

Regeneration
Midlothian Council
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Strategic Services

Director
John Allan

02-57

Midlothian

2 March 2007

John Glen
Scottish Executive Health Department
Tobacco Control Division
3 E(R)
St Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

Rec'd 3/3/07



Dear John

Towards a Future Without Tobacco

Midlothian Council welcomes the publication of the Report of the Smoking Prevention Working Group and the priority given to the protection and education of young people highlighted in the report.

The report rightly highlights the addictive nature of nicotine and recognises the need to do more in relation to young people's understanding of its addictiveness and build on the knowledge that smoking is 'unhealthy'. It is also helpful to highlight the relationship between deprivation and smoking and the need to incorporate the use of other addictive substances, such as alcohol and drug use, into the wider debate.

Importantly, the report brings in research findings and whilst there is a general awareness of gender differences the stark contrast between boys, described as being among the lowest rates in Europe and girls, among the highest may require further research to look into the positive reduction in males. Are there lessons which can be transferred to the promotion of the no smoking message for females?

Whilst there have been major progress in relation to advertising, the need for continued awareness of the role of the media is well made. Education and the significant role the Health Promoting Schools Programme can play is important, but in the light of media impact, the recruitment of positive role models to convey the anti smoking message may prove fruitful for future campaigns. The 'White Stuff' milk advertising campaign provides a recent example.

More information and analysis is required in relation to smoking prevention programmes to provide a clearer picture of effectiveness, particularly in relation to programmes providing nicotine replacement and smoking cessation support in combination.

In/

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In terms of the recommendations, we feel it is important to address the two main areas of reducing availability and discouraging young people from smoking. We also agree with the recommendation that an Action Plan be developed to take this work forward and commend the recommendation that young people be consulted on the reports findings.

Midlothian Council is in agreement with the statement

There is a need for innovative research studies that aim to identify ways to prevent children and young people in disadvantaged communities from starting to smoke.

In our Joint Health Improvement Plan (2007 – 10), currently in the process of consultation <http://www.midlothian.gov.uk//Article.aspx?TopicId=0&ArticleId=20414>, we are attempting to analyse health inequalities in relation to age stage, lifestyle and life circumstances/areas of deprivation. Clearly, young people involved in substance misuse from deprived communities would be regarded as a priority. We therefore welcome the work that has been undertaken in relation to this report and look forward to future developments in this crucial area for Scotland's public health.

Yours sincerely



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1234 to find out where your nearest public internet access point is, if you prefer to submit your response by e-mail.

8. To complement the written consultation we will also be holding regional seminars next year to engage directly with stakeholders on the recommendations made. Details of these will be circulated shortly.

Handling your response

9. We need to know how you wish your response to be handled and, in particular, whether you are happy for your response to be made public. Please complete and return the Respondent Information Form at Annex A as this will ensure that we treat your response appropriately. If you ask for your response not to be published we will regard it as confidential, and will treat it accordingly.

10. All respondents should be aware that the Scottish Executive are subject to the provisions of the Freedom for Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and would, therefore, have to consider any request made to it under the Act for information relating to responses to this consultation exercise.

Next steps in the process

11. Where correspondents have given permission for their responses to be made public, these will be made available to the public in the Scottish Executive Library by 28 March 2007 and on the Scottish Executive website by 4 April 2007. We will check all responses where agreement to publish has been given for any potentially defamatory material before logging them in the library or placing them on the website. **Annex B** contains additional information about Scottish Executive consultation policy, including about access to consultation responses.

What happens next

12. Careful consideration will be given to all the comments received and, as indicated above, will inform the development of a 5 year action plan for consideration by the new administration following the Scottish Parliamentary elections in May 2007.

Comments and complaints

13. If you have any comment about how this consultation exercise has been conducted, or if you have any other queries, please contact John Glen at the above address or call 0131-244-5660.



Mary Cuthbert
Head of Tobacco Policy