
Report To:	The Inverclyde Council	Date: 8 October 2009
Report By:	Corporate Director Regeneration & Resources	Report No: SL/LA/427/09
Contact Officer:	Sharon Lang	Contact No: 01475 712112
Subject:	Scottish Coalition on Tobacco - Request by Councillor McCabe	

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Councillor McCabe has requested that the Council consider the attached letter from the Scottish Coalition on Tobacco requesting support for the Tobacco and Primary Medical Services Bill which is currently before the Scottish Parliament. APPENDIX

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The Council is asked to consider the request from Councillor McCabe.

Sharon Lang
Legal & Administration



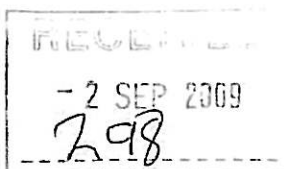
SCOT Members



SD/mm/scot1

28 August 2009

Councillor Stephen McCabe
Inverclyde Council
Clyde Square
Greenock
PA15 1LY



Dear Cllr. McCabe

I am sure that you are aware that the Tobacco and Primary Medical Services Bill which is currently before the Scottish Parliament aims to prevent young people starting to smoke by reducing the availability, attractiveness, and visibility of cigarettes. This is important public health legislation which local authorities will have a vital role in enforcing. It aims to improve Scotland's health and reduce inequalities by reducing youth smoking uptake in the future.

The main measures proposed in the bill are:

- putting cigarettes and tobacco out of sight in retail outlets
- introducing a national register of tobacco retailers, enabling enforcement officers to engage effectively with them
- introducing fixed penalty fines and the option of banning orders for breaking the law
- a ban on self service tobacco vending machines

The Scottish Coalition on Tobacco (SCOT) is a dynamic coalition of partners which campaigns on all matters related to tobacco and, as a coalition as well as individual organisations, we have been working hard to campaign for a strong and robust bill to be passed by parliament.

However we are aware that there is opposition to the bill and that there are other organisations that are actively campaigning against the bill, writing to MSPs and lobbying hard to stop the proposals both here in Scotland and at Westminster where similar legislation is due to be debated in October.

So, if like us, you also back this bill, we urge you to consider writing to or emailing all MSPs and the Scottish Parliament's Health and Sport committee to let them know of your support.

15,000 young people take up smoking every year and it is those young people now who will feel the harmful effects of smoking in the future. The younger someone starts to smoke, the harder it is to quit, the more they will smoke in adulthood, and the more harm is done to their health. Someone who starts smoking at age 14 or younger is fifteen times more likely to die of lung cancer than someone who never smokes.

Smoking remains Scotland's biggest killer with 24% of all deaths due to smoking. It costs the NHS in Scotland more than £400 million every year to treat smoking related diseases and it costs the Scottish economy £837 million. Then of course there is the emotional cost to friends and family when a loved one suffers a preventable early death or has to cope with illness.

That is why it is so important that this bill is supported and its principles not diluted by opposition. The Health & Sport Committee is currently preparing its first stage report on the bill and will make comments and recommendations on the proposals in advance of a full debate of the whole chamber at the end of September. The bill will then enter the amendment stage before being fully debated again at the end of the year. So now is the time to make your views clear and put on record your support for these measures.

I hope you will be able to take the time to let MSPs know why your Council supports the bill. Feel free to use any of the information contained in this letter and if you would like any further information on the bill, youth smoking, SCOT or any other related matters, please don't hesitate to contact me. You will also find briefing materials about the tobacco bill under the policy section of the ASH Scotland website, at <http://www.ashscotland.org.uk/ash/6545.1359.html>. If you would like to send a copy of any letters you send to me, when we are speaking to MSPs we will let them know of your support.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Yours sincerely

Sheila Duffy
Chair, Scottish Coalition on Tobacco