**Draft letter to MP from Director of Public Health**

**Your support for a Smokefree generation is needed including to support proposal to raise the age of sale of tobacco and legislation proposed to make it illegal to sell tobacco to anyone born after 1st July 2009.**

Given smoking is STILL the key driver of health inequalities and premature death in your constituency we support any action to help reduce smoking rates. It’s needed, it’s wanted and it works. Reducing smoking rates further will have a positive impact on the NHS – present and future- and also for economic growth and prosperity.

Nearly all smokers reach a point in regretting taking up smoking (nearly always getting addicted when young) and want to stop. They also don’t want their own children to get hooked to such a lethal product guaranteed to kill 2 in 3 long term users. This is why support is so high. Local insights in Greater Manchester suggest that 79% of people want to make smoking history, including half of all smokers.

Greater Manchester has collectively made good progress on smoking and smoking prevalence continues to fall – but there is still much to do and smoking rates are much higher in our poorest communities and in key priority groups such as people living with mental health illness.

In Greater Manchester smoking costs us £1.1Bn each year in healthcare costs (£109.4M), lost productivity (£897.2M), social care costs (£66.1M) and fire costs (£20.0M). We are committed to doing all we can to reduce smoking prevalence in Greater Manchester to 5% by 2030.

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| **Area Name** | **Number of smokers** | **Overall cost** | **Healthcare costs** | **Productivity costs** | **Social care costs** | **Fire costs** |
| North West | 784,400 | £2.87Bn | £258.5M | £2.38Bn | £180.1M | £49.9M |
| Greater Manchester ICB | 340,000 | £1.1Bn | £109.4M | £897.2M | £66.1M | £20.0M |
| Bolton | 31,900 | £115.6M | £10.2M | £96.6M | £6.3M | £2.4M |
| Bury | 17,600 | £73.8M | £6.1M | £62.3M | £4.4M | £1.0M |
| Manchester | 73,400 | £259.8M | £22.3M | £216.3M | £17.0M | £4.2M |
| Oldham | 19,700 | £78.8M | £6.5M | £64.5M | £5.7M | £2.0M |
| Rochdale | 25,900 | £108.0M | £9.4M | £90.7M | £6.3M | £1.6M |
| Salford | 32,000 | £110.1M | £10.9M | £90.5M | £7.0M | £1.7M |
| Stockport | 27,500 | £103.2M | £8.5M | £87.4M | £5.6M | £1.7M |
| Tameside | 36,400 | £152.5M | £12.3M | £131.6M | £6.6M | £2.0M |
| Trafford | 14,400 | £58.1M | £4.7M | £48.2M | £4.0M | £1.2M |
| Wigan | 38,500 | £112.5M | £13.3M | £89.4M | £7.7M | £2.1M |

**Addressing smoking as a cross party issue has been so important over the last two decades, it affects too many of our communities and continues to rob families of their loved ones.**

Greater Manchester warmly welcomes the [announcement](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/stopping-the-start-our-new-plan-to-create-a-smokefree-generation/stopping-the-start-our-new-plan-to-create-a-smokefree-generation#the-case-for-change) from the Government on 4th October 2023 around a smokefree generation and the plans to stop the start of a new generation of children and young people getting hooked to such a lethal addiction. We will be responding to the current [consultation](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/creating-a-smokefree-generation-and-tackling-youth-vaping/creating-a-smokefree-generation-and-tackling-youth-vaping-your-views#legislating-to-create-a-smokefree-generation) “Stopping the start – a plan to create a Smokefree generation” which has questions around age of sale of tobacco, measures to reduce youth vaping, and enhanced enforcement.

**We strongly recommend you support the key proposal to raise the age of sale of tobacco and legislation proposed to make it illegal to sell tobacco to anyone born after 1st July 2009.** We also want to stop the start of addiction, as it is much easier to never start smoking than to have to try to quit. This will have a significant impact on the health of our city region and to address the greatest driver of health inequalities in your constituency.

We also welcome measures to reduce the appeal of vaping amongst children and young people by restrictions on their marketing, branding, promotion and price but recognise that vaping is a useful aid for smokers to quit their lethal addiction to cigarettes and why we are not in support of a ban on the sale of disposable vapes, or flavours.

**We hope you will support this hugely important proposed measure to turn off the tap of a new generation of smokers and to help us to achieve our vision for a Greater Manchester where we don’t have loved ones dying for totally avoidable smoking related illnesses.**

We will share with you in due course our official response to the consultation and we would be delighted to meet up to discuss this with too.

Signed xxx