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Clare Haughey MSP
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The Scottish Parliament

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22 November 2023

Dear Clare,

Launch of Tobacco and Vaping Framework – roadmap to 2034

Smoking causes one in five deaths in Scotland. Over 8,000 lives a year are cut short from diseases caused by smoking. It causes illness, disability for many years, and deaths with the highest burden falling on the poorest members of our society. Large parts of the harm caused by cancers, cardiovascular disease and respiratory disease is caused by smoking. Harm that is entirely preventable.

Smoking damages lives across Scotland from our earliest years to our latest. It is a leading risk factor in stillbirth, cuts lives short by ten years on average, and increases the risk of dementia.

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Smoking slows progress on our three National Missions of Equality; Opportunity; and Community:

- **Equality** – Smoking is the leading preventable cause of health inequalities. Addressing smoking tackles poverty;
- **Opportunity** – Smoking costs the Scottish economy millions each year in lost productivity. Addressing smoking supports a wellbeing economy; and
- **Community** – Smoking causes significant burden on NHS and social care services. Addressing smoking supports the delivery of high-quality public services.

In addition, recent increases in the number of young people using vapes are deeply concerning; vapes are one of range of cessation tools that can be used by adult smokers to stop. They should not be used by young people or adult non-smokers. We recognise the acute need to take action on vaping.

Our 2023/24 Programme for Government included a commitment to publish a refreshed Tobacco Action Plan in autumn 2023, outlining decisive action to remain on track to make Scotland tobacco-free by 2034. To meet this commitment, I am pleased to announce the launch of our new Tobacco and Vaping Framework.

Unlike previous tobacco plans Scottish Government is taking a more responsive approach, departing from 5-year reviewed action plans, instead setting an overarching Tobacco and Vaping Framework underpinned by shorter action-focused 2-year implementation periods.

This approach will allow for flexibility within the Framework, developing and adapting actions to react to an ever-evolving area, and ongoing tobacco, nicotine and vaping product development. This will also allow for more regular review of progress and more frequent setting of actions that can target areas of intervention to ensure we achieve our 2034 target.

There are three overarching themes:

- **People** – What we can do to prevent uptake and what support we can provide to help people stop smoking, and to educate them on the risks;
- **Product** – What restrictions and limitations can be placed on tobacco containing products to further reduce use and ensure NVPs are used appropriately to support cessation but deter take up where not used for quitting tobacco; and
- **Place** – What restrictions and limitations can be placed on how and where tobacco and NVPs products are sold to deter use of the former and ensure appropriate use of the latter.

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These will be supported by three principles:

- **Transparency** – Adherence and promotion of the principles of the WHO FCTC guidelines and specifically Article 5.3;
- **Sustainability** – continued funding to support the Framework and actions within it; and
- **Accountability** – Good governance of the implementation of the framework and progress towards the 2034 target.

It is important that the Framework continues to reduce the impact of health inequalities and this will underpin our approach.

The first implementation plan, which will run until November 2025 will cover a range of actions. These can be summarised under the three themes as:

People

- **Information** – improving the information and resources around vaping and cessation services;
- **Engagement** – continuing to work with our partners across Scotland over awareness raising and support as well as continuing to work with UK Government and Devolved Administrations on shared approaches; and
- **Cessation** – improving our cessation services

Product

- **Regulation** – continuing to progress further regulation around tobacco and vaping including potential outcomes from the current UK-wide Smoke Free Generation consultation;
- **Appeal** – continuing to progress further actions that could reduce the appeal of tobacco and vapes; and
- **Enforcement** – to continue to work with Trading Officers in Scotland around ways to improve enforcement, particularly around the sale of vapes

Place

- **Smoke-free spaces** – to review the effectiveness of the current hospital grounds restrictions and review the value of any future place-based restrictions; and

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- **Tobacco and nicotine vapour register** – to further develop our register to further inform and support retailers to ensure higher compliance with current age-based restrictions.

The launch of the Framework is supported by our first information marketing campaign targeted at children and young people, and their carers to highlight the risks of vaping. This campaign launches alongside the Framework and will run until Christmas.

I hope the Committee finds this information helpful.

Yours sincerely,



Jenni Minto MSP

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