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ash.
action on smoking and health

Smokefree
Councillor
Network

Rt. Hon Steve Barclay MP

Secretary of State for Health and Social Care
Department of Health and Social Care
39 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0EU

18 January 2023

Dear Secretary of State,

We are writing to you on behalf of the ASH Smokefree Councillor Network and Cancer Research UK's (CRUK) Councillor Cancer Champions Network to call for the publication of a new Tobacco Control Plan for England. We support CRUK's [#SmokefreeUK campaign](#) which calls on the UK Government to implement a 'polluter pays' levy on tobacco manufacturers to help fund tobacco control measures and deliver the Government's Smokefree 2030 ambition. Achieving this ambition would be a cost-effective way to ease pressure on the NHS and social care, support people with the cost of living and grow the economy.

Smoking harms our communities, reduces productivity and increases the cost of living

Smoking is still the biggest cause of death and cancer in the UK, responsible for around 125,000 deaths per year and around 150 new cancer cases every day. An estimated £3.6 billion each year goes on smoking-related health and social care costs in England alone. Smoking costs England's economy £13.2 billion each year in lost productivity through premature death and disability. Higher smoking rates are clearly linked with socioeconomic disadvantage, meaning these huge costs for the NHS, councils, and communities across the country are concentrated in our most deprived areas.

Smoking comes at a high price to those who smoke. Smokers who quit successfully will see their disposable income rise by around £2,450 a year, putting money back into the pockets of those who need it most. As the country goes for growth, we cannot allow smoking to mean parts of the population are left behind.

A new Tobacco Control Plan is urgently needed

The UK Government first set out its ambition to make England Smokefree by 2030 in 2019. The current Tobacco Control Plan expired in 2022 and CRUK modelling suggests we will miss the 2030 ambition by around nine years, with previous modelling suggesting that the delay in achieving the target could be around twice as long for our poorest areas. Ministers have repeatedly committed to publishing the new Plan before the end of 2022. However, this deadline has now been missed, leaving the Smokefree 2030 ambition at risk.

Public health budgets have been squeezed, with many of us forced to make difficult decisions about the services we can offer to support our constituents. As councils, we are uniquely positioned to drive forward activity on tobacco across place and system, however without bold national action and sustainable funding solution, our efforts will not be enough.

A levy on tobacco manufacturers would deliver for local tobacco control

According to the APPG on Smoking and Health, a levy on tobacco manufacturers based on the 'polluter pays' principle could raise £700 million per year, significantly more than the minimum additional £125

million per year the Khan Review says is needed to achieve a Smokefree 2030. A levy is supported by over 70 organisations committed to improving the nation's health and addressing

inequalities, as well as three in four members of the public. The funding would enable stable funding for the activities needed to support smokers to quit whilst preventing a new generation from ever starting.

We urge you to publish a bold new Tobacco Control Plan including a 'polluter pays' levy without delay to secure the investment we need to make the Smokefree 2030 ambition a reality in our communities.

Yours sincerely,

Cancer Research UK's Councillor Cancer Champions Network and the ASH Smokefree Councillor Network

This letter has been endorsed by:

Cllr Evelyn Akoto, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing	London Borough of Southwark
Cllr Val Armstrong, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health	Cheshire West and Chester Council
Cllr Naheed Asghar, Cabinet Member for Health	London Borough of Waltham Forest
Cllr Kemi Atolagbe, Councillor	London Borough of Camden
Cllr Mike Bell, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing	North Somerset Council
Cllr Joshua Blacker, Cabinet Member for Healthy Lives	London Borough of Ealing
Cllr Sunny Brar, Member of Health Scrutiny and Joint Health Scrutiny Committee	London Borough of Redbridge
Cllr Beverley Brewer, Chair of Health Scrutiny Committee	London Borough of Redbridge
Cllr Kris Brown, Chair of the Audit Committee	Liverpool City Council
Cllr Janet Campbell, Councillor	London Borough of Croydon
Cllr Lucia das Neves, Cabinet member for health, social care and wellbeing	London Borough of Haringey
Cllr Jim Dickson, Cabinet Member for Healthier Communities	London Borough of Lambeth
Cllr John Ennis, Lead Councillor Adult Social Care	Reading Borough Council
Cllr Duncan Enright, Cabinet Member for Travel and Development Strategy	Oxfordshire County Council
Cllr Jo Farrell, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Community Health & Wellbeing	Blackpool Council
Cllr Lorna Fielker, Cabinet Member for Health, Adults and Leisure	Southampton City Council

Cllr Brian Ford, Cabinet Member for Adults and Health	Swindon Borough Council
Cllr David Fothergill, Chair of the LGA Community Wellbeing Board	Somerset County Council
Cllr James Giles, Leader of the Kingston Independent Residents Group	Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames
Cllr Louise Gittins, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Poverty and Wellbeing	Cheshire West and Chester Council
Cllr Matthew Goodwin-Freeman, Councillor	London Borough of Harrow
Cllr Gary Haley, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People	Gateshead Council
Cllr Sabah Hamed, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Public Health	Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
Cllr Joanne Harding, Executive Member for Culture, Leisure and Strategic Partnerships	Trafford Borough Council
Cllr Graeme Henderson, Cabinet Member for Adult Care and Health and Chair, Health & Wellbeing Board	London Borough of Wandsworth
Cllr Anne Hetherington, ICS member	South Tyneside Council
Cllr Anne Hook, Member of Health and Adult Social Care Committee	City of York Council
Cllr Sir Stephen Houghton CBE, Leader of the Council	Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Angela Kandola, Councillor	Nottingham City Council
Cllr Chris Kennedy, Cabinet Member for Health	London Borough of Hackney
Cllr Robert Lanzer, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing Chair of the West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board	West Sussex County Council
Cllr Donna Lumsden, Secretary of the Labour Group and Deputy Health Scrutiny Committee	London Borough of Barking and Dagenham
Cllr Caroline Makinson, Cabinet Spokesperson for Public Health and Communities	Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Michael Mullaney, Leader of the Opposition	Leicestershire County Council
Cllr Chewe Munkonge, Councillor	Oxford City Council
Cllr Neil Nerva, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Adult Social Care	London Borough of Brent
Cllr Bernadette Oliphant, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing	Gateshead Council
Cllr Sarah Osborne, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group	East Sussex County Council

Cllr Jonathan Owen, Leader of the Council	East Riding of Yorkshire Council
Cllr Shirley Procter, Member of Planning Committee and Children's Services Scrutiny	Trafford Borough Council
Cllr Shaz Saleem, Cabinet Member for Highways and Public Realm	Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Cllr Anita Schaper, Chair of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel	Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
Cllr Tom Simon, Leader of the Opposition	London Borough of Camden
Cllr Dr Wendy Taylor, Cabinet Member (Substitute) Community Wellbeing Board	Newcastle City Council
Cllr Nafsika Thalassis, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and the Voluntary Sector	Westminster City Council
Cllr Yvonne Tracey, Cabinet Member for Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel	Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames
Cllr Nurullah Turan, Executive Member for Health and Social Care	London Borough of Islington
Cllr Alistair Willoughby, Councillor and Deputy Executive Housing & Environmental Health	North Herts Council