merit in making health a material consideration under the Licensing Act 2003. The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill will make certain health bodies responsible authorities under the Act. We are talking to the Department of Health about what we might do to ensure that the health aspects of alcohol are properly taken into account.